Q. How can I exercise if I'm always busy?

A. Ever feel like you're too busy to exercise?

You know...things like work, family, and everything else on your to-do list keep you on the go. And you can't seem to find the time.

You're not alone. About 80 percent of adults don't get the minimum amount of exercise (150 minutes a week).[1]

Here's the thing...people who DON'T EXERCISE are more at risk for things like:

- Depression
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Elevated blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Certain types of cancer
- Age-related memory loss
- Weight gain and obesity

The good news, even if you're busy you can fit exercise into your schedule. And you don't need to run a marathon, spend a fortune on fitness, or log hours in the gym.

You can improve your health by exercising in 10-minute chunks of time. You've got 10 minutes here and there during the day, right?

Even if you're busy, you can still fit exercise into your schedule. Here's how:

1. Make Exercise a Priority

Taking good care of your health by exercising pays off. In a recent Harvard study, researchers found that exercising at least 150 minutes a week cut the risk of early death by 31 percent.[2] When you exercise, you don't lose time. You actually gain time.

Too Busy to Exercise?

2. Try a 10-Minute Workout

Short on time? Instead of skipping a workout, fit in short sessions here and there.

- Take a walk
- Ride a bike
- Pick a workout video and follow along
- Do your favorite exercises or just 10 minutes

Aim for 30 minutes of exercise or activity daily. That's just three 10-minute sessions.

3. Plan a Morning/Evening Workout

What's your morning or evening routine look like?

Take a closer look at how you spend time at the beginning or end of the day. If you're always busy and on the go, try this...

Wake up a few minutes earlier than usual OR Plan to exercise before bed.

If you're not getting any exercise, start with 10 minutes. It's worth the effort. Regular exercise can help:

- Improve sleep
- Reduce anxiety
- Decrease muscle tension
- Lower stress
- Reduce the risk for chronic diseases

4. Be Active on the Weekend

Maybe your work week is always crazy. You know...you're booked with appointments, meetings, and other activities.

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

If you're short on time to exercise during the week, plan to be active on the weekend. You can make time for things like:

- Walking
- Biking
- Playing tennis
- Getting in a round of golf
- Going to the gym
- Working in the yard

Use the weekend to catch up on getting at least 150 minutes of exercise a week.

5. Speed Up

If you're always busy, you're probably used to the go-go-go schedule. It's a smart way to exercise when you're short on time, too.

Research shows exercising in short 10-minute bursts can improve your mood and promote health.[3] Try this:

- Hustle through a 10-minute workout
- Walk briskly to appointments.
- Speed walk up stairs.
- Race through the grocery store to do your shopping.
- Clean your house in record time.

It's one more way to help you get 30 minutes of exercise a day, and reap the benefits. Even if you're busy, you can find time to exercise.

References

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2. Arem, H., et al. (2015). Leisure time physical activity and mortality: a detailed pooled analysis of the dose-response relationship. *JAMA Internal Medicine,* 175(6):959-967. From: https://tinyurl.com/2df6ds83
3. Edwards, M., et al. (2018). Experimental effects of brief, single bouts of walking and meditation on mood profile in young adults. *Health Promotion Perspectives,* 8(3): 171-178. From:https://tinyurl.com/56smjnav

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