

Newsflash

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Q & A

Q: What aerobic exercise can I do at home when it's too cold, slippery, or dark to walk outdoors.

A: ONE EASY IDEA. March in place while you watch TV. In a study of 58 sedentary adults (middle-age and older), those who stepped in place or walked around the room during the commercials during 90 minutes of TV added about 3,000 steps to their day, as many as those instructed to walk for just half an hour. Wear sneakers, and aim for 100 to 120 steps per minute, lifting your feet about 6 inches. If you feel inclined to keep stepping beyond commercial breaks, go for it. The longer you step and the higher you lift your feet, the more you'll get your heart pumping and increase the calories burned.



~ HAPPY ~
New Year
★ 2022 ★

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Heat Up Your Winter Workout

While many of us plan to jump-start our fitness routines after New Year's Day, odds are those plans will falter quickly. In fact, January is usually when people in the U.S. exercise the least, according to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index. The weather can be blamed for that. In a recent study, researchers at the University of Michigan confirmed that as temperatures drop, exercise participation also wanes. But according to the American College of Sports Medicine, you can burn up to 40 percent more calories while exercising when it's cold. Here are four steps to improve your cold-weather workout.

STEP 1: Layer up. During exercise, your body uses 20 to 30 percent of its energy for movement, with the remaining 70 to 80 percent released as heat. To retain that warmth, wear clothes in layers that can be loosened or removed to regulate your temperature. Even brisk walking can generate enough heat to make it seem like the outside temperature is 30 degrees warmer than it actually is. To avoid overheating, dress so that you feel slightly chilly at first. For your innermost layer, choose synthetic underwear made of materials like polypropylene or Thermax, which draw perspiration away from your skin and toward the next layer. For your middle layer, add warmth not bulk, with merino wool sweaters and lightweight fleece jackets. Turtlenecks are a good choice, since they can lock in heat. Top your layers with a breathable, water-repellent shell. Look for a jacket with a vent flap on the upper back and underarm zippers to help keep your middle layer dry.

STEP 2: Shield your extremities. They suffer in cold weather because your body reacts to it by reducing blood flow to the surface of the skin to protect vital organs.

Here's how to stay warm:

Feet: Winter shoes should have less ventilation and more traction. You might also need a larger size to accommodate an extra or thicker pair of socks.

Hands: Try thin, synthetic gloves underneath cotton gardening gloves. If your hands are still cold, try thick mittens instead of the gardening gloves.

Head: At least 40 percent of your body's heat loss occurs through the scalp. Minimize this by wearing a wind-resistant cap. If your face gets cold, cover with a fleece or wool scarf or a bandana. Protect ears with earmuffs or a thick headband.

STEP 3: Prep with a snack. Start your workout 30 to 60 minutes after eating to benefit from the extra heat your body generates during digestion. This can help you stay warmer, with the food serving as fuel.

STEP 4: Hydrate. Dehydration remains a concern. In addition to sweating, your body loses moisture as it humidifies the cold air you inhale.

How to Eat Healthy This Year

Turning the calendar to a new year often inspires people to attempt a 180 on their eating habits. But those intentions fail more often than not. People set unrealistic goals and attempt to make wholesale changes. That all-or-nothing behavior becomes overwhelming, leaves you feeling deprived, and sets you up for failure.

That's why we're advocating a more realistic approach: Try a few minor tweaks. That makes the changes doable, not daunting, and you will see improvements in your health. You have so many diet choices to make every day, so even if you make a change only some of the time, the benefits will add up.

A new study supports that strategy. The study found that replacing just 25 percent of discretionary foods (such as dessert, snacks, and sugary beverages) with healthy foods resulted in a huge improvement in overall diet quality – reducing sugars intake by almost 21 percent and calories by almost 4 percent, and increasing protein intake by about 2 percent. That means that something as simple as trading a few cookies for a piece of fruit can make a big difference. Here are six strategies you can use to build your own personalized small-changes diet:

EAT HEALTHY FOODS YOU LIKE: A recent Baylor University study found that even people with little self-control can set themselves up for healthy eating success if they switch their attention from what the researchers call “avoidance” foods to “approach” foods. Don't try to force feed yourself something healthy that you hate (such as kale) in place of something unhealthy you love (cake). Seek out yummy healthy foods – such as strawberries – and you might find that after enjoying a big bowl of fresh berries you no longer want that chocolate cake.

REPLACE ONE SUGARY DRINK PER DAY WITH WATER. We all know that soda isn't the healthiest beverage choice, but a recent study suggests that exchanging one serving per day for a glass of water could help reduce overall calorie intake and subsequent risk of obesity, lowering your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 14 to 25 percent. Take a look at your fruit juice intake, too. Even 100% fruit juice can contribute a lot of calories and sugars to your diet. Limit yourself to one 4-ounce glass per day.

EAT YOUR VEGGIES FIRST. If you're not eating enough vegetables (and most of us aren't), it could be because you put them in a contest they can't win. Research has shown that when vegetables are competing with other – possibly more appealing – items on your plate, you eat less of them. But when you get the vegetables alone, you eat more of them. Make a salad and sit down to eat it before you put any other food on the table. You'll not only eat more vegetables, you'll also fill up a bit so you eat less later in the meal.

MAKE A SMALL SNACK MORE SATISFYING. You don't need to give up your favorite sweets, but you can eat less and enjoy a snack just as much. If you eat just a quarter of your usual amount (just 2 Hershey's Kisses, for example, instead of 8), then do something distracting for 15 minutes (return a call or take a walk), you'll feel just as full and satisfied as if you'd eaten the full amount.

BE GRATEFUL. When you're in a bad mood, you might be more inclined to eat unhealthy foods. But a recent study found that improving your mood even slightly may lead to healthier eating. How to do it? Right before we served a meal to a group of people, we asked them to think of one positive thing that had happened that day that they were grateful for. Those who did ate 9% fewer calories at that meal and chose a healthier mix of foods that included more vegetables and fewer processed carbs.

First Aid Essentials

As the new year gets underway, don't forget to check your batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and check your personal fire extinguishers. But also take this time to get your first-aid supplies re-stocked and back in order.

Keep your supplies neatly organized in one place so that you don't waste time rounding them up when someone's hurt.

WHAT YOU NEED

DRUGS (*in adult and child formulations*):

- Acetaminophen (*Tylenol* and generic)
- Ibuprofen (*Advil* and generic)
- Aspirin (brand name and generic)
- Antihistamine (*Benadryl Allergy* and generic)
- Anti-diarrhea medicine (*Imodium A-D* and generic)
- Antacid (*Tums* and generic)

SUPPLIES

- First-aid handbook
- CPR mask
- Absorbent compress dressings
- Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Sterile gauze pads
- Adhesive cloth tape
- Roller bandages
- Triangular bandages
- Safety pins or bandage closures
- Sharp scissors with rounded tips to prevent cuts
- Tweezers
- Triple-antibiotic ointment
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Gel cold pack to keep in freezer (or instant cold compress)

WHAT YOU DON'T NEED

- Syrup of ipecac
- Chemical preparations to stop bleeding
- Smelling salts
- Tincture of iodine