

10 Tips For An Active Day... Every Day!

Physical activity makes us healthier, faster, stronger, more flexible, smarter and gives us more energy... and these are just *some* of the benefits! The key to find time to exercise and making a commitment to it, is building it into your routine. But don't forget the "fun" factor: when something's fun, we want to do it again and again, right?

1. **FIND THE TIME... IT'S THERE!** Take a look at your daily routine and find 60 minutes where you can make time for physical activity. You may not think the time is there... but it *is* and it doesn't have to all be at once. Four 15-minute workouts, two half-hour blocks of time, six ten-minute get-moving periods... the choice is yours.
2. **DAILY ROUTINES!** Build physical activity into your daily routine. Instead of driving the kids to school, walk with them. Take the train to work? Get off two stops early and walk the rest of the way. Taking your daughter to hockey practice? Walk laps around the rink. Got a half hour lunch break? Walk for 20 minutes before enjoying your lunch. Afternoon meeting a few blocks away? Walk and arrive mentally and physically recharged! Identify the opportunities – even the small ones – and take action against inactivity.
3. **LEAVE THE CAR AT HOME:** Active transportation is better for you and the environment. Walk, jog or bike your way to work or to run errands. Or, use public transportation and get off the bus or train a few stops ahead of your destination and walk the rest of the way. If you must drive, park a couple of blocks away from your destination and finish the journey on foot!
4. **TRY SOMETHING NEW:** Each season, or at least twice a year, commit to trying a new activity or one you haven't done in some time. Roller blading, snowshoeing, indoor climbing, soccer, Aquafit classes, or working out on an elliptical trainer are just some examples.
5. **BUDDY UP!** Find a family members, colleague, friend or neighbour who also wants to become more physically active and schedule times to meet up for a fitness class, swim, game of tennis, or lunch time walk.

6. **MAKE ACTIVE PLANS!** You'll be much more likely to commit to physical activity if it's in your planner or on the calendar. Make plans well ahead of time for snowshoeing, a day of hiking, a cycling date, etc. Some people are more likely to commit if they're forced to 'pay' for a program – a dance class, a karate program, etc.

7. **DON'T GET SIDELINED!** Many parents log hours on the sidelines watching their children play soccer, baseball, or on the ice. Seize some of this time for your own workout needs and interests. Log some laps around the rink or soccer field, while your child plays, take a walk with other parents, run errands on foot and if possible, walk your child to and from the game!

8. **AFTER DINNER EVERY NIGHT.** Leave the stresses of the day behind and find time every evening – even if just for 20 minutes – to do something active. Walk the dog, head to the park with the family, ride your bike, lift some weights, go for a swim, play some backyard badminton, or crank up the tunes and vacuum the house! You'll have more energy, will sleep better and will feel a lot better about hitting the sofa with the remote in hand to take in a favorite show.

9. **DIY!** Do your own lawn mowing, shrub pruning, raking of leaves and snow shoveling. Year-round home and garden maintenance counts towards the minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity you need for good health. You'll also save a bundle!

10. **TRACK IT!** Buy yourself a pedometer to and aim to get at least 10,000 steps a day – preferably more. By taking the stairs, walking to and from work – or even part of the way, running errands on foot, taking a walking break at lunch and taking a brisk walk after dinner, you'll be well on your way!