



Great expectations – achieving your fitness goals



Exercise is good medicine, and has both physical and mental health benefits.

These benefits are well known, and include improved energy, increased strength and cardiovascular fitness, reduced blood pressure, better weight management, decreased stress and anxiety, improved sleep quality, and reduced risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

Despite knowing these benefits, why do we find it so hard to get started and stay on track?

Here are a few tips to get you on the road to better health, and how to stay there.

▶ **Ditch the all-or-nothing attitude**

A little exercise is better than none. In fact, adding just modest amounts of physical activity to your weekly routine can have a profound effect on your physical, mental and emotional health.

▶ **Be kind to yourself**

Don't beat yourself up about your body, your current fitness level, or your supposed lack of willpower. Instead, look at your past mistakes and unhealthy choices as opportunities to learn and grow.

▶ **Check your expectations**

Expecting too much, too soon only leads to frustration. Instead of obsessing over results, focus on consistency. While the improvements in mood and energy levels may happen quickly, the physical payoff will come in time.

How to stay on track!



▶ **Schedule it.** You don't attend meetings and appointments spontaneously, you schedule them. If you're having trouble fitting exercise into your schedule, consider it an important appointment with yourself and mark it on your daily agenda.



▶ **Make it easy on yourself.** Plan your workouts for the time of day you're most awake and energetic. If you're not a morning person, for example, don't undermine yourself by planning to exercise before work.



▶ **Remove obstacles.** Plan ahead for anything that might get in the way of exercising. Do you tend to run out of time in the morning? Get your workout clothes out the night before so you're ready to go as soon as you get up. Do you skip your evening workout if you go home first? Keep a gym bag in the car, so you can head out straight from work.



▶ **Hold yourself accountable.** Commit to another person. If you've got a workout partner waiting, you're less likely to skip out. Or ask a friend or family member to check in on your progress.



Your diet is just as important in maintaining your health.

A healthy diet contains a good balance of vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts and seeds, grains and cereals, dairy, protein, and fats. Whole foods are preferred, however many of us use lots of packaged foods - so we need to understand how to read the nutritional information to avoid any hidden surprises.

The Nutrition Information Panel tells you the size of a standard serving of the product and which nutrients are contained in that serving. You can use the label to compare the product with similar packaged foods.

What to look out for:

- ▶ **Energy:** A kilojoule is a measure of energy. To lose weight, you need to eat and drink fewer kilojoules (kJ) than you use. You should limit your intake of junk foods and aim for foods with less than 600kJ per serve.
- ▶ **Fat:** Fat is higher in kilojoules than other nutrients, so you should limit the total amount you eat. Aim for foods with less than 10g of total fat per 100g.
- ▶ **Saturated fat:** There are different types of fats. Saturated fats are linked to an increased risk of heart disease and high blood cholesterol, so it is especially important to choose foods low in saturated fat. Aim for foods with less than 3g of saturated fat per 100g.
- ▶ **Sugar:** Sugar is a type of carbohydrate. It is better to choose healthier carbohydrates and to limit foods that are high in added sugars. Aim for foods with less than 10-15g of sugar per 100g.
- ▶ **Fibre:** High fibre foods such as wholegrain bread and cereals improve digestion and help you feel full. Aim for foods with more than 3g of fibre per 100g.
- ▶ **Sodium:** This tells you how much salt the product contains. Eating too much salt is linked to high blood pressure and can lead to heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. Aim for foods with less than 120mg of sodium per 100g.



Simple green juice

Replace that sugary cool drink with homemade healthy juice. By making your own juice, you avoid any hidden ingredients and sweeteners.

Here is a simple green juice that will quench your thirst on those hot summer days, and give you a health kick for the day.

Ingredients

- ▶ 3 stalks of celery
- ▶ 1/2 large cucumber, cut into quarters
- ▶ 1 medium green apple, cut into eighths
- ▶ 1 medium pear, cut into eighths

Method

- ▶ Add all ingredients into a juicer or high power blender to create your desired consistency.
- ▶ Serve on ice for added refreshment!



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