



Re-think Fitness During COVID-19

by B. Kay Sugg

Just like the “Freshman 15” which refers to the 15 pounds college freshmen typically gain, many of us are experiencing the “COVID 15.” No doubt, being confined to our homes and the stresses of a pandemic have led to overeating and possibly making some poor food choices. But many of us are also exercising less.

When under duress, even the healthiest and most physically active among us have a tendency to fall out of their normal fitness routines. Their decrease in fitness exercises is further compounded by the fact that many businesses (due to the pandemic) are closed, especially gyms, yoga studios, recreation centers, and other places where group fitness classes and group sports are held. Maintaining a routine is a big part of a successful fitness regimen; these closures, for many, have contributed to a lapse in regular exercise habits.

Does it Matter?

The pandemic has plunged us into unprecedented times, which may have you wondering if you don't deserve a “hall pass” on exercise. Unfortunately, the pandemic has raged on for months and may continue for more months ahead of us. As such, none of us can afford to remain sedentary. Fitness is important during normal times, but it is especially important during the pandemic. Here are a few reasons to consider:

- Research shows that regular, moderate-intensity exercise provides immune-boosting benefits that could help your body fight off infections and disease.
- Exercise reduces stress and anxiety. It's a proven mood-booster and helps build emotional resilience, something we could all use right now.
- Exercise can help you fall asleep faster, and it improves the quality of your sleep. And good quality sleep contributes to an improved immune system.
- People with chronic health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and arthritis especially benefit from exercise, which improves cardiovascular health and also improves balance, flexibility, strength, and mobility.
- Exercise helps prevent weight gain by burning off some of the extra calories you may be consuming while stuck at home.

Try Some New Moves

Take the opportunity to try some new ways to move while sheltered-in-place. Here are some ideas for exercise that you can do from home:

- Get outdoors! Not only do you get a healthy dose of vitamin D, but fresh air also does a body good! Try neighborhood walks, bike rides, running, hiking, jumping rope, or calisthenics in the back yard.
- Tap into online exercise. There are plenty of free online video workouts, from yoga, strength training, dance, kickboxing, aerobics, and more. There are also many choices for livestreaming group classes you can join for free or on a subscription basis.
- Work with a personal trainer. If your finances will allow it, many of the local fitness studios and gyms are offering online personal training one-on-one. It can be especially helpful to have someone who not only directs your workouts but can also advise you on form while keeping you on a schedule and accountable.
- Exercise with family! Get the kids in on the action with a game of dodgeball, back yard soccer, basketball, or a dance challenge.
- Tackle calorie-burning chores like mowing the lawn, working in the garden, washing the car, or cleaning out the garage.
- Use your tech! Take full advantage of your smart watch or phone app to count your steps, monitor your heart rate, and track your activities. There are also a number of apps that can lead you through workouts.

The best way to incorporate a new fitness routine into your COVID-19 lifestyle is to set a goal. Regardless of how you choose to exercise, set a plan for the week, track your progress against the plan, and reward yourself for hitting your goals. Consistency is more important than gains; try to include physical activity of some sort every day of the week.



Creamy Grape Salad With Brown Sugar and Pecans



Ingredients

- 4 lbs. grapes (seedless) washed
- 8 ounces sour cream
- 8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Topping

- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup crushed pecans

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, mix brown sugar and crushed pecans for the topping.
2. In a large bowl, blend together cream cheese, sugar, sour cream, and vanilla until smooth.
3. Stir in the grapes.
4. Cover with the topping and chill for at least two hours.

TIP Make this salad a few hours prior to serving but making it the night before is not recommended since the brown sugar becomes too “weepy.”

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 15

Source: <https://ohsodelicioso.com/>

