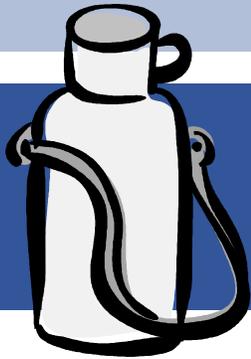




Exercise



A Healthy



Habit

By Arrin Fleck, BS, NSCA-CPT

Exercise is an important habit to develop. It is essential to weight-loss and optimal health. Exercise is one of the most important keys to one's success as a weight manager. Developing exercise as a part of your lifestyle is a process involving several things.

First, you need to make a decision to incorporate exercise into your life. Second, determine your motivation. Make it powerful. Once you have decided why you want to exercise and make a commitment, then you can set a goal and make a plan.

DISCLAIMER:

To develop an exercise program that best suits your pre or post-operative needs, please consult with your physician. It is important to talk with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Your goals should be **SMART**. By this, I mean that they should follow a formula, which is as follows:

- S** **pecific:** Choose one specific behavior per goal to work on.
- M** **easurable:** Can you measure this against a baseline?
- A** **ttainable or Action Based (behaviors):** Is the goal attainable? Use action words when writing goals such as "I will" and "I do" rather than "try, should, would, could."
- R** **ealistic:** Do you have honest and realistic expectations of yourself with your time, body, likes/dislikes?
- T** **imely:** Is the time allotted reasonable and manageable for you right now? And when will it conclude?

Then use the **FITT** principle to develop your plan.

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Frequency: How often?

Intensity: What percentage of your target heart rate do you exercise? (This is not necessary when *beginning* an exercise program.)

Type: What mode of exercise are you using (walk, swim, aerobics, bike, dance, weights, yoga, Pilates, etc.)?

Time: How long can you exercise per day? (This does not have to be all in one session; time can be broken up over the day.)

Now let us look at how to put these two principles together and start our plan. Here are some examples of poor and well-written goals:

Poor goals:

Increase cardiovascular exercise.

Better: I will walk five days per week for 30 minutes.

Lose weight.

Better: Lose 10-15 pounds by walking four days a week for 30 minutes a day.

SMART goals:

- I will increase my exercise by walking three times a week for 15 minutes each time.
- I will relax in the hot tub at the gym for 10 minutes after my two workouts this week.
- I will take the stairs down once a day at work, every day this week.



The easiest program for most people to begin is a walking routine. Realistically, any movement that you do is better than none. Do what works for you right now in your life. Everyone is different and has different likes, dislikes and abilities.

A good tool to have is a pedometer, it is very motivating and helps to keep you on track with your daily activity level.

For those considering surgery, it is best to begin this process prior to your procedure. By doing so, you prepare for life after surgery, lose weight, become healthier and make the recovery process easier and sometimes faster.

Maintain your program up until surgery and then begin again right after surgery. There are a few limitations depending on your specific procedure. Check with your surgeon for specifics.

In general, you should resume a walking routine immediately after surgery. Walking can be outside, on a treadmill (no incline), at the mall and walking videos. Most can ride a stationary bike as well. Some other appropriate exercises are:

- Seated knee marches
- Seated knee extensions (kicks)
- Pillow squeeze between knees
- Standing side leg lifts
- Toe/heel raises
- Arm circles
- Neck stretches

Remember these few things about exercise: make it simple, make it realistic, make it happen and most importantly make it fun! The most important commitment you make is to your health and wellness!

About the Author:

Arrin Fleck, BS, NSCA-CPT, is an exercise physiologist educator at Scottsdale Healthcare and Scottsdale Bariatric Center in Scottsdale, AZ. She was recently a presenter at the American Society for Bariatric Surgery annual conference.





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.



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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**



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