

Weighing In May 2016

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The Great Benefits of Just Going for a Walk

Can you believe it's May already? I can't! Seems like we just started January a few weeks ago. Time is flying by. Many patients have come in recently saying, "I can't lose any more weight!" The first question we ask is what they are doing for activity. Many of them tell us they are doing absolutely nothing. So this month's newsletter is dedicated to show you how to start exercising and how to stick with it.

You already know there are many great reasons to exercise – from improving your energy, your mood, your sleep, and your health to reducing anxiety, stress, and depression. Detailed exercise instructions and workout plans are usually just a click away on your computer. But knowing how and why to exercise is not enough. We all want to be in great shape. Exercise is a great habit, but it takes more than just the right mindset. It takes another approach; it takes using your brain. Whatever your age or fitness level – even if you've never exercised a day in your life before -- there are steps you can take to make exercise less intimidating, not painful, and more fun and enjoyable.

To begin an exercise program, you must get clearance from your doctor. Then, of course, you also need some instruction. We have lots of gyms in the area and lots of fitness instructors. Sadly, many of them have no clue what they're talking about. We live in an age of fraudulent fitness. Our society is plagued by obesity, cardiovascular disease, cancer, impotence, sterility and fast foods. The public demands miracle pills, products and potions to fix all that's wrong with them, and all of their health and fitness problems, and they want them fixed now. Fitness frauds and charlatans are only too joyful to supply the public with the miracle products they demand. All you have to do is tune into Dr. Oz who is the epitome of someone making money off people with no clue of what they're buying. One of the biggest myths of all of the fitness gurus is that magic products exist and can build muscle with the greatest of ease.

The goal of achieving a lean and muscular body began long before Michelangelo and

Leonardo da Vinci decide to paint in the Sistine Chapel. Our admiration for physical power and muscularity depicted by the ancient Greeks and Roman art is well-known. In the old USSR, workers had a saying, "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us." This statement could be modified for modern fitness: "We provide pretend products to aid the public in their pretend fitness efforts." Any time a so-called fitness expert tells you that building muscle or shedding fat is easy, be aware that you're being scammed to make a purchase. By buying "breakthrough" products you will magically be able to eliminate all the tears, teeth grinding effort and tough work required to trigger a true transformation---remember, none of this is true.

My friend Dan Foley of Foley's Fitness is the polar opposite of the modern fitness product pressure. He is a fitness icon, a man rooted in science and biology who tells people the inconvenient truth about how to transform their bodies. I've learned a lot from Dan over the years. One thing he answered for me I found truly interesting. Can you turn on an anabolic switch like a flip on a light? The simple answer is yes, there is indeed an anabolic switch that you can turn on the body for survival mode. But you need to acquire the knowledge of how to do that.

To break through your mental barriers and make yourself successful, you don't have to spend hours and hours and hours in the gym to force yourself in monotonous, painful activities. A little exercise is better than none at all. In fact, setting modest amounts of physical activity such as taking a walk or just walking your dog is enough. Be kind to yourself. Research shows that self-compassion increases the likelihood you'll succeed in the endeavor. So don't beat yourself up because the way your body looks in comparison to someone else. Your past mistakes are only a learning mechanism. You didn't get out of shape overnight, and you cannot get back into shape instantly. Expecting too much too soon leads to people become frustrated. Don't let yourself become discouraged by what you can't do or how far you have to go. Celebrate every victory of getting outside even when you didn't want to. You deserve to celebrate. Find joy in moving your body in the fresh air. Feel the warmth of the sun now that spring is (hopefully) here.

Now let's destroy a few excuses. Let's start with the "I'm too busy; I don't have time" excuse. Even the busiest person can find a few hours in his day to do something important, but we're not asking for a few hours; we're only asking for a short 10 to 15 minutes burst of activity. Take a short walk outside or around your office at work. How about the excuse, "I'm too tired?" It may sound counterintuitive, but increasing your physical activity is actually a great pick-me-up to help get you through the day. Increasing your activity reduces your fatigue and boosts your energy levels in the long run. With regular exercise, you feel more energized, refreshed and alert throughout the day. The "I'm too fat" excuse we hear often. Even if you're a senior or self-confessed couch potato that basks on the couch most of your down time, there are very few health and weight problems that make exercising out of the question. No matter what your current weight, size or age, you can, with our help, find something that is fun and safe for you to do. Come in and talk with us about it.

Currently recommendations for most adults are to complete about 150 minutes of

moderate activity per week. Now if you divide seven days a week into 150 minutes, it works out to only 21.4 minutes a day. I think many of you could squeeze in 21 minutes out of 24 hours. You could take a 10 minute walk in the morning and an 11 minute walk in the evening. Just a thought.

Dan Foley starts a lot of his patients off with the goal of exercising 30 minutes a day five days a week if at all possible. If that is too ambitious of a goal, then start with 5 to 10 minutes, and you'll be on your way. If you need advice on how to start exercising, check out Foley's Fitness or call Tricia our dietitian. She can put you in touch with Dan and his staff.

If you have a family, there are many ways to exercise together. Kids learn by example, and if you exercise with the family, you are setting great examples for their future. Here are a couple of things you can consider. Swimming is one. And since the weather's gotten nice, bike riding, taking walks in the park, or just doing chores together outside the house. There are activities everybody can enjoy.

But if you need to think about more than running, swimming or biking options, here are a few you might find interesting: Horseback riding, ballroom dancing, rollerblading, hiking, kayaking, martial arts, or Zumba to name a few.

The main thing is just to do something.

I remember we had a lady that was 390 pounds. The only thing she could do was push-ups off the wall. So we got her interested in just pushing herself off of the wall and as her weight came down we had her to start doing some squats, even if it was only one or two a day. By the time she had lost 200pounds, she was up to walking 2 miles a day and had gotten even into doing a few push-ups. To this day she continues with regular physical activity in maintenance along with having learned how to eat correctly. So the next time someone says to you, I'm just too out of shape to exercise, remind them that all they have to do is start walking.

Here's an actual Scripture verse about exercise, Romans 12:1. I urge you. Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of worship. I also found I Corinthians 10:31. Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever, you do, do it all to the glory of God.

And for those of you who have a dog, go for a walk!

Blessings to all,
Chuck Shaffer MD

Recipe of the Month:

Egg Roll Stir-fry:

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

1 lb lean ground beef
1 large onion, diced
1 small head cabbage
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
1.2 tsp black pepper
2 tbsp sesame oil
1 tbsp olive oil
¼ C low sodium soy sauce (no added sugar)



Directions: Cook meat with onions in a large skillet until meat is brown. Meanwhile, cut cabbage into thin shreds and set aside. Combine garlic, ginger, pepper, oils and soy sauce in a small bowl and stir to combine. Set aside. Add cabbage to ground meat then cook and stir over medium high heat for 3-4 minutes. Add soy sauce and mix well. Reduce heat to medium and continue cooking for 5-10 minutes or until cabbage is tender.

Making Sense of the Changes in the Book:

Recently we updated our program book. With the changes our staff has noticed that many of our patients have questions. Here are the most common explanations to our FAQ's regarding these changes.

Fruit: What is a type? A type of fruit is **ANY** fruit listed in our program book. Blackberries, blueberries, cherries, peaches and strawberries are all different examples of a type of fruit. Eating one type of fruit all the time can increase the risk of plateaus and limit the levels of nutrients you nourish your body with. For example, we have found that many patients limit their fruit choices to only apples or grapes. Many of our patients have reported eating these multiple times a day on a daily basis. We have noticed that this often results in weight loss plateaus. This is also why we limited both apples and grapes to once a week as a general rule of thumb to encourage patients to get a variety of fruits that are normally not chosen and be mindful of the quantity in which they consume one single food. This is based off of our clinical experience and has little to do with the glycemic load of apples and grapes. Although every fruit has a different glycemic load, rest assured that all the fruits listed in the book do have a low glycemic load overall.

Please remember that the **guidelines** in the book are just **guidelines!** It is important that you follow these strictly, however if you have a concern, please let our staff know during your weekly visit. The staff will be able to assess your individual needs and make recommendations that are right for you. This may entail liberalizing some of these guidelines. What is warranted for one patient is not always warranted for another. This is why weekly visits are so important, we want to follow your individual progress and assess your personal needs.

Some changes and updates have also been made to our beverage section. Please note that there is a section that states "The following sodas are limited to 2 cans or bottle/week:" This statement pertains to the entire list as a whole, not just one single beverage. For example; if you wanted to have Hansen's Blue Sky soda but also Virgil's Zero Root Beer and Cream soda you would be able to enjoy one can each per week (for a total of two cans/week) **not** two cans each for a total of 4 can/week.

If there is anything else in the book that seems confusing to you, please let our staff know. We are always more than willing to both clarify and address any questions or concerns you may have.

-Tricia Foley, MS, RD