

Starting an Exercise Program for Better Health

We are all well aware of the importance of exercise. Studies constantly come out showing that exercise can reverse many serious health problems and increase our longevity. Americans spend more on health and exercise equipment than any other country. Yet few of us follow through on an exercise regime. The main reason for this is time. It can be hard to find time in a busy schedule to include an hour or more at the gym. By starting with a manageable schedule and choosing something you enjoy, you can begin an exercise program and stick with it.

Be sure to see your doctor before you begin your new exercise program, especially if you have not been active in a long time.

Start small

Begin your exercise regime slowly. Jumping in too fast can lead to injury which will definitely decrease your desire to stick with it. Do not expect too much too fast. Start out with small goals that you can measure.

Choose a small amount of time each day such as 10 minutes and schedule it into your daily routine. Do not let exercise to be the thing that gets cut out of your schedule when you get busier. Think of it as a regular part of your daily duties such as brushing your hair or flossing your teeth.

Before you begin, remember to do some warm-up exercises. Warming up prepares your muscles for the exercise and helps to prevent injury. Do about 5 to 10 minutes of jumping jacks or a slow jog. If at any time during your exercise you begin to feel pain, just stop. If you keep going it could lead to injury. Drink plenty of water before you start and have an extra glass if it's a hot day. Don't exercise on an empty stomach especially if you do your routine first thing in the morning.

Make it enjoyable

The most important thing you can do when starting an exercise regime is to choose something that you enjoy. If you have always wanted to learn to dance, sign up for dance lessons. Take a beginner aerobics course at a gym or join a tennis league. Aim for about 30 minutes of physical activity per day.

One of the best exercises for the beginner is walking. You can easily adjust the intensity and length of your workout, and increase both as you become more fit. It can be done at any time that best fits into your day. Studies have shown that walking can combat health problems such as diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Exercising can be especially valuable for women in combating bone loss which comes with age. As women get older they begin to lose about 1% of their bone mass per year. Following menopause it increases to 3% per year. Weight bearing exercise stimulates the bone to make new bone cells.

To enjoy the health benefits of exercise you have to make it part of your daily routine. Start by doing something you enjoy or even began with walking. Schedule exercise into your daily routine and do a little each day. Before you know it you will be healthier than ever before!

About the Author

Kevin Kielty lives in North Carolina and writes articles on health insurance. If you are looking for rate quotes on health insurance in North Carolina, visit [Blue Cross Blue Shield NC \(BCBSNC\)](#), also known as [Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina](#).