



YOUR 21-DAY HEALTH INITIATIVE

This guide is to provide you with the fundamental know-how behind any successful wellness program. We have all heard the old adage, "If you feed a man a fish, he eats for a day, but if you teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime." We want to "teach you to fish" so you live a healthy lifestyle for the rest of your life.

We recommend and encourage you to read one entry a day for 21 days. Consider how each page's information can fit into your daily routine. Ask yourself if what you're doing today is getting you closer to where you want to be tomorrow.

*Our goal and slogan are one and the same—to provide YOU with **"The knowledge to build a better body."***

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DAY 1 | When Your Goal Is Weight Loss

Assess

When you set goals for yourself, you need to assess where you are today so that you may know what needs to be improved upon tomorrow. You want to lose weight, but do you know WHY you want to lose weight? Do you know how much you weigh? What about your Body Mass Index, or BMI? How much of your weight is body fat? How much body fat do you want to lose? Have you ever tried to lose this weight before? Were you successful? How long did you keep the weight off? What are your expectations for losing weight given your age, gender, body composition, and activity levels; or asked another way, how fast should YOU see results? Is that healthy? Setting a new health goal is great. Setting a new health goal once you know exactly where you stand is even better.

Make SMART Goals

Now that you know where you are, what do you want? Ensure your strategies set you up for the results you desire by making goals that are:



Set Short- and Long-Term Goals

Now that you know where you are, and where are you going, how do you get there? Just as you would use a map to travel somewhere new, you need a road map to achieve new health. Try practicing this framework. Picture in your mind what you look like, how you feel, and what you will be able to do once you achieve this new weight. Write it down; make that your long-term goal. Now start writing down what must happen in order to achieve your long-term goal. Practice this step by writing down a six-month goal and then a couple of three-month goals. Try to break each three-month goal into monthly goals and then down again into weekly goals.

Finally, your weekly goals are achieved through daily habits and practices which you are willing to adjust. Be aware that you must keep these small steps manageable because they are the foundation for your progress. Set yourself up for success by making these achievable and keeping yourself on track towards your weekly goals. Be honest with yourself; these practices should be actions you could take immediately, so make them easy and only move forward once the practice becomes a habit.

DAY 2 | Evaluations

Before embarking on any health and wellness journey, you must know the condition of the “vehicle” in which you’ll be traveling. Reviewing your health history and screening for pain and proper movement efficiency with a health professional will let you know how well your “vehicle” is running and if a tune-up is required. Proper preparation beforehand will dramatically reduce the risk of something going wrong once the journey has begun.

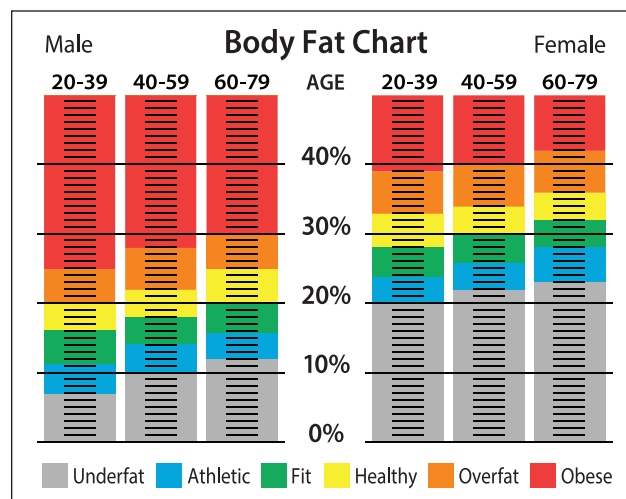
You must know where you are to determine the best route to your desired destination. An evaluation is a valuable tool for designing a personal exercise regimen because it gives baseline information (where you are now) to help chart a course to where you’re going (your goals). The importance of evaluations:

- ✓ **DIAGNOSIS** | Evaluations can be used to identify and evaluate deficiencies or weaknesses in a person’s fitness.
- ✓ **PLACEMENT** | Evaluations may be used to group individuals on the basis of their common characteristics or goals.
- ✓ **PREDICTION** | Evaluations are used to set measurable goals or objectives to strive for.



A re-evaluation can promote achievement by measuring movement towards the accomplishment of a set of objectives. The importance of re-evaluations:

- ✓ **ACCOUNTABILITY** | Knowing there is an upcoming re-evaluation holds a person responsible to follow through with daily habits.
- ✓ **MOTIVATION** | Re-evaluations can be used to help individuals put forth their full effort and to provide challenge and stimulation to more accurately measure personal fitness.
- ✓ **MODIFICATION** | Based on the results of the re-evaluation, an exercise program should be adjusted in order to continue progress, or the exercise program should be modified to assure that progress starts.



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DAY 3 | Track Your Eating Habits to Establish a Baseline —Nothing More, Nothing Less

Most of the time, success experienced from adopting a fad diet is not necessarily from the food recommendations, but simply from having a system of eating that forces you to be aware of what you are putting in your body. This overlooked aspect of “getting on a diet” is quite often the most influential. It is not the extra protein. It is not the absence of carbs. It’s nutritional awareness; being mindful of what, when, and why you are eating. This is why food diaries are so helpful. The food diary is a great learning tool for establishing your daily eating patterns. Weighing and counting everything you eat does not encourage a very healthy relationship with food, and relying on packaged foods for their food labels isn’t a healthy way to go either.

Understand your eating pattern and know why you’re eating what you’re eating. If the results of your changed eating habits aren’t satisfactory, make more small, sustainable adjustments. Making the small adjustments leads to long term results. Assess. Plan. Execute. Evaluate. Repeat.



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DAY 4 | Top Five Harmful Habits

If you're reading this booklet, you're at least considering the adjustments to live a healthier life. According to hard data, the five most harmful habits to focus on are: smoking, being inactive, carrying too many pounds, eating poorly, and drinking too much alcohol. Alone or together, all five habits disrupt the markers of health we all worry about so much: blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar. All too often, the end result of these five habits are heart attack, stroke, or peripheral artery disease. The damage isn't just limited to the cardiovascular system, but can extend to the kidneys, bones, liver, and brain to name a few.

A 20-year study of 4,900 men and women tallied up the (1) occurrence of smoking, (2) low intake of fruits and vegetables, (3) little physical activity, and (4) having more than 21 (men) or 14 (women) alcoholic drinks a week. The results were:

- *Just one habit led to 85% higher chance of death*
- *All four habits led to 349% higher chance of death*
- *People with all four habits were physically 12 years older than their chronological age*

Five Strategies for Change



AVOID TOBACCO

As bad for heart and arteries as for lungs



BE ACTIVE

Physical activity is as close to a magic bullet as you'll find.



AIM FOR A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Carrying extra weight strains the heart and can lead to diabetes.



DRINK ALCOHOL IN MODERATION

(If at all)



BALANCE YOUR EATING HABITS

Add fruits and veggies, whole grains, unsaturated fats, and good proteins.

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DAY 5 | Getting Acquainted With Movement

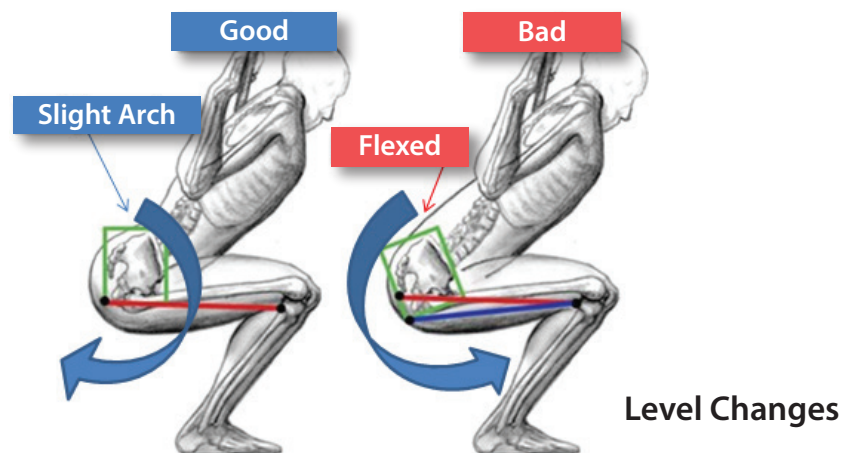
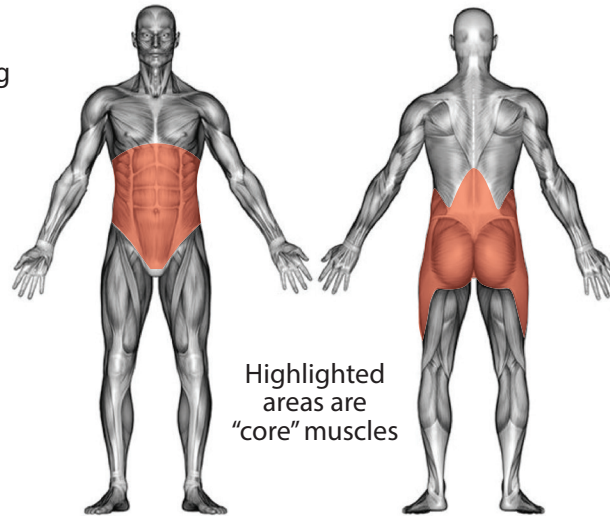
With any fitness program, the number one priority should be safety. To reduce the risk of injury, begin an exercise program by establishing a solid movement foundation before progressing to more complex exercises. Performing exercises with the proper techniques help avoid injury and gain the desired muscle adaptations.

We begin with four basic movement patterns: **CORE STABILITY AND BRACING**, **LEVEL CHANGES**, **PUSHING**, and **PULLING**.

Improved **CORE STABILITY AND BRACING** protects the spine and prevents injury during exercise. Enhanced overall strength is gained by providing a secure link between your upper and lower body. The ability to properly align and brace your spine is essential for proficient exercise techniques and reduced injury risk.

Every complete exercise program includes **PUSHING**, **PULLING**, and **LEVEL CHANGING** (squat, dead lift, lunge, etc.) exercises. Each exercise has nearly limitless variations depending on fitness level, but they all begin with the same basic framework that must be understood and consistently put to use in order to safely and efficiently achieve the full benefits of each exercise.

The framework includes proper alignments of the spine and other joints and movement proficiency.



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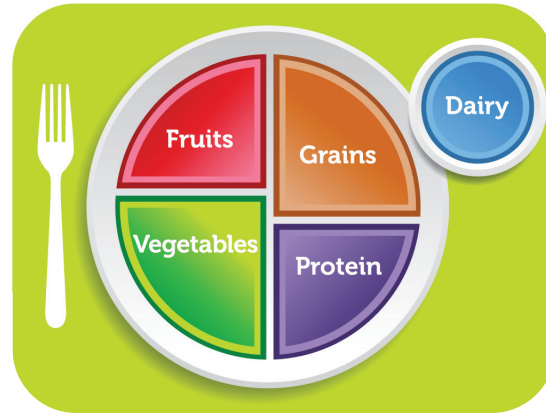
DAY 6 | Macronutrients

Carbohydrates

Dietary carbohydrates are the body's primary and preferred energy source. In fact, they are the primary energy source for most of the world's population. Carbohydrates come from plants: such as grains, legumes or beans, vegetables, and, with one exception, milk as lactose. There are two basic types of carbohydrates. Simple carbohydrates provide quick energy, as they are easy to digest and absorb. Complex carbohydrates break down more slowly and thus provide energy over a longer period of time than simple carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are responsible for dietary fiber, or the structural part of the plant that is indigestible. Fiber adds bulk to the diet, aids in nutrient absorption, and contributes to a healthy colon.

Fats

Fats are a storage form of fuel for our body's energy system, and as such they back up carbohydrates as an available energy source. Dietary fat is obtained from animal and plant sources. Saturated fats come primarily from animal sources, (while plants are a great source for unsaturated fats). Unsaturated fats help reduce health risk and saturated fats increase those risks, yet the source of fat does not automatically indicate its effect on health. Some plant sources, such as palm and coconut oil, have saturated fats. Seafood is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, essential fatty acids the body needs to function properly.



Protein

Protein provides the body with its tissue-building units, amino acids. There are twenty amino acids, nine of which are necessary in the diet because they are not made in the body. When food sources have all nine essential amino acids, they are called complete proteins; when they do not, they are called incomplete proteins. However, these names are misleading and only true when calories are severely restricted. If a diet is rich in whole foods and calorically adequate even when nothing but incomplete protein sources are eaten (rice, beans, bread, nuts, seeds, etc.), an individual will have no problem getting enough of their essential amino acid needs—it is only a concern when highly processed, refined foods replace these whole-food sources.

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Day 7 | Don't Just Move—Move Correctly

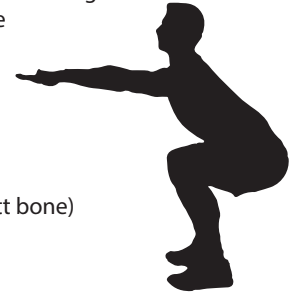
Thousands of years ago, Aristotle said, “Life requires movement.” He was correct, but he neglected to mention that a painless life requires moving correctly.

All movements begin with the same basic framework. The framework includes proper alignments of the spine and other joints in unison with movement competence. We begin with three basic movement patterns: level changes, pushing, and pulling.

Level Changes

SQUAT

- Knees tracking in line with toes and keeping weight on the heels of feet to recruit posterior chain
 - Knees coming together is the result of lost recruitment of glutes and hamstrings
- Torso alignment — heels, knees, and shoulders in line and neutral spine throughout range of motion
 - Avoid lumbar flexion (hips tucking under) and knees in front of toes— exercise becomes quad dominant



DEAD LIFT

- Neutral spine throughout entire range of motion
 - 3 points of alignment: back of head, upper back (t-spine), sacrum (butt bone)
- Hinging at the hips (bend at hips, not low back)
 - Hip and hamstring dominant movement
- Hip drive extension
 - Posterior chain tight and hamstrings “loaded” (use your butt and hamstrings to move)

Pushing

PUSH-UP

- Focus on core stabilization to avoid swayback or hips up
- Correct hand position to avoid unnecessary joint stresses
 - Narrow grip leads to higher elbow stresses but elicits greater muscle activation in the triceps and pecs
 - Internally rotated hands have been shown to create greater and potentially injurious stresses on elbows

BENCH PRESS

- Proper set up with 5 points of contact; feet, glutes, shoulder blades, and head
- Focus on scapular retraction throughout entire ROM — ensures primary movers are pecs and not deltoids and triceps
- Elbows should be directly below wrists and bar
 - Grip width
 - Elbows not forward or backwards
- During eccentric contraction, pull the bar apart and to the chest creating a “spring” for the concentric contraction



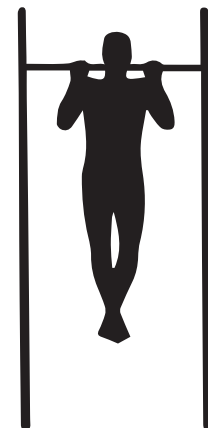
Pulling

PULL-UP

- Hollowed-out core bracing
- Scapular retraction — shoulders depressed throughout range of motion
 - Avoid excessive thoracic extension (arching back); Spine should remain neutral throughout
 - Shoulders should not “roll forward” at top position
- Minimal use of body English (no swinging)

HORIZONTAL ROW

- Focus on core stabilization and neutral spine — keeping hips in line with shoulders and knees
 - Elbow tucked at 45 degrees to body to reduce torque on shoulders
 - Lead with chest and keep chin tucked
- Focus on scapular retraction and depression (squeeze your shoulder blades down and toward your spine)



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DAY 8 | Healthy Food List

Vegetables

Asparagus
Avocados
Beets
Bell peppers
Broccoli
Brussels sprouts*
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower*
Celery
Collard greens
Corn
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Garlic
Green beans
Green peas
Kale
Mushrooms
Mustard greens
Olives
Onions
Potatoes
Romaine lettuce
Seaweed
Spinach
Squash, summer
Squash, winter
Sweet potatoes
Swiss chard
Tomatoes

Fruits

Apples
Apricots
Bananas
Blueberries
Cantaloupe
Cranberries
Figs
Grapefruit

Grapes
Kiwifruit
Lemon/Limes
Oranges
Papaya
Pears
Pineapple
Plums & Prunes
Raspberries
Strawberries
Watermelon

Seafood

Cod
Salmon*
Sardines*
Scallops
Shrimp*
Tuna

Nuts & Seeds

Almonds
Cashews
Flaxseeds*
Peanuts
Pumpkin seeds
Sesame seeds
Sunflower seeds
Walnuts*

Beans & Legumes

Black beans
Dried peas
Garbanzo beans
Kidney beans
Lentils
Lima beans
Navy beans
Pinto beans
Soybeans*
Tofu*

Poultry & Meats

Beef, grass-fed*
Chicken, pasture-raised
Lamb, grass-fed
Turkey, pasture-raised

Eggs & Dairy

Cheese, grass-fed
Cow's milk, grass-fed
Eggs, pasture-raised
Yogurt, grass-fed

Grains

Barley
Brown rice
Buckwheat
Millet
Oats
Quinoa
Rye
Whole wheat

Herbs & Spices

Basil
Black pepper
Chili pepper, dried
Cilantro
Coriander seeds
Cinnamon
Cloves, ground
Cumin seeds
Dill
Ginger
Mustard seeds
Oregano
Parsley
Peppermint
Rosemary
Sage
Thyme
Turmeric

*Omega-3 Fatty Acid Source

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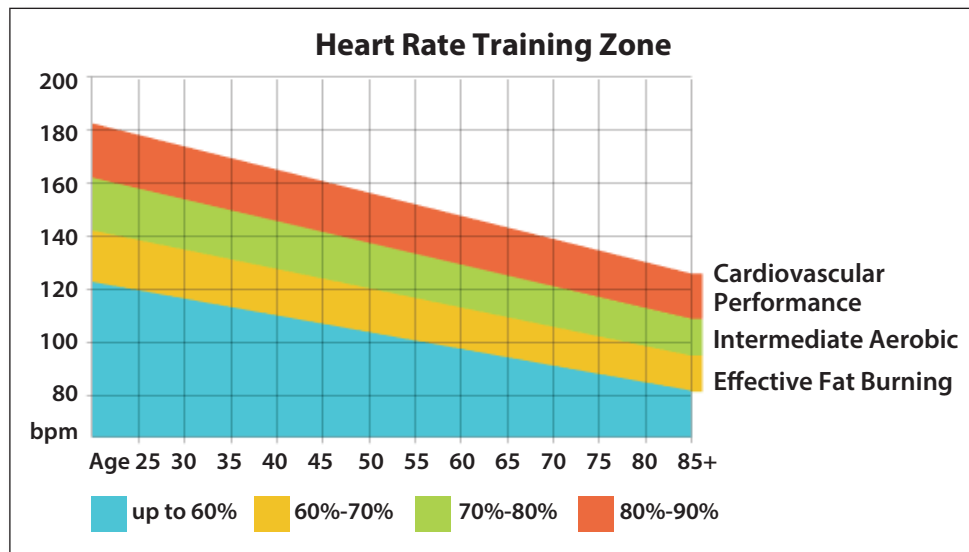
DAY 9 | Heart Rate Training

Why is RESISTANCE training important?

- Builds lean muscle tissue, ultimately reducing body fat and thus reducing risk of heart disease, hypertension, and obesity related cancers
- Reduces risk of osteoporosis
- Improves joint stability and strength protecting joints from injury
- Improved mobility and balance
- Enhance performance of everyday activities

Why is CARDIOVASCULAR exercise important?

- Combined with healthy eating, cardiovascular exercise helps you lose weight and keep it off
- Increased stamina and reduced fatigue
- Improves the strength of your heart and increases its efficiency
- Helps control blood sugar and manage diabetes
- Reduction in bad (LDL and overall) cholesterol and increase in good (HDL) cholesterol



Which is more important?

The short and easy answer is...they're both equally important in order to have a well-rounded fitness routine.

- If weight loss is the goal, a combination of cardio and resistance training will provide the best results for loss and maintenance.
 - More calories are burned during a cardio session
 - Resistance training provides a metabolic spike after the session (more calories burned after session)
- Finding a combination that you enjoy and fits your goals is most important. No results will be seen unless you exercise regularly, and exercising regularly is easier if enjoyed (or at least not despised).

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DAY 10 | Rest and Recovery

Rest and recovery are important parts of any successful fitness program. They are also the least planned and underutilized ways to improve your performance. Let's assume you train for five hours a week. Five hours of 168 hours available is only 3% of your week, so why do you walk into a workout dragging? Probably because of poor rest and/or recovery.

Rest is defined as a combination of sleep and time spent not training. Recovery, on the other hand, involves techniques and actions taken to maximize your body's repair.

Elements of Rest and Recovery

SLEEP | The most important time to recover. Adequate levels of sleep help to provide mental health, hormonal balance, and muscular recovery.

HYDRATION | Drinking adequate amounts of water is critical to health, energy, recovery, and performance.

NUTRITION | Eating clean and balanced meals in moderation is proven to be effective to remain healthy and increase performance.

POSTURE | We spend more time sitting than any other country in the world and, as a general trend, have bad posture. This is not a restful position; sitting or standing with bad posture is unhealthy and harmful.

STRETCHING AND SELF MYOFASCIAL RELEASE | Tight muscles and trigger points sometimes need assistance to return to healthy normal tissue.

REST.

(It's part of the program.)

Remember:

**Muscles are TORN in the gym
FED in the kitchen
And BUILT in bed**

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DAY 11 | Cardiovascular Exercise and Heart Rate Training

Heart rate training with monitors can help you adjust your effort so your heart rate falls within a specific “zone” or percentage of maximum heart rate. There are five heart rate zones, each offering slightly different benefits to exercisers.



MAXIMUM/HARD | If your goal is to compete at top potential, you will have to train in **HEART RATE ZONES 4 and 5**. In these zones, you exercise anaerobically, in intervals of up to 10 minutes. The shorter the interval, the higher the intensity. Sufficient recovery between intervals is very important. The training pattern in zones 4 and 5 is designed to produce peak performance.



MODERATE | Aerobic power is enhanced in **HEART RATE ZONE 3**. The training intensity is higher than in zones 1 and 2, but still mainly aerobic. Training in zone 3 may, for example, consist of intervals followed by recovery. Training in this zone is especially effective for improving the efficiency of blood circulation in the heart and skeletal muscles.



LIGHT | Training in **HEART RATE ZONE 2** is for endurance training, an essential part of any training program. Training sessions in this zone are easy and aerobic. Long-duration training in this light zone results in effective energy expenditure. Progress will require persistence.



VERY LIGHT | Training in **HEART RATE ZONE 1** is done at very low intensity. The main training principle is that performance improves when recovering after and not only during training. Accelerate the recovery process with very light intensity training.

Heart rate responds to training intensity depending on factors such as fitness and recovery levels, as well as environmental factors. You need to look out for subjective feelings of fatigue and to adjust your training program accordingly.

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DAY 12 | Modify Mood By Moving

If you have had a good workout after a stressful day, chances are you feel better afterward. There is a solid relationship between exercise and mood. But the effects of physical activity extend beyond the short-term. Research shows that exercise can help alleviate:

DEPRESSION | Even just moderate exercise throughout the week can improve depression. Some doctors recommend trying out an exercise regimen before turning to medication.

ANXIETY AND STRESS | Exercise, particularly aerobic activity, has been shown to reduce both anxiety and your sensitivity to stress. It is considered one of the most effective natural cures for anxiety disorders.

COGNITIVE DECLINE | As people age, their brains tend to become less sharp and neurodegeneration can set in. Studies show that individuals that don't take care of their cardiovascular health are significantly more likely (up to eight times as likely) to develop dementia.

Psychological Health Variable	Known Effect	Exercise Mode	Comments
Depression	Anti-depressive Effects in those diagnosed with clinical depression	Aerobic and anaerobic exercise; Follow ACSM guidelines	No difference in gender, age or health status; Regimens lasting over 17 weeks yield most positive results
Anxiety	Exercise positively invokes a reduction in anxiety	Aerobic exercise; Exercise at a perceived level of exertion established by individual and health practitioner	Greatest results when clients participate in 10 to 15 weeks of aerobic exercise or longer
Stress	Exercise helps to manage stress more effectively	Aerobic exercise	Results appear to be beneficial after 12 weeks of 3 times per week of at least 20 continuous minutes per session
Mood State	Exercise positively affects mood states such as tension, fatigue, anger and vigor	Aerobic and anaerobic exercise; Follow ACSM guidelines	The exercise/mood state association is complex and not understood
Self-Esteem	Exercise improves self-esteem	No guidance yet from the research as to appropriate exercise prescription	More prevalent with low self-esteem; Various subcomponents include perceived physical condition, attractive body, sport competence

Exercise and Psychological Health – Len Kravitz, Ph.D.

Of all the questions that remain to be answered, perhaps the most perplexing is this: If exercise makes us feel so good, why is it so hard to do it? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2008 (the most recent year for which data are available), some 25 percent of the U.S. population reported zero leisure-time physical activity. A safe guess would be that this percentage has increased over the years.

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DAY 13 | Dietary Fats: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The Good...

Not all fats are the enemy. We actually need fats to be healthy. Aside from being delicious, fats deliver fat-soluble vitamins, influence hormonal balance, keep our skin and other tissues healthy, and ensure our nerves and brain function properly. Fats keep us fuller, longer when eaten with meals and indirectly signal us to stop eating after our brain tells us that we have had enough. Fats also provide the essential fatty acids, omega-3 and -6. They are “essential” to eat because our bodies do not synthesize, or create, these fatty acids and so we must find food sources in order to reap their benefits. Good fats, like mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acids, are commonly found in seeds and nuts, avocados, whole eggs, olive oil, and flaxseed to name a few.

The Bad...

Eating foods that contain saturated fat has been shown to raise the bad cholesterol (LDL) levels in our blood. Greater amounts of cholesterol in the blood increase our risk of heart disease and stroke; therefore, limiting saturated fat intake is commonly recommended. Sources of saturated fat include the fat found in animal products like meat and dairy, many baked goods, fried foods, and different plant-based oils, like palm and coconut oil. Specifically, oils are incredibly sneaky and can contribute to the caloric density of any food. Fat has nine calories (9kcal) of energy per gram, which is over twice the energy provided by one gram of protein or carbohydrate (4kcal).



The Ugly...

The first set of dietary guidelines for Americans were created as a response to a growing body of evidence suggesting a diet rich in saturated fat leads to heart disease. Specifically, the guidelines called for fewer fats to be consumed, which could be achieved by replacing fats from dairy and animal products with carbohydrates found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. During this time, many Americans were not eating a majority of their meals at home; or if they did, their meal certainly wasn't made from scratch. Food companies, instead of farms or fresh markets, were where the masses got their food; the microwave, not the stove, was how it was prepared; and in front of a TV, not at the dinner table, was how it was eaten. Amidst this food trend, Americans and the food companies heard a different message: fats are bad; carbohydrates are good. Fat was removed from many food products, and sugar, salt, and artificially made fats were added back in to make the product tastier and last longer on the shelves. Artificial fats (trans fatty acids) usage has become widespread in many food products under the guise of partially hydrogenated oil. Trans fat has been linked to heart disease and type 2 diabetes. In addition, fake fats do not trigger the signal to our brain that a rich meal has been eaten, which tricks us to continue eating these high-fat foods until we are physically full rather than simply satisfied. If there is such a thing as a fat being fattening, trans fat would be that fat.

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DAY 14 | Let's Get Stronger

Let's begin by putting at least one myth to rest: stronger doesn't mean more muscular. Stronger means your brain is more adept at communicating with your muscles, your muscles are more efficient, and you have a better understanding of how to move correctly.

Now that we have that out of the way, how do we get stronger? Short answer is: progressive overload. The definition for progressive overload is "a gradual increase in volume, intensity, frequency, or time in order to achieve a targeted goal." Here are some general guidelines for properly progressing an exercise:

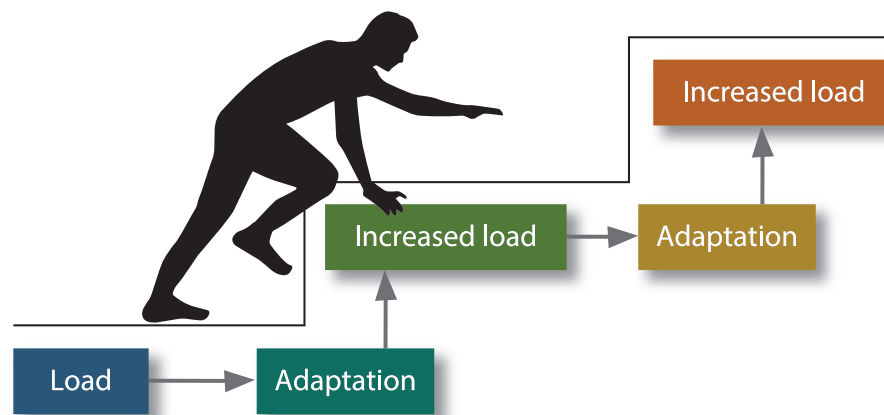
BEGIN WITH ERROR-FREE TECHNIQUE | The reward of any exercise must outweigh the risk. Performing an exercise correctly not only dramatically reduces the risk of injury, it allows for the correct muscle groups to be worked resulting in strength gains in the right places.

START WHERE YOU ARE | Choose an exercise variation that fits your fitness level. (There are nearly limitless regressions or progression, for any exercise.) Remember, you have to crawl before you walk.

PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD CAN OCCUR IN A VARIETY OF WAYS | Rest a little less between sets, sit just a little lower, increase the weight just a tad, or add just one extra repetition or set. Increasing the intensity in some way will increase the overload. Where the intensity increases is simply dependent on your goal.

ADAPTATIONS ARE VARYING AND INDIRECT | Unfortunately, progress from resistance training, whether it be mobility, bulking, strengthening, or fat loss, is not linear. You may see progress in one week, but then not again for three. Persistence and proper programing pays off, promise!

CONSISTENCY IS KING | Unless your muscles are regularly overloaded, no muscular adaptations will occur. Regularity is required for real results.



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DAY15 | Healthy Eating Habits

Eating habits are developed over a lifetime. They are often so deeply ingrained that our brain simply runs on autopilot when faced with choices pertaining to food. This can be a blessing when our routine aligns with what our body needs to stay healthy but can make for a difficult time when it runs astray. Here are six habits to create a healthier eating style that you can start today:

EAT BREAKFAST | Break the evening-fast by starting your morning off right with a healthy breakfast that includes lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and a healthy fat. Try a parfait with Greek yogurt topped with fruit and a whole grain bagel with peanut butter or a breakfast burrito with scrambled egg whites, black beans, guacamole, spinach and salsa wrapped in a whole wheat tortilla.

MAKE HALF YOUR PLATE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES | Fruits and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals, water, and fiber. They add color, flavor, and texture to your plate, as well as antioxidants to fight cancer. Strive to eat three cups of fruit and three cups of vegetables every day. More is always better. Experiment with fresh, frozen, or canned produce.



READ AND KNOW YOUR FOOD LABELS | Get to know what you are eating and drinking before you eat or drink it. Food labels have information on number of servings; calories per serving; grams of fat, carbohydrates, and protein; as well as the amount of important micronutrients like sodium, calcium, and iron. Make sure to also look at the ingredient list. If a fifth grader couldn't pronounce an ingredient's name from the list, you probably shouldn't eat it.

WATCH PORTION SIZES | Portions are not serving sizes. They are different. Think of a really big apple. Bigger. Okay. That is ONE big apple, but TWO servings of fruit. The same can be said for many foods or food products. We often eat a standard amount for us, or our portion, but in fact our portion could be many servings of that food. Make sure you know how close your portions are to the recommended serving size.

FIX HEALTHY SNACKS | Healthy snacks are a great way to get you through to lunch or dinner. They sustain your energy levels, make you more productive, keep your spirits high, stop you from crashing, or falling into a food frenzy when you get home. Snacks are even better when you combine them from different food groups like grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and lean proteins. If you're tight on time, and the snack thing is new, grab an apple and half a handful of your favorite nuts, throw them in a plastic sandwich bag, and head out.

CUT BACK ON ADDED SUGAR | Foods and drinks with added sugars contribute greatly to excessive calorie intake, diminished satisfaction when eating naturally sugary foods like fruits, and provide little to no nutritional benefit. Over time and when repeated often, sugar intake is severely addicting when combined with the right amount of fat and salt, so much so that it can cause withdrawal headaches. Added sugar is the kind of sugar you see on the ingredient list as "Sugar." What added sugar is not are the sugars found naturally in foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and some nuts. Those sugars are natural and have not been added.

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DAY 16 | Stretching and Mobility

Achieving and maintaining a functional level of flexibility should be an integral part of any fitness program. However, there are several misconceptions surrounding stretching and mobility that hold many people back from making the most of this important component of training.

Flexibility vs. Mobility

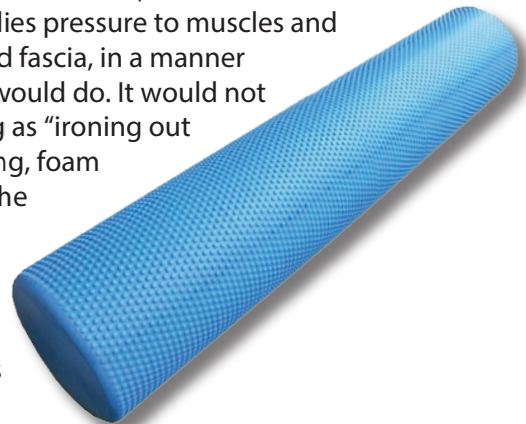
When trainers talk about increasing flexibility, they're referring to your joints' ability to move through a range of motion when being stretched, either by your trainer or you. Mobility, on the other hand, is your ability to move and function at those ranges of motion. Being able to stretch yourself into pretzel-like positions is great, but being able to control yourself at those end ranges is even better. An example of flexibility would be you lying on your back while your trainer pulls your straight leg back into a hamstring stretch; the mobility equivalent would be you actively raising your leg with your hip flexor muscles to the same position. The two should be fairly close in terms of range of motion achieved.

What Stretching is Not

Stretching is not like pulling on a sock until it loses its elasticity and rests limply off of your ankle. Instead, what you're actually doing when you stretch is sending a signal to your brain to allow that muscle to relax into a longer length. The muscle itself doesn't get longer, it just relaxes into a length it already possessed. This means that yanking on your shoulders and hips to the point of pain and extreme discomfort is not only miserable, but counterproductive. Instead, control yourself into your end range of motion in a stretch—where the muscle begins to feel “tight”—and breathe deeply, allowing yourself to relax with every exhale. If you've ever taken a yoga class, you know that incorporating breathing and relaxation into the stretching routine is a big part of the practice. There's a reason yogis are so limber!

A Note on Foam Rolling

Have you ever seen someone on the gym floor flopping around on what looks like a big pool noodle? That's a foam roller, and shows a form of self massage. The firm(ish) foam applies pressure to muscles and the tissue that surrounds them, called fascia, in a manner similar to what a massage therapist would do. It would not be inaccurate to think of foam rolling as “ironing out your muscles.” Just like with stretching, foam rolling is about relaxing and letting the pressure of the roller do the work; it should not be an exercise in pain tolerance. Breathe deep and easy, relax your target muscle, and search for “hot spots” in the muscle to focus on; those are the “wrinkles” in your muscle that need to be ironed out!



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DAY 17 | Supplements and Nutrition

Healthy nutritional habits and supplementation involves making small and simple lifestyle modifications. Our staff recommends making healthy choices from all of the food groups. We feel if you move toward eating natural foods (whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean meats), and minimize processed foods (saturated fats, refined sugars), you are headed in the right direction. "Diets" are usually short term answers, which provide short-term results. Research has proven that the only true method for effective and permanent weight loss is to correctly balance caloric consumption and caloric expenditure. In order to lose weight, a person must consume less calories than they burn.

We view the use of supplements as a tool to aid in the modification process, not as a quick fix or magic pill that yields amazing results. We suggest eating adequate portion sizes with proper meal frequencies during the day to reach optimal health. However, when these foods are not available, supplementation may adequately fill the void. Body Structure's nutritional goal is to provide you with the knowledge necessary to help modify your lifestyle and eating habits over a period of time, resulting in lifelong behavioral changes for permanent results.

Here are some questions that the Food and Drug Administration recommends asking yourself and discussing with your doctor when considering whether you should take a vitamin/mineral supplement:



- *Do you eat fewer than two meals per day?*
- *Is your diet restricted? That is, do you not eat meat, milk or milk products, or eat fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day?*
- *Do you eat alone most of the time?*
- *Without wanting to, have you lost or gained more than 10 pounds in the last six months?*
- *Do you take three or more prescription or over-the-counter medicines a day?*
- *Do you have three or more drinks of alcohol a day?*

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DAY 18 | Weight Loss vs. Weight Maintenance

Losing weight and maintaining weight is much like love and marriage. What gets you to the altar will probably be a bit different from what keeps you married. Losing weight is the relatively easy part. Participating in a weight loss program, limiting the sugar in your diet, eating healthy snacks, and not skipping meals may help you lose weight initially, but these practices don't necessarily translate to maintaining the loss.

Eating low-fat sources of protein, following a consistent exercise routine, rewarding yourself for sticking with your plan, and reminding yourself why you want to keep your weight off, were all linked to maintaining weight loss.

The key is switching your mindset at some point to a more permanent way of living in order to keep the weight from creeping back. Your approach must “emphasize healthy lifestyle modifications for long-term results.”

Goal	Weight Loss	Weight Maintenance
Duration	Temporary	Life-long
Amount of Change	Small to large changes; Potential for backslide	Very small changes; Awareness of slight fluctuations in weight from day to day; Responds to slight changes quickly; gets back on track rapidly with little harm done
Potential Mindset	Learn new habits; Deprivation and limiting options	Stick with good habits already learned; Patient and persistent; Continuous adjustments; Flexibility within reason
Composition of Diet	Can range dramatically; Typically low fat, low carb; Often focused on eliminating or limiting certain macronutrients, or eating “special” foods	Some variation, but, more importantly, all involve careful monitoring and self-awareness; Must be eating pattern that can be sustained for life
Typical Actions	Regular observation and monitoring (may be less frequent to allow progress to occur); Regular exercise	Daily observation and monitoring—including weigh-ins; Regular exercise; Ongoing habitual healthy food choices

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DAY 19 | Support System

Whether you're beginning to exercise for the first time or preparing to run a marathon, getting your friends and family on-board will help push you the extra mile or keep you from hitting the snooze button before your workout.

Peer support groups are used in many situations to help people achieve their goals, and fitness is no exception. Seeking out like-minded people will help you make progress and keep you motivated and accountable. Social support can take many forms, but usually falls into these four categories:

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT | Encouragement and acceptance;
Key benefit of participating in a group training class

INSTRUMENTAL SUPPORT | Providing a ride to the gym
or watching the kids for you

INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT | Health care professionals,
certified personal trainers*, wearable technology,
sport-specific magazines and reliable websites

APPRAISAL SUPPORT | Periodically evaluating your
progress is essential to make sure you're on track



Accountability counts. Finding a friend to workout with is not a new concept, but a tried and true one. A recent study out of the University of Georgia reveals that people tend to mimic the behavior of others around them. Subjects experienced a greater level of self-control when surrounded by others with strong self-control. And the opposite was also true—subjects showed poor self-control when others around them did.

You become like the people you surround yourself with. Choose carefully.

✱ **CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINERS** | One of the fastest, easiest, and most successful ways to improve your health and fitness is hiring a personal trainer. We frequently hear that time and money are obstacles in obtaining a trainer, but once a client exercises with a trainer and visible lifestyle changes occur, the overall value and money concern is not an obstacle. Personal trainers specialize in accountability, motivation, and the development of a plan that meets your time restraints and financial concerns.

STICKING WITH A PROGRAM IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES |

A personal trainer makes sure workouts are fun and effective by regularly modifying your routine. Other motivating benefits to keep you working out consistently are:

- *Teaching and monitoring proper movement and safety in the gym*
- *Setting realistic goals and periodically evaluating progress*
- *Designing a routine around your physical limitations and old injuries*
- *Preventing boredom in the gym*
- *Having a set time of day and a paid appointment*

The final stage of training is the transition of our knowledge to you, which allows you to take charge of your own program for long-term results!

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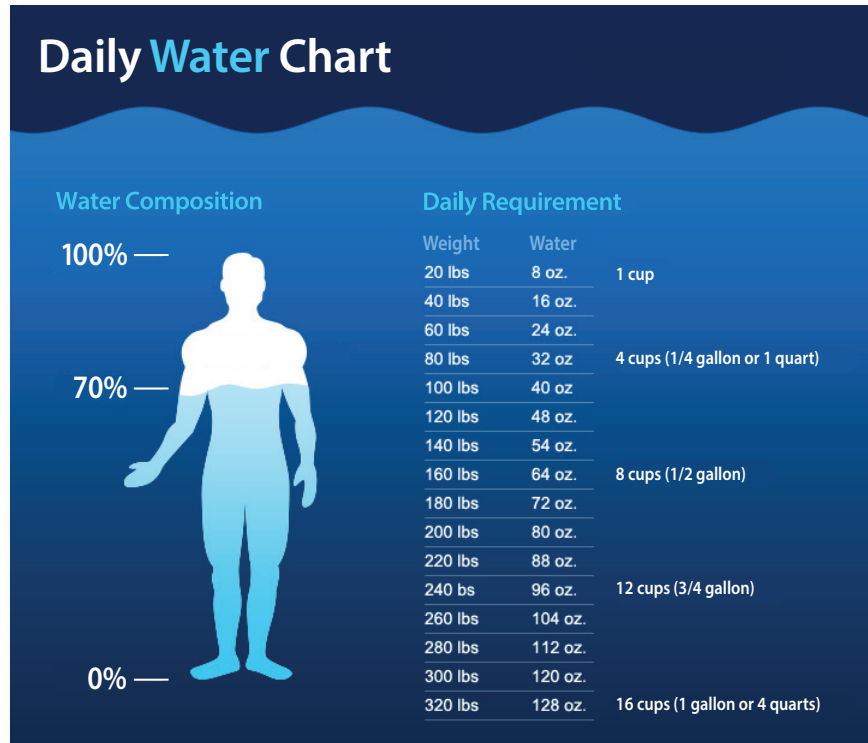
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DAY 20 | How Much Water Do You Need?

Every day you lose water through your breath, perspiration, urine and bowel movements. For your body to function properly, you must replenish its water supply by consuming beverages and foods that contain water.



You may need to modify your total fluid intake depending on how active you are, the climate you live in, your health status, and if you're pregnant or breast-feeding.

EXERCISE | If you exercise or engage in any activity that makes you sweat, you need to drink extra water to compensate for the fluid loss.

ENVIRONMENT | Hot or humid weather can make you sweat and requires additional intake of fluid.

ILLNESSES OR HEALTH CONDITIONS | When you have fever, vomiting or diarrhea, your body loses additional fluids. In these cases, you should drink more water.

PREGNANCY OR BREAST-FEEDING | Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding need additional fluids to stay hydrated.

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DAY 21 | Get Back On The Wagon

Between work deadlines, vacations, family obligations, (and the list goes on and on), you can quickly fall off the exercise and nutrition bandwagon. A week quickly becomes a month; and in no time, you haven't worked out in half a year. Getting the ball rolling again doesn't have to be hard if you follow these *seven simple tips*:

DO NOT BEAT YOURSELF UP | Try not to accept one defeat as total defeat. Failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently. Move on and embrace the new beginning.

SET A CLEAR STRATEGY | Arriving at a destination is difficult if you don't know where you're going beforehand. Set long-term goals to strive for, but remember, patience and persistence is required.

EXPECTATIONS
VS. **REALITY**



SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS | Set smaller attainable goals that lead you in the right direction. Regularly achieving small goals keeps you on track and cumulatively leads to big change.

DON'T DO TOO MUCH TOO SOON | Be realistic. If you try to pick up where you left off after an extended amount of time, you may take the air out of your sails before you even begin.

ELIMINATE OBSTACLES | Obstacles equal excuses. Don't have enough time? Three hours is just 2.5% of your waking week. Don't want to spend too much money? Six feet of space and a body weight routine are all you need. Most obstacles have solutions, *but first you must choose to put yourself first*.

FIND ACCOUNTABILITY | Recruit a workout wingman; or, for even more accountability, find a qualified fitness professional to motivate and guide you. Either way, set an appointment and don't miss it. Skipping just one workout increases your chance of missing the next one by 61%.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS | Reward yourself for a job well done. You reached a goal you set for yourself; as long as the reward doesn't undo the success, go for it and enjoy. You earned it!



OUR MISSION is to implement safe, individualized programs emphasizing healthy lifestyle modifications for long term results.