

Health Tips & News

Keeping Fit

Home gym on a shoestring

You don't need to break the bank to break a sweat. You don't need a gym membership to burn fat, slim down and get fit. If you are on a budget, follow these simple steps for an effective workout at home.

Cardiovascular activity

Cardio exercises help you lose weight, decrease stress, strengthen your heart and lungs, gain energy, and generally feel better.

Some simple at-home aerobics include:

- jumping jacks
- jogging on the spot
- invisible skip rope
- running on the spot with high knees

Search online for alternate examples of more challenging cardio activities, or rent a workout video from your local library. Aim to complete 30 minutes of cardio, four to five times a week.

Calisthenics

Calisthenics help you develop flexibility, increase muscle strength and endurance, and gain energy.

Typical calisthenic activities include:

- lunges
- squats
- push-ups
- crunches

You can find more examples of calisthenic activities online. Try to include activities that target your entire body into your weekly routine. Shoot for 20 to 30 repetitions, gradually increasing by 5 to 10 repetitions each week until you reach your target.

Yoga

This mind-body-spirit activity is ideal for increasing flexibility, enhancing balance, toning muscles, increase blood flow, and promoting a feeling of peace. A yoga mat, some floor space, a 30-minute beginner's yoga video, and an open mind are all you need to start learning the basic postures.

Weight training

Weight training is your ticket to strengthening muscles, burning fat, improving flexibility, and building bone mass. Dumbbells and barbells are low-cost tools to help you quickly achieve concrete results. Find a fitness book or search online for examples of total body strength training exercises. To start, perform 8 to 12 repetitions.

Exercise ball

This bouncy fitness tool is all the rage, and with good reason: it improves core stability, strengthens hard-to-tone muscles, enhances posture, and improves balance and co-ordination. You can purchase a ball at your local fitness store, and ask the sales associate about the right size for you. The web is full of examples of exercises you can perform on the ball.

Things to remember

Work within your comfort zone.

Choose a quiet spot with enough free floor space.

Breathe regularly throughout your workout.

Include warm-ups and cool-downs in your workout - 5 to 10 minutes of stretching will do.

For new exercisers, check with your doctor first about your ideal routine

Quote of the Month

- **Those who think they have no time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness.**

~Edward Stanley

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