

# BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

## FIND YOUR EXCUSE



Exercise is critically important to reducing your risk of cancer, heart disease, and diabetes, and prevents or delays several health conditions. Only 2 in 10 adults (ages 18-64) meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week.

We talk so much about wanting to live a long and healthy life, and we know that exercise is a primary predictor of health. Yet, we still don't want to do it. Why?

The benefits of exercise are numerous and so are the reasons for avoiding it.

## EXCUSES FOR EXERCISE (AND WHY THEY WON'T FLY)

"I hate the gym."

There are a lot of reasons why you might not enjoy the gym environment. It can be intimidating, narcissistic, dirty, and expensive. If you are letting the cons outweigh the benefits and the gym isn't your scene, find another activity. Be creative and willing to experiment. Set up a small circuit at home, join a group class, or download an app. You don't need to go to a gym to get active.

"I'm too tired at the end of the day."

Then don't wait for the end of the day. Let's face it, once your glutes hit the couch, it's downhill from there. The best time to work out may be right after work or first thing in the morning. Feeling tired is no excuse. Getting active is a great way to boost your overall energy. Once you are into a good routine, you'll train your body to crave physical activity and you won't be as tired.

"Exercise doesn't work for me."

Are you doing the right kind of exercise? Did your goals match your activity level? Going to a Zumba class once a week won't get you ready for swimsuit season. Even if you don't see immediate results or experience any noticeable weight loss, you are likely still losing body fat and intra-abdominal fat, the most dangerous kind of fat that can only be measured via CT Scan or MRI! Regardless, you can feel confident that you are improving your health.

"I don't have the time!"

We find time for hair appointments, to walk the dog, and to research our next car purchase. We make time for what we feel is a priority, and sometimes for things that aren't. Did you know that we spend approximately 2 hours a day on social media? If you want to be active, you can be active almost anytime and anywhere, including at your desk! 10-15 minutes is all you need to start.

# BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

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Ok, no more excuses. You know you need to move more.

- So, what activities burn the most calories?
- What activities have the greatest benefits?

You might be surprised to know the answer won't be found on Google. It's something only you can answer. For example, running is a great calorie burner, but if you aren't interested in something that is high impact, you won't be consistent. Have you ever had a gym membership that you didn't use? Did you make excuses for not going? Likely. Statistics show that you will stick to exercise that you enjoy. When you enjoy it, you are motivated to do it.



What exercise is best for me?

Your search did not match any results.

# WHAT?

## SPRAWL Your Way to Success

**Schedule.** Look at your schedule and find a small amount of time you can set aside for exercise each day. You might think it's the morning, but if you aren't a morning person and you like to sleep past 7:00 am, don't sign up for a 6:30 am class or plan a morning jog. Make time somewhere else in your day. Maybe you have 10 minutes to spare at your desk.

**Practicality.** If it's not practical, you aren't going to do it. Does your apartment building have a pool that you can access? Is there a walking trail or track near your home? Maybe money has been your barrier, but your workplace has a workout room available to employees. Consider what is practical, and see if you can work with it.

**Realistic.** If you are just beginning, be realistic about your fitness goals. You don't need to jump into a 90-day challenge. Start where you are comfortable. Move from a 10 to 20-minute dog walk and increase your pace. Try something low-intensity like Pilates or Yoga. Purchase some hand weights and commit to a 15-minute strengthening session.

**Acceptance.** Accept you for you! It's ok that you don't want to get up at 6:00 am to make time for a workout. It's ok that you want to spend the evening with your kids and enjoy your family time after work. Work with what you CAN do, rather than what you can't or you will come up with excuses. Perhaps you can start with a half-hour after-dinner backyard sports session with the kids.

**Why.** Know your why and dig deep. Why do you want to exercise? *To lose belly fat.* Why? *Because it's unhealthy.* Why? *I don't want to be at risk for heart disease.* Why? *Because my father died of a heart attack and I want to be healthy to see my kids grow up.* There. No excuses.

**Likability.** Don't set yourself up for failure. Do what you like! Group activities aren't your thing? Find a solitary exercise routine. Hate being stuck between four walls? Get outside. Competitive by nature? Consider an organized sport. When you do what you like, you will look forward to being active, you'll be consistent, and you will see results!

Sources: <https://www.seattlepi.com/lifestyle/health/article/Hidden-fat-portends-destruction-of-health-1105269.php>  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/corporate/publications/chief-public-health-officer-reports-state-public-health-canada/2016-health-status-canadians/page-13-what-influencing-health-physical-activity.html>