



Campus Calm – Dec '09

Staying fit through the holidays

The hectic holiday season will undoubtedly create changes to your regular schedule. Between exams, longer work hours, and holiday events, you may feel like there are not enough hours each day to fit everything in. Just remember that your personal fitness program needs to remain an active part of your schedule even if your program needs to change.

It's easy to come up with an excuse not to exercise. But slacking off on your fitness program during the holidays will only leave you with more pounds -- and more stress -- come New Year's. We all know that this time of year is difficult for many people trying to stick to an exercise program, so here are some suggestions to keep you motivated and disciplined.

The first step, is acknowledging the holidays probably will affect your exercise program to some extent. Then you can make adjustments that will help you stay fit during the season. For example, if you usually take exercise classes only offered at a certain time, skip the classes and take a hike or a swim at an indoor pool instead.

Take an honest look at your schedule, and instead of trying to squeeze exercise into your schedule, take other things out. The goal is not to do more (as we all have a tendency to do this time of year), but to do less, but do it all well.

Regardless if you are new to fitness, or have a regular program and consistent habits, make sure you actually schedule time into your day for your exercise. There's nothing like having an entry in your planner for exercise.

Indeed, maintaining a workout schedule is even more important this time of year because we eat more than usual. The best thing for your body, mind, and soul is to fit in as many sessions as possible, and maybe even add one or two more a week. Not only will this make a difference physically, it will mentally remind you that your No. 1 objective is to lose weight and stay healthy.

Be Flexible and Mix It Up

- Be flexible when your days get busy, instead of simply blowing off your 5 p.m. trip to the gym in favor of a party at the same time, wake up an hour early and walk or jog before class or work. Or fit a brisk walk into your lunch hour.
- Mix up your routine to avoid boredom. "If you usually run four days a week, try running once, swimming once, and lifting weights twice.
- To save time, combine exercising and family commitments. Get your family or friends to go snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or on a backpacking.
- Create a home workout routine for those times you can't make it to the gym. Crunches, push-ups, Pilates mat work, and Yoga along with many other exercises can be done without any gym equipment.
- Increase your time management skills over the holiday season. Organize your day the evening before. Prioritizing your tasks beforehand will help you find time to exercise. Each week, make it a priority to fit in three exercise sessions.
- Walking is an exercise that can go anywhere, from the woods to the mall. Always have a pair of running or walking shoes with you, along with a set of light, hand-held weights, and a clean pair of socks, "If all else fails, you have the minimum equipment necessary to get in a walk.
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For additional fitness ideas, contact the Beyond Motion Studio in Naples, FL at info@go2beyondmotion.com