

Jeni's Health & Fitness Tips

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Hi Everyone!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Do you keep a diary or calendar to write appointments in? Now is the time to organise your exercise sessions for 2009. If you have them written down in your diary as appointments you will be less likely to double book and miss an exercise session. The minimum requirement for adults is 30 minutes of exercise most days. If you are just starting out on your fitness program, set aside 30 minutes each day. For those of you who are fitter, make this 45 minutes or one hour, or even longer if you feel up to it.

When planning your sessions you will need to include cardio vascular (or aerobic) training 3-4 times a week. This can be walking, cycling, rowing, dancing, swimming laps, using a rebounder, jogging or running. If one of your goals is fat burning, aerobic exercise before breakfast is most efficient. The body uses energy from stored body fat, as there is no fuel in the system (food) to burn sugars from. It is important, however, to drink water before setting off. If you decide on a morning walk, be determined to go out in any weather. Get yourself a raincoat that breathes so you won't get too hot. Take a "no excuses" attitude, you may find tough weather conditions bracing rather than unpleasant.

You also need to make time for at least 2 strength-training sessions each week. These could be activities such as Pilate's, weight training, more dynamic forms of yoga, working with resistance bands, circuit training or any gym class that includes strengthening exercises. Strength training is very important particularly for older participants as it helps prevent osteoporosis and muscle atrophy. A senior with strong muscles will stay independent well into later life.

Flexibility training should be carried out at least once a week. Keeping muscles flexible allows full range of movement of the joints, helping to prevent injury and maintain good posture. When the body is more open and posture is correct, breathing is improved and abdominal organs work more effectively without being cramped up.

So get out your diaries and make appointments with yourself for some sort of workout each day. Take every possible opportunity to move. Arrange the office so you have to stand up and walk to the filing cabinet. Park the car as far away as possible from your destination. Take the stairs rather than the lift. See movement as a great opportunity rather than an inconvenience.

Make 2009 a year to improve or maintain your fitness level. Whatever restrictions you have, there is always some activity you can do. Focus on those "can dos".

Yours in health,

Jeni

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