

Hate Exercise? 5 Tips That May Change Your Mind



So how can you get over your exercise aversion?

You don't have to be a gym hero to get enough physical activity to improve your health. There are a lot of ways to make regular activity part of your life, which can help you have more energy, handle stress better, reduce your risk of illness and disease, and look and feel good!

It's pretty much a no-brainer. But most of us (about 80 percent of Americans) don't make exercise a regular habit. And many say it's because they just don't like it.

So how can you stop being a hater and get over exercise aversion? Here are some tips to help you add physical activity to your life – and maybe even learn to like it!

Find your jam.

Instead of forcing yourself to do something you don't enjoy, find ways to exercise that fit your personality. If you're a social person, do something that engages you socially – take a group dance class, join a recreational sports team, or start a walking group with friends. Connecting with your peeps is a great way to stay motivated and avoid working out alone. If you're more of a lone wolf, running or swimming might be a better fit. And if you're not a morning person, you're not likely to get up at the crack of dawn to make a boot camp class.

Give it time.

It can take a while for a new behavior to become a habit, so give yourself time to get into a regular routine. One way is to try to be active around the same time each day. Exercise can become addictive in a good way. Once it becomes a habit, you'll notice when you aren't doing it.

Build it in.

Build activity into your schedule and lifestyle so it doesn't feel like a chore. There are many ways to fit exercise into your life, and it doesn't mean you have to give up something else, like time with family and friends. Get active together as a family, you'll all benefit. And if you just can't imagine life without your daily phone chat with your BFF, take that call for a walk around the block.

Break it up.

It's OK to break up your physical activity into smaller segments. The American Heart Association recommends a total of at least 150 minutes a week, but if that sounds overwhelming, try two or three 10-minute activity sessions most days of the week. It all adds up! You could do a quick yoga routine when you wake up, take a brisk walk after lunch at work, and if you commute with public transportation, get off a stop earlier and walk the rest of the way home.

Keep going.

If you miss a day or a workout, don't worry about it. Everybody struggles once in a while. Just make sure you hit it again the next day. And if what you're doing just isn't working for you, revisit this list. You may need to try a different activity or a different time of day. Don't give up!