



Exercise Adherence Tips
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We all have the best intentions when starting a new exercise program...but something always gets in the way, right? Hence, the reason we are starting another one! Here are some tips to make sure that this program is different!

Move Exercise up on your list...

In order for this program to develop into a way of life, you will need to make exercise a priority. For most of us, either exercise is the first thing that is cut out of our day when we get busy, or we claim we will fit it in when we have time (which we never do!). For your program to be effective, you need to force yourself to schedule things around your exercise (put it in your calendar in advance).

Don't have enough time???

Most exercise programs will suggest finding 30 minutes a day, 3 days a week. Hmmmmmm...is there anything else in your life that lasts about 30 minutes? What about your favorite TV programs? In a 30-minute sitcom, not only is there enough time for a workout, but there are 6 minutes worth of commercials. In 2.5 hours of television, you could have your workout done during the commercials!

Exercise = Fun?

OK, you can stop laughing now...exercise can be fun! Unfortunately, it is usually not fun when we are physically and mentally out of shape, which makes a vicious cycle (don't workout because its not fun...its not fun because you don't workout...). Start your program out with some physical activities that you enjoy doing, regardless of whether they are the most beneficial. Once your fitness improves, those that you dread will become more tolerable.

Exchange Your Clothes!!!!

We all have the best intentions of working out, but if you are working out alone, there is not much keeping you from skipping your workout. Instead, try this: Get yourself a workout partner...then trade workout clothes with them! If your partner is relying on you to bring their workout clothes, you are not only responsible for your fitness, but the fitness of your partner. If you don't show...they don't get to workout!

Go Shopping!

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Yeah, you can tell your spouse that I said it... Actually, clothing can be a big motivator to exercise in two ways: 1. New workout clothes give us reasons to workout...to make sure we get our money's worth, and to get out and show them off! 2. New clothes are a great way to show off the progress you have made. Once you lower your waist size or gain definition in your arms...show them off! Just be sure to pace your shopping out, so that it continues to be a motivator.

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In general, exercise programs can be divided into two basic categories depending on the goals of the participant – 1) exercising to improve health-related physical fitness and 2) training to improve sport/athletic performance. Although this tip sheet focuses on health-related physical fitness, the concepts are also applicable to sports-related training. Most exercise scientists agree that health-related physical fitness is comprised of five components: muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, and body composition (% body fat). The goal of a health-related physical fitness program is to enhance the quality of life. Specifically, through increasing one or more of the components of fitness, one may reduce the risk of disease and increase the ability to complete daily tasks with less effort, fatigue, and injury. The principles listed below serve as a guide for developing an effective and safe exercise program, with the overall goal of increasing one or more of the health-related physical fitness components.

Basic Principles of an Exercise Program

Overload– The SAID principle (an acronym for specific adaptation to imposed demands) states that when the body is subjected to stressors (e.g., aerobic or resistance training), it will adapt in a positive and specific manner. Thus, “overload” is a term that denotes a stressor to the body, whether that stressor is an aerobic activity (e.g., jogging) or resistance training (e.g., lifting weights). It is important to note that the overload must be great enough, and repeated often enough, to elicit a positive adaptation. However, too much overload, too little recovery time, and/or improper nutrition, can actually result in distress or injury (overtraining). The body needs to have a reasonable chance to adapt to the “overload” demands. Overload is accomplished by gradually increasing the **frequency**, **duration**, or **intensity** of the particular physical activity.

Progression– According to the SAID principle explained above, one should start gradually and systematically increase (logical progression) the frequency, duration, or intensity of the specific physical activity. Progression is closely related to overload.

Consistency – One of the greatest problems with fitness programs (and maintaining fitness) is the lack of consistency. According to the American College of Sports Medicine guidelines, one should exercise for 30 to 60 minutes on most, if not all, days of the week. Of course, exercising one, two, or three days per week is better than not exercising at all. One should strive to remain consistent over the course of time, avoiding the tendency to be “all or none”. It is more beneficial to exercise consistently for three days per week for the entire nine-week period (Boxer Bootcamp), than exercising sporadically (six days per week for some months and nothing for other months).

Specificity – The adaptations that occur (SAID principle) are directly related to the type of activity (the stressor). For example, to increase range of motion in a particular joint (e.g., lower back and hamstrings), one must target those areas for stretching. However, this principle does not apply to “spot-reducing” fat. For example, doing hundreds of sit-ups does not preferentially reduce fat in the abdominal area.

Individuality – It is always important to remember that everyone is different.

Safety – The purpose of a fitness program should be to enhance one or more components of health-related physical fitness. It is counter-productive to rush, without planning, into a fitness program

and unnecessarily risk injury. If necessary, seek professional advice from someone with expertise in fitness to ensure a positive and lasting experience.

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