

Getting Started on An Exercise Program

Start with GOALS! Simply write down some short and long term goals and post them where they are visible to you everyday! A short-term goal is one you can accomplish in less than 3 months. For example, if your goal is to exercise at least 4 days every week for 30 minutes each day, then that would be a good goal to have for the first few months. After meeting your goal for a few months, you could progress from that point.

Long-term goals are good to have, as well. A long-term goal is something you wish to accomplish over an extended period of time. For example, if you wanted to lose 25 pounds in 6 months (about a pound per week), this would be an attainable goal. An example of an unrealistic long-term goal is if you wanted to lose 60 pounds in only 4 months. This would mean you would have to lose about 4 pounds per week, which can be unhealthy.

Develop a PROGRAM! Use the FITT Principle:

Frequency: This is how often, or how many days a week, you should work out. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends at least 30-60 minutes most days per week (that is, 5-6 days per week).

Intensity: This is how hard you should work out. It is recommended that you spend most of your exercise sessions working out at a moderate pace, with a few days a week at a vigorous pace.

Time: This is how long your workout sessions should be. Thirty minutes is required daily to maintain your weight and health. However, if your goal is to lose weight or overall body fat, 60-90 minutes is recommended. Remember, if you don't have a 60-90 minute chunk of time in your day, it is okay to do 15-30 minutes of exercise here and there. For example, if you only have half an hour in the morning to work out, then try to find another half hour at night to finish the workout. You will still burn the same amount of calories and get a good cardiovascular workout, as well!

Type: This is what mode of exercise you plan on doing. The type of exercise depends on what you like to do and what your body will allow. Some people love working out by themselves; others would rather do it with a partner or group. Some people love to workout inside, on the machines, while others prefer the outdoors. Do what best suits you, whether it be running on the treadmill, riding a bike, taking an aerobics class, or swimming laps! Listen to your body and don't forget to add variety every once in a while!