

Holidays No Excuse for Not Exercising

Holiday season happenings can pack your schedule, but that's no excuse to scrap your workout regimen until January. In fact, regular exercise is a proven way to reduce the harmful effects of stress, which is often associated with the hustle-and-bustle of this time of year.

Health and Human Services recommends that most adults get in at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week. Naturally, the more you exercise, the greater the health benefits... reduced risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, lower blood pressure and bad cholesterol, and so on.

One way to be sure you work out is by scheduling time during the day for it, just as you would any other activity. Exercise can include trips to the gym, but can also be as simple as a brisk walk outside or, if weather doesn't allow, even inside the mall before doing some seasonal shopping.

You can also include the family in your exercise activities... ice skating and sledding are great group workouts. Just be sure to dress properly for the weather (including sunscreen, as any exposed skin can become sunburnt, even during the winter).

Spending time with your friends and family during the holiday season is important, but so is maintaining your health. With a little planning, you can prioritize both. And of course, be sure to discuss any changes in your wellness routine with your family doctor.



Workout in a Winter Wonderland

Try these exercise ideas for routines that don't require a fitness center.

- Go ice skating and try different speeds and alternating between forwards and backwards to work different muscles.
- Repeatedly walking up a hill to go sledding can increase your heartrate.
- Walk the stairs in your home or at the local shopping mall if it has two or more levels.
- Shoveling snow is a great cardio activity, but be careful not to overdo it... and watch out for ice!
- Try jogging in place or doing yoga while watching TV. Do burpees or pushups during commercials if you want to step it up.
- For a fun inside workout, dance to some of your favorite songs for awhile.



SOURCES: WebMD, Everyday Health