



in the news

Lean at 18 means a longer life: study

Being obese in middle age lowers a woman's chance of being alive and free of chronic disease after age 70 by nearly 80 per cent, according to new data from the landmark U.S. Nurses, Health Study.

The findings suggest every bit of weight gain between ages 18 and 50 lowers a woman's odds of being a "healthy survivor", living to age 70 or older, free from 11 major chronic diseases as well as physical, cognitive and mental impairment. For every one kilogram of weight gain since age 18, the odds of healthy survival decreased by five per cent, the study found. The worst odds for a long and healthy life were among women who were overweight at 18, with a body mass index greater than 25, and who gained 10 kilograms or more by mid-life. But even a higher BMI at 18 alone was associated with "moderately, albeit significantly" reduced odds of healthy survival at much older ages.

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lifestyle

Finding Fitness: 10 Ways to Fit in Exercise

By Beth W. Orenstei

The "E" word can make you cringe, but exercise is really necessary. Besides, it can be fun: Learn how to squeeze fitness into your busy day.

Medically reviewed by Pat F. Bass III, MD, MPH [Print](#) [Email](#)

The benefits of regular exercise are unrivaled: Physical activity can help you lose weight and prevent a host of ailments, including heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis. Being fit also can help you stay mentally sharp.

While most people know they should exercise, you may not know where to start or how to fit it into a busy schedule. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend that healthy adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity spread out over five days a week, or 20 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity on each of three days a week.



"This is something we recommend to all Americans," says Gerald Fletcher, MD, a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla., and a spokesman for the AHA.

An ideal fitness routine also includes resistance or weight training to improve muscle strength and endurance. The ACSM and the AHA recommend that most adults engage in resistance training at least twice a week.

Finding Fitness: 10 Ways to Get in Exercise

Sometimes the problem isn't motivation — it's simply finding the time. But scheduling exercise isn't as difficult as you might think. Here are 10 ways to get you moving more often:

1 Be less efficient. People typically try to think of ways to make daily tasks easier. But if we make them harder, we can get more exercise, says Sabrena Merrill, MS, of Lawrence, Kan., a certified personal trainer, group fitness instructor, and spokeswoman for the American Council on Exercise (ACE). "Bring in the groceries from your car one bag at a time so you have to make several trips," Merrill says. "Put the laundry away a few items at a time, rather than carrying it up in a basket."

2 Shun labor-saving devices. Wash the car by hand rather than taking it to the car wash. "It takes about an hour and a half to do a good job, and in the meantime you've

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gotten great exercise,” Merrill says. Use a push mower rather than a riding mower to groom your lawn.

3 Going somewhere? Take the long way. Walking up or down a few flights of stairs each day can be good for your heart. Avoid elevators and escalators whenever possible. If you ride the bus or subway to work, get off a stop before your office and walk the extra distance. When you go to the mall or the grocery store, park furthest from the entrance, not as close to it as you can, and you’ll get a few extra minutes of walking — one of the best exercises there is, Dr. Fletcher says. “Walking is great because anyone can do it and you don’t need any special equipment other than a properly fitting pair of sneakers.”



4 Be a morning person. Studies show that people who exercise in the morning are more likely to stick with it. As Merrill explains, “Are you going to feel like exercising at the end of a hard day? Probably not. If you do your workout in the morning, you’re not only more likely to do it, but you’ll also set a positive tone for the day.”

5 Ink the deal. Whether morning, afternoon, or evening, pick the time that is most convenient for you to exercise and write it down in your daily planner. Keep your exercise routine as you would keep any appointment.

6 Watch your step. Investing in a good pedometer can help you stay motivated. “If you have a pedometer attached to your waist and you can see how many steps you’ve taken, you’ll see it doesn’t take long to walk 5,000 steps and you will be inspired,” Merrill says. And building up to 10,000 steps a day won’t seem like such a daunting a task.



7 Hire the right help. While weight training is important, if you don’t know what you’re doing, you run the risk of injuring yourself or not being effective, Merrill says. It’s best to get instructions from a personal trainer at the gym. You also can buy a weight-training DVD and follow along in your living room.

8 Keep records. Grab a diary or logbook, and every day that you exercise, write down what you did and for how long. Your records will make it easy for you to see what you’ve accomplished and make you more accountable. Blank pages? You’d be ashamed.

9 Phone a friend. Find someone who likes the same activity that you do — walking in the neighborhood, riding bikes, playing tennis — and make a date to do it together. “Exercising with a friend or in a group can be very motivating,” Fletcher says. “You are likely to walk longer or bike greater distances if you’re talking to a friend

along the way. The time will go by faster.” Don’t have a buddy who is available? Grab an MP3 player and listen to your favorite music or an audio book while exercising.

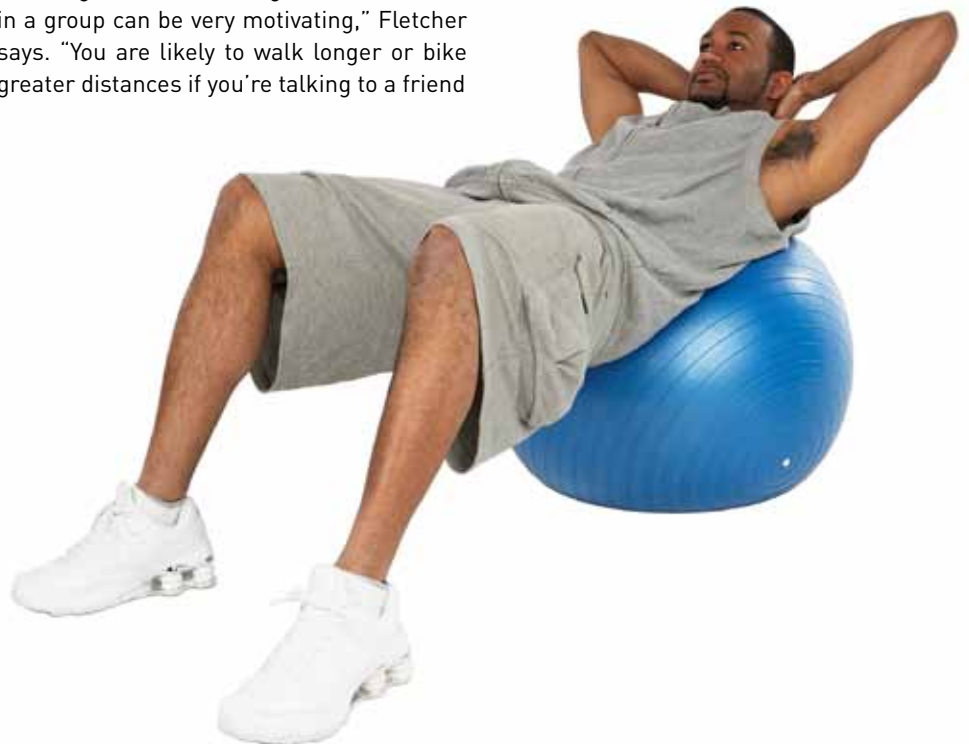
10 Do what you like. Whatever exercise you choose, be sure it’s one that you enjoy. You’re

more likely to stick with it if it’s something you have fun doing rather than something you see as a chore, Fletcher says.

If you can’t fit 30 minutes a day into your schedule, get more exercise simply by being less efficient with your chores and adding a little extra walking distance everywhere you go. However, if you pick an activity you like, finding time for fitness will become effortless and the rewards enormous.

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Fat Loss Arithmetic



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When it comes to fat loss, the simple arithmetic of it all has and always will be the same. There are endless diet and "weight loss" products on the market today with the newest craze being detox and cleanse formulas. If you look at the simple arithmetic of these advertisement claims - "flush 10 pounds of fat in 7 days"- it would show that it is mathematically impossible. Regardless of the ingredients, simple arithmetic shows that no miracle-like product can exist; making this claim false. Yes, you may lose "weight" on some of these products but I can promise you that the weight loss is not "fat loss" and the "weight" will come back.

The simple arithmetic of fat loss

There are about 3,500 calories stored in a pound of body fat. In order to lose 1 pound a week you must create a calorie deficit of 3500 from overall calories consumed. If you break this down by the day that means you must burn 500 calories a day. Simple enough right?

To do this you can go about it in 3 ways.

1. Eat less
2. Exercise more
3. Eat less AND exercise more - The most efficient and effective way.

To achieve this amazing goal of losing 1 pound a week you need a solid plan on how to create this 3500 Calorie deficit. This could be as simple as exercising three days a week, consuming 2 less lattes and cutting out your daily muffin from your morning commute. This simple formula can work for anyone and it could be your plan for success.

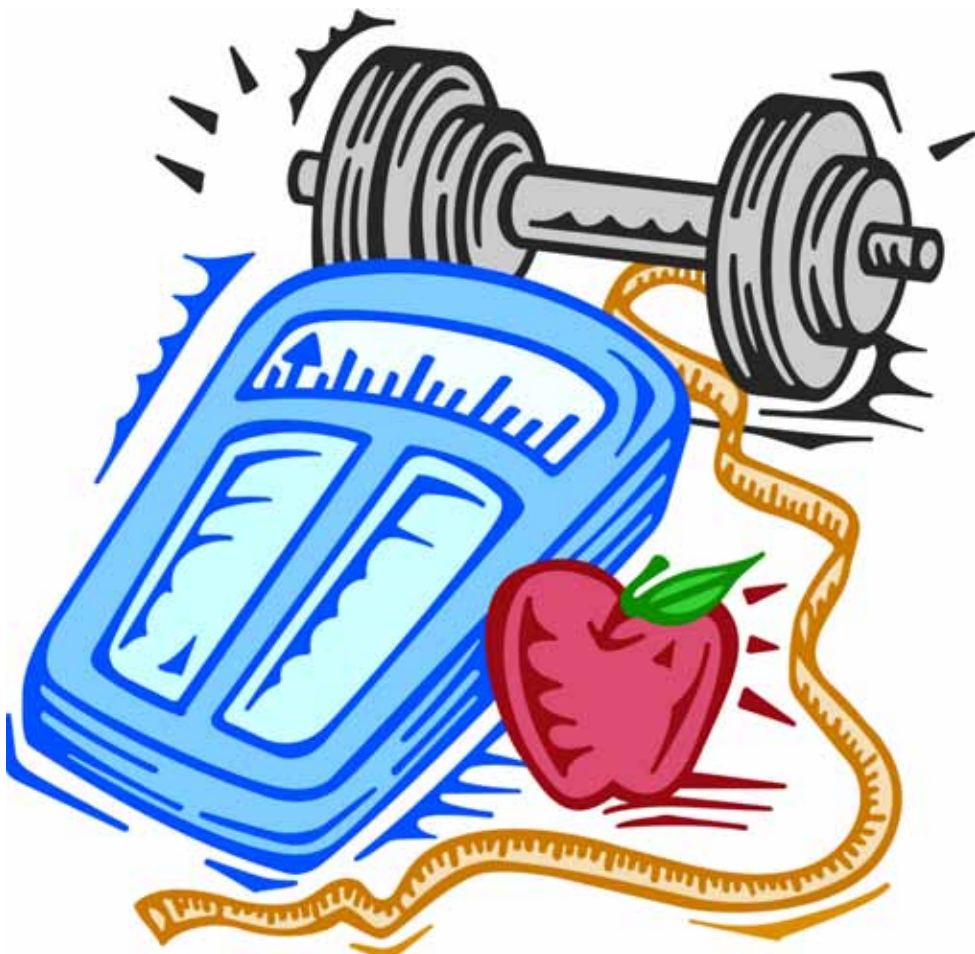
Now let's look at the arithmetic of the claim "you can lose 10 pounds per week". For this to be true one would have to expend 5,000 calories per day more than they consume. How is that even possible if you only consume 2000 calories a day, you ask? And the ad says you don't even have to exercise. This is mathematically impossible and makes the

miracle statement, you guessed it, false. But how could they lie to us like that? There are no regulations on weight loss products and it's a multibillion dollar industry that can write whatever they want on their labels.

So what is the "weight" they are referring to then? The "weight" is most likely an unhealthy combination of water, fat and muscle which is to be regained as soon as you are off the "detox". Losing "weight" and losing "fat" are two very different things. Continuously buying the newest weight loss product on the market will just continue to damage your metabolism, make you fatter and your wallet skinnier.

The key to permanent weight loss has and always will be a simple combination of diet and exercise. There is no magic pill as much as the infomercials would like you to believe. It's a simple combination of healthy eating and exercise. Mark Twain said "Be careful about reading health books. You may die of

a misprint." And that statement couldn't be more true when it comes to trendy weight loss formulas or products. Stop researching quick fix methods of weight loss on-line and seek out the advice of qualified health and fitness professionals. Just as there are no regulations on these formulas, there are zero regulations about what gets documented on the internet, making this information notoriously unreliable. If you have any questions in relation to weight loss or on how to build a strong and solid exercise plan that will work for you please feel free to email me at micaelafitness@gmail.com.



The “Stitch”

Q. I work out by running on a treadmill two to three times a week and I consider myself to be in “relatively” good shape since I also engage in other physical activities like cycling. My problem with running is that I frequently experience a stitch or sharp pain in the lower abdomen during my run that I manage to tolerate by reducing my intensity and/or by improving my breathing. I do, however, wonder what the cause of these stitches is and what I can do to eliminate them. Having a stitch can be annoying when you want to push your training a little further.

Martin Boulianne.

A. Your question definitely calls for further investigation. If your pain is really in the region of the lower abdomen, it could end up being a more serious problem and we would advise you to consult your doctor if the pain persists each time you run.

However, there is an aspect of your question that leads us to believe that you are speaking of a very common problem experienced by athletes, namely, the “stitch,” that can be felt more frequently on the right side, but also on the left side, and sometimes in the centre.

Even if it is quite common in new runners, it is possible for anyone to experience a stitch. Despite research advancements, its cause cannot be ascertained. There are, however, several hypotheses that can account for the stitch. We will only list several of the most plausible ones.

One hypothesis would be that the stitch is a muscle spasm. The diaphragm is the main muscle responsible for breathing. When the diaphragm contracts and relaxes quickly during intense and sudden effort, as in the case of not having had a moment to warm up better to have better blood flow, it can be the cause of a spasm.

Another hypothesis is that the stomach and the liver, which are attached to the diaphragm by two ligaments, create tension (the stitch) on this very diaphragm and strengthen this hypothesis since they are pretty much situated on the right side of the body.

And finally, it is believed that eating too much not very long before sustained exertion may

provoke a stitch.

As you can see, these causes are all plausible and can even coexist. We won’t even consider all the many other causes that are often raised.

One thing is certain, there are as many “treatments” for the stitch as there are people who are victims of such discomfort. Everyone seems to have their own little miracle cure. Luckily, these “precautions” or remedies all share some of the same features.

Preventive measures

You need to start any physical activity with a good, highly progressive warm-up. Blood flow will be better and all the muscles will therefore be better prepared to engage in more sustained exertion.

You need to make sure you are breathing better by inhaling and exhaling deeply. Too often, people inhale and exhale too quickly and especially not deeply enough.

Every person is different, but you need to make sure that you have sufficient time to eat before you exercise to avoid having too full a stomach before a run.

Treatments

If you find yourself suffering from a stitch, slow down or even walk for a few seconds and breath deeply until the pain disappears.

You can do a few stretches. Raise the right arm to the sky and bend at the hips from the left side. Hold this stretch for a few seconds. Do the same stretch on the other side.

Exhale strongly from the mouth while rubbing the painful spot.

Stitches commonly disappear as quickly as they appeared when you follow these simple recommendations. If they persist, you could very well be dealing with another problem, and you should definitely consult your doctor. Thank you and enjoy your run!

