

ADVENTURE is OUT THERE:

*Get Active by Exploring a
New Activity this Summer!*

by OAC Community Members

SUMMER IS UPON US! The sun is out, the skies are blue and carefree weekends and vacation await.

When we were children, summer was a break from routine. Why should it be different as adults? Most of us can't take months off from work, but we can use these months to branch out from our normal physical activity choices and have some fun.

For most of us, exercise tends to fall into three categories: walking, running or working out at the gym. Maybe you mix it up with a new route or group class from time to time. This summer make a real departure from your routine with some help and guidance from fellow OAC Community Members as they share their favorite outdoor activities!



TAKE A HIKE

Advice from OAC Community Member Rob Portinga

How would you like to boost your immune system, lower your blood pressure and reduce stress? How about improving your mental health, quality of sleep, energy level and more? Sound good? Then take a hike!

Find Your Footing

For those living with obesity, walking is often suggested as an easy way to start getting active. Try moving off those paved sidewalks and paths and head out into nature. Hiking can have all the health benefits mentioned above, and more, according to many studies around the world!

Let Nature Be Your Guide

Spending time in nature helps us take a break from the rush of our daily lives. It's a natural stress reliever, and breathing in fresh air can boost your immune system. Hiking often involves terrain that can be a bit more challenging than the paved trails around your local park, adding additional cardio benefits to your physical activity.



Be Prepared

There may be hills to climb, streams to cross and other "hazards" such as rocks, logs and more to be aware of, so hiking may take additional preparation on your part. Make sure to always carry water and a nutritious snack to help keep your energy level up. It is also a good idea to bring along a hiking buddy or at least let someone know where you are going and when you plan to be back.

A Pair of Shoes Can Change Your Life

Don't underestimate the importance of a good pair of hiking shoes. A sturdy boot can offer protection from slips as well as the weather. Boots also provide proper ankle support for uneven trail conditions. For those who are worried about those uneven trails, a trekking pole (*or two*) or walking stick can provide additional support when navigating trail conditions.



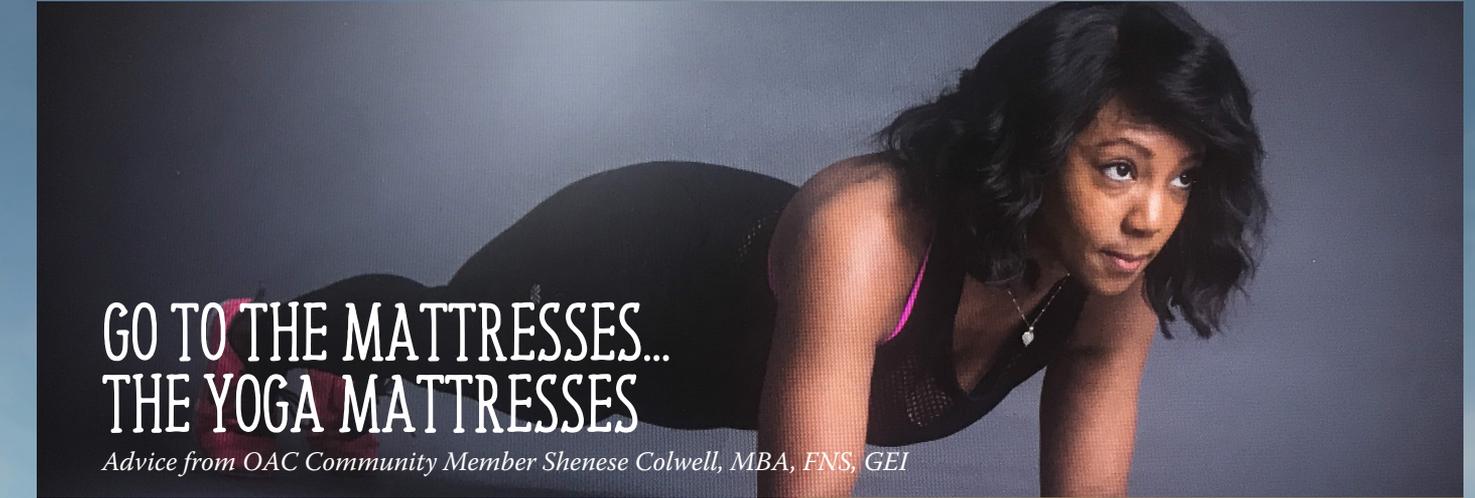
The Options are Endless

When it comes to finding a hiking trail, there are endless resources to choose from. Local and state parks typically publish trail maps of some sort, and many online communities have various outdoor groups that organize outings. Like any new activity, start slow and work your way up. Online resources can give you detailed trail information, including factors like distances, elevation and trail conditions.

Caution! More Fun Ahead!

One last word of caution: hiking can often lead to other outdoor activities, such as backpacking, camping, bird watching, nature photography and more!





GO TO THE MATTRESSES... THE YOGA MATTRESSES

Advice from OAC Community Member Shenese Colwell, MBA, FNS, GEI

While the phrase made popular by the Godfather movies and Tony Soprano refers to going to battle and yoga is the art of meditation, health and relaxation; they have one similarity. They require a desire to be true to oneself. Yoga can be a wonderful way to step away from daily stress, focus on yourself and become mentally and physically stronger.

Take it Outside!

Whether you are new to yoga or you practice it regularly, summer is the best time to become “one with nature.” It is an excellent way to replenish an abundance of essential vitamin D from the sun that a rainy spring may have prevented, and allows you to connect to another level of Zen. The open skies and fresh air offer the perfect recipe for outdoor yoga.

Bend So You Do Not Break

Yoga is a low impact exercise that helps with stress relief and mental clarity. If you have never tried yoga and are worried about flexibility and balance, do not worry. Yoga is designed for all levels. Instructors are trained and can change poses to fit your ability, so there is no need to be nervous about holding them. Take it slow and pace yourself. Yoga improves flexibility and muscle strength over time, so you will improve with each class you take.

Yoga is like walking because you can practice it anywhere and you don't need much to get started. The only things you need are a yoga mat and clothes that allow you to move freely. Many “yogis” find that the change of scenery and calm of nature is all they need to tap into the next level of focus and meditation.

Find a Class that Works for You

Finding a yoga class is simple. Start by looking into your local yoga studios for sessions at local parks. Search to see if your city recreation department offers yoga in the park or another relaxing outdoor space. You can also see if a local fitness apparel store like Lululemon offers free classes at outdoor locations near their shop. You are sure to find something that fits your needs and connects you with others on your fitness level.

Inhale new activities for summer and exhale that old routine. Namaste.



“Spending time IN NATURE HELPS US TAKE A BREAK FROM THE RUSH OF OUR DAILY LIVES. IT'S A NATURAL STRESS RELIEVER, AND BREATHING IN FRESH AIR CAN BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM.”



JUST ADD WATER

Advice from OAC Community Member Jaime Fivecoat, MBA

Last year, I told my Bariatric Surgeon that I was planning to start kayaking as a primary form of exercise. She thought it was a great idea as it combines resistance with cardio exercise.

Kayaking has many health benefits including:

- Improved cardiovascular fitness
- Increased muscle strength
- Reduced risk of joint and tissue damage (*it is a low impact activity*)
- Calories burned from active paddling (*more than a brisk walk!*)

Do Your Research

To research my kayak options, I went online and used an outfitter that sells and rents kayaks. With their help, I learned the difference between recreational, touring and whitewater kayaks:

- **Recreational kayaks**—tend to be less expensive, stable sit-on-top boats.
- **Touring kayaks**—are longer, sit inside and narrower boats.
- **Whitewater kayaks**—are the shortest and are designed to handle class 3 and 4 river flows.

There are many other features to learn about (*such as using a rudder, tracking, splash skirts and which paddle to get*), so I highly recommend spending time in a store that really knows the sport. Renting kayaks before you buy can help you determine which one works best for you.

The type of water you plan to go out on will also help you pick a kayak. Living on a lake (*flat water*), visiting the beach on occasion and wanting to do some slow river paddles helped me decide on a touring kayak. In season, I get out on the water four to five times a week for an average of 90 minutes each time.

Find Your Rhythm

I tend to go about 4.25 to 4.5 mph on my fitness paddles. I'll even get into a nice meditative state of mind at times as I find a nice paddle rhythm. Paddling a kayak is not just pulling on the paddle; it actually uses most of your body. There are lots of online resources and instructional videos to learn more about the sport, but you could also look into joining a club if you want to learn specific techniques or paddle with a group.

If you are looking for a water sport that is fun, gets you close to nature and gives you a wonderful workout, then kayaking is something you should explore!



Whether you find outdoor adventure with a paddle, a yoga mat or a new pair of hiking boots; enjoy the summer months seeking a new exercise path and finding the peace and tranquility that disconnecting in nature can provide.



ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



JOIN TODAY: GO TO OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN

info@obesityaction.org

(800) 717-3117 | (813) 872-7835 | Fax: (813) 873-7838



@ObesityActionCoalition

@ObesityAction