

Overcome Your Exercise Excuses

Here are some strategies to get you moving.

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It's easy to come up with reasons why you can't

exercise—but sometimes you spend more time arguing with yourself than it takes to fit in an exercise session. The easiest way to overcome your exercise excuses is to be prepared. Identify the reasons you most often give (yourself) for not being able to exercise—and think of a few ways to work around them. Here are our top tips for overcoming exercise excuses:

The excuse: “I don't have enough time.” Try these solutions:

- Break exercise into smaller segments.
- Multitask—do stretches while watching TV.
- Adjust your schedule—say, get up a half-hour earlier to walk.
- Make it a nonnegotiable routine. Block off a time each day for exercise, so you (and friends and family) can plan around it.



Photo Credit: Blaine Moats

Photo is of a model not an actual patient.

The excuse: “I'm too embarrassed to exercise.” Try these solutions:

- Bring a friend along for moral support. Walk in a neighborhood where you're not likely to run into anyone you know.
- Work out at home with an exercise DVD.
- Try a gym that feels comfortable and friendly. Most welcome all sizes and fitness levels.

The excuse: “Exercise is too hard.” Try these solutions:

- Take it slow and steady. Start with a comfortable amount of activity and add a little more each day.
- Try walking as exercise—it's already part of your day, so just try to add a few extra steps when you can.
- Listen to your body. Don't exercise to the point of exhaustion; you should generally be able to carry on a conversation.
- Keep going. If you've got minor aches, take it easier the next day but don't stop altogether. Gentle movement helps sore muscles recover.

The excuse: “Exercise doesn't work for me.” Try these solutions:

- Maybe you just haven't found the right kind of exercise yet. Try joining a walking group, exercising with a friend or listening to music while you move.
- Focus on adding more lifestyle exercise to your day. Vacuuming or gardening counts as exercise.
- Use your journal to record your thoughts and feelings about exercise—they can help you find a way around your exercise demons.

Make sure you talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program.