

Making Physical Fitness Our Priority

The benefits of physical fitness to our health and wellness can never be over stated. Physical fitness adds years to our lives and reduces the risks of non-communicable diseases including some cancers and heart disease. We know that we should, but the pressures of work, home, school and family life can convince us that there's little time left to fit it in. If exercise is not already a part of our weekly routine, it is certainly difficult to convince ourselves to begin. Reminding ourselves of the benefits and simple solutions for incorporating physical activity into our lives may provide the motivation we need. Here are some helpful suggestions:

Benefits of Exercising Regularly

- ✓ Exercise means a healthier heart as it reduces several cardiovascular risks, including high blood pressure.
- ✓ Being physically active can bolster good mental health and help manage stress, anxiety and depression.
- ✓ Regular exercise as we age keeps us strong, mobile, less dependent on others and more energetic.
- ✓ Regular exercise can help us achieve and maintain an ideal weight, which may simply contribute to our happiness about how we look.
- ✓ All exercise helps strengthen bones and muscles to some degree, but weight-bearing exercise, such as running, is especially good in promoting bone density and protecting against osteoporosis, which affects men as well as women.
- ✓ Exercise may improve digestion, poor posture and sleeplessness, and physical activity can be beneficial for a range of medical conditions, from diabetes to lower back pain.

Tips for fitting Exercise in

- ✓ Park further and walk longer.
- ✓ Skip the elevator ride and take the stairs as often as possible.
- ✓ Consider fitting in a 15-20-minute brisk walk three times a week.
- ✓ Make our commitment to exercise known to a supportive friend or family member.
- ✓ Consider doing something different each exercise day: Try mixing walking or running with a simple stretching or yoga routine or with a short aerobics or dance routine.
- ✓ Consider learning to bike or swim: This allows us to reap the benefits of being outdoors and meeting new people in addition to the benefits of exercise.

However, we choose to do it, making physical fitness a priority will provide benefits well beyond the effort we put in.

For more information on incorporating fun physical fitness into our weekly life, remember that MyEAP is here to help. Contact us at eap@familiesinaction.net or log on to MyEAP at www.myeap.familiesinaction.net with your username and password.