

Who Has Time to Exercise?

You know the importance of being physically active for your waistline, your heart, and your overall health. But between shuttling the troops from school and social activities, where do you find time to keep your body strong and ready for the next round?

Based on your typical day, your options for physical activity fall into one or more of the following categories:

Spending time with:

1. Your children
2. Your spouse
3. Your friend
4. Your Lord

Which one gets most of your time? How can you incorporate physical activity with all that goes on in your day? Here are some ideas for each of the categories.

1. Spending Time With Your Children. Odds are you do this already, but I am talking about time that is physically involved and gets you some exercise. So try these on for size.

- If your teen is involved in athletics, help them practice, or actually play with them. They'll appreciate the effort and time even more if sports aren't your thing. Plus, you'll get in a great cardiovascular and muscular workout. You may wake up the next day feeling muscles you never knew you had.
- Attend your teen's events, sporting or otherwise. Instead of sitting in the car or the stands, get up and get moving. Walk around the field, parking lot, or bleachers. Bring a Walkman, CD player, or mp3 player and listen to some inspiring music or a message from church you've been meaning hear. Better yet, use this as quite

time to reflect and spend with the Lord (while moving, too!). We get so little of it in our fast-paced world, so this will quickly become treasured time where you can be built up and put life back into perspective.

- You may be thinking, “Well, that would work if I didn’t have to pick up the other kids and go get dinner and. ...” Most everyone with children has those lists and routines that are necessary. The key is to prioritize and recruit the help of your spouse or carpool with parents whose kids are on the same team or involved in the same event.

2. Spending Time With Your Spouse. This is a great way to spend more time together. It’s often difficult between the children and work schedules—all the more reason to exercise together and accomplish two very important things at once. You’ll have some quality time to bond and catch up, plus the physical activity helps calm the nerves, releases stress, and increases the production of endorphins—something all couples could benefit from. Use the above ideas if you can both attend your teen’s events and activities. Otherwise, make a point of spending 20-30 minutes, even if it’s just a walk around the block to start.

3. Spending Time With a Friend. If your spouse isn’t ready to get moving, or you just want to alternate days getting together, grab a good friend and start walking. It’s much easier to cancel on your spouse or decide to stay in together and watch television than it is to cancel on a friend when you know they’re waiting for you. The time of fellowship will be an encouragement. Plus, combined with physical activity, you’ll feel rejuvenated and rested so much more so than if you would have stayed on the couch.

4. Spending Time Alone With the Lord. It’s easy to overlook your time alone with the Lord, so it’s a perfect combination to get out and do both. This time in prayer, praise, and His presence, along with using the body He has blessed you with,

will have you returning refreshed, with the worries and stresses of the day put in their proper place in the light of His love.

Some other exercises can include hiking, swimming, bicycling, gardening, climbing stairs, dancing, or doing intervals of walking and running. Find something you enjoy, anything, as long as you are moving.

The idea is to find physical activity wherever you are. You'll eventually get better at identifying things you can do as time goes on. Keep this in mind: anything that has weight can be lifted. Examples could be the grocery bags you're bringing into the house, or your purse or briefcase as you stand in line or are at the office.

If you cannot find something to lift, there are always isometrics. These are exercises where you just contract and "squeeze" the muscle. All resistance training basically boils down to contraction of the muscle. If you're in the car, you can contract your abs, hold for 10 seconds, and release. If you are sitting at the office or in a waiting room, you can squeeze your buns, hold 10 seconds again, and relax. Any body part you can contract you can work out no matter where you are.

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