

Ten Fitness Tips for a Healthy Summer

Summer time is just around the corner and it would serve you well to be reminded of some useful fitness tips!

1. Drink plenty of water and stay hydrated. Water cleanses the body and allows your body to function more efficiently. Make sure you are drinking about 16 ounces every 30 minutes, before, during, and after exercise. Some sports drinks such as PowerAid and GatorAid have special ingredients that help replenish fluids to prevent dehydration.

2. Get outdoors. Our country is beautiful and exploring your surroundings can be a helpful distraction from monotonous exercising. Make a list of outdoor activities that you want to participate in over the summer and schedule them!

3. Establish your support network. When trying to get into shape, it is important to have family and friends who actively support you. Many times, the people in your life can sabotage your success. This means they need to respect your goals and not offer you wrong foods, or try to pull you away from your exercise program. Explain to them how important this is to you and that you need their encouragement.

4. Follow a Training Program and Keep Records for accountability. If you really serious about your goals, it helps to establish and commit to a training plan. A program will keep you focused and allow you to set short term goals. Tracking your progress will also allow you to assess what's working and what's not.

5. Eat small meals frequently. Eat more frequently but in smaller portions. The more often you eat, the higher your metabolic rate. A higher metabolism burns more calories a day. Eat 5-6 smaller meals a day to ensure adequate nutrients to build muscle and burn fat.

6. Get creative. Too busy for fitness? Change your social and eating habits to promote healthy lifestyle changes. Instead of eating a heavy lunch, pack a lunch and go for a walk. You can sip on a protein drink or snack on fruit while enjoying a nice brisk walk to break up your stressful work day. You will feel refreshed and more invigorated for your afternoon tasks.

7. Be patient. If you took the winter off, don't expect to reach your fitness goals in a week or two. It's more important that you enjoy the summer while appreciating the efforts that you're making. Focus on what you want to accomplish daily in your physical activity and the results will follow. Getting fit takes time and with commitment, you will reach your goals.

8. Breathe during exercise. When exercising, there is a proper way to breath that will allow adequate amounts of oxygen into the system and providing better endurance. For example, marathon runners will tell you that they use a rhythm when running that allows them to run longer and healthier than normal breathing.

9. LOVE YOURSELF. Accept the fact that we are all built differently and that love comes from within. Always love yourself for who you are inside. As long as you are eating right, exercising, and doing your very best, you will be healthy and happy. Do the best you can and love the inside beauty more than the outside beauty.

10. Remember to Have Fun. Keep in mind that the summer is supposed to create some of the best memories of the year. So relax and enjoy!

"Spirit has 50 times the strength and staying power of brawn and muscle." - Anonymous
