

Building Healthy Lifestyle Habits

Fitness When Your Routine Changes

By Dave Nash, BBJ YMCA

Routine is often recommended to maintain our fitness. Plan a time to make certain you get to the gym or meet a friend for a run, walk or bike ride. Have a workout buddy to hold you accountable. We have all had our routines thrown off over the past few weeks. How can we make certain to keep up with our exercise, nutrition and rest needs?

Think about vacation time or the holidays; these are other times, although more pleasant times, when our routines are challenged. Not only do we need to prioritize activity, diet and sleep, we know that these can help us remain healthier and more resistant to illness.

Time is always one of the challenges often cited that keeps us from getting the right amount of activity or making certain that we have a balanced meal. How many of us have been gifted extra time each day that normally is part of our commute? We can reinvest that time into our health. Now is the time to begin to take extra time to care for yourself.

Spring has begun so it is becoming easier to get outside. Remember that going outside is not forbidden while we socially isolate. Use the pleasant days to get outside for a walk, run or bike ride. If you live in an area where these activities may not be safe, go to a park or a neighborhood with sidewalks or walking paths. Aim for at least thirty minutes of activity. On the days when outdoor activities are not advisable, try walking inside your home.

Fitness bands can be useful during this time. They can allow us to work on specific muscle groups. This can even be done while working on a computer during work time! Another easy way to build your health is through stretching, push-ups, crunches and other activity that may be done at home using body weight. Many online fitness workouts have been made available for free during this period. Try YMCA360 and choose from among many different types of workouts.

Activity is also important for mental health. It is tough to stay at home with little exposure to other people. Activity helps that feeling of stir craziness. Take extra time to reach out to friends and family. How long has it been since you wrote a letter with pen and paper? Call someone instead of simply texting. Now is time to try Face Time or Zoom if you have not yet been using them. See who you are talking with through these applications.

Use your time well while socially isolating. Get outdoors, stay active, keep in touch and get the rest and nutrition you need.

Building Healthy Lifestyle Habits is a weekly column by Barbara B. Jordan YMCA and IU Health Morgan along with healthy lifestyle programming funding through a grant from Kendrick Foundation.