

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



April 2007

Fitness, You Can Spring Into

Spring ushers in a new season, why not let it motivate you to make a fresh start.

And what better time than spring-time to kick your fitness up a notch? (Bam!!)

Longer days and warmer weather provide the perfect motivation. And you don't have to start training for a marathon either; as long as you're getting more activity than you used to, you're on the right track.

For example, if you are a golfer, why not make it a custom to walk on your round of golf instead of riding in a cart? You can get your cardio and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.



The Power of Physical Activity

Regular physical activity improves your mood, enhances the quality of your life, helps you burn off stress -- and, most important, it strengthens your body while it burns calories.

Physical activity helps your body work the way it is supposed to. Even simple walking is a good, weight-bearing exercise that helps keep muscles -- including your heart -- strong.

'I Hate Exercise'

It's possible those words have crossed your lips, most likely what you hate is not the exercise itself, but the chore of having to do it. Let's face it, no one likes chores.

The key is to think of it differently. Instead of viewing exercise as a chore, replace the word exercise with physical activity. Some of the things that qualify as physical activity are:

- walking
- gardening
- swimming
- bike riding
- tennis

Understanding that these activities are defined as physical will make it much easier to find activities that you enjoy, and exercise won't feel like a chore if you are enjoying yourself.

(Over)

Fitness You Can Spring Into, . . . (Continued)

Make a Commitment

One of the best strategies for making activity a habit is to commit to a program -- or to a friend. When you know someone is counting on you, it's easier to stay motivated.

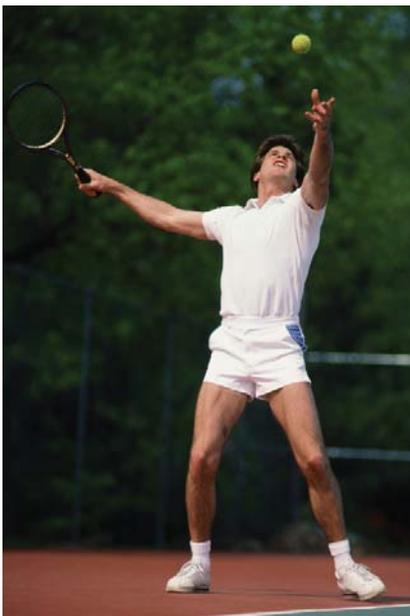
Whether you are just getting off the couch more often, making it a habit to climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator, or are in training for athletic competition, your goal should be to steadily improve upon your fitness level.

By adding a few extra minutes or slightly increasing the intensity of your routine, you'll continue to become fitter, get stronger, and avoid the dreaded weight-loss plateau.

Endeavor to develop a routine that you can **SPRING** into this season.

Source:

WebMD at www.WebMD.com



At-Home Fitness Gadgets

These easy-to-use tools pump extra excitement and motivation into your workout, plus they'll engage muscles in new ways to challenge your body and rev calorie burn.

- Resistance Bands** – Incredibly, these lightweight strips of rubber really do whip muscles into shape, increasing strength and endurance. To use, loop one around your waist, feet, or hands, then pull on the ends to create resistance. Another big benefit: you can take them anywhere.
- Jump Rope** – Back in the day, you were probably having too much fun jumping rope to realize you were also getting a total-body workout. Challenge your workout buddy (or the kids) to a jump rope contest and burn about 175 calories per 15 minutes.



- Medicine Ball** – These colorful weighted balls make a great alternative to dumbbells, plus they help build serious “core strength.” Hold one during shoulder presses or lunges, or tuck it between your knees during reverse crunches.
- Stability Ball** – These king-size balls have gained a huge following-and for good reason. They can improve flexibility, balance, and posture while building muscle strength, especially in the abdominal region (stabilizing yourself on the ball engages your core). And then there's the versatility. You can lie on your back for ab work, stretching, or upper-body moves, or rest your belly on the ball for push-ups. You can even substitute the ball for your office chair to keep your core muscles engaged while you're working.



Spring Announcement

It is that time of year again for Health Fairs!

The Health Fair claim forms are available at www.ctsi.org under **CHP Documents**.