



Get back to the gym with a plan for success - By Suzanne Schlosberg

The only exercise you've gotten lately is circling the buffet table. But you're ready to hit the gym again. Here's your can't-miss plan of attack.

No matter what's kept you from the gym—new baby, new job, a few new bulges you're ashamed of after the holidays, or even boredom with your old routine—there's no better time of the year than January to get your groove back.

"After New Year's, everyone in the gym is gung-ho," says Anthony Branker, a trainer at the San Jacinto Sport 24 Hour Fitness in Houston. "There's so much great energy, it will be contagious. You can feed on it."

Of course, you don't want "new year, new you" to turn into "new year, new injuries." Getting back into the swing of things safely and with maximum results does take some strategic planning. Here's how to make 2008 your leanest, strongest, fittest year ever.

Write Down Goals

"When you have goals in writing, it's like a contract," says Branker. "Post them on the fridge or at work to remind you of what you're trying to accomplish." Goals should be specific: It's easy to weasel out of "get in shape," but hard to avoid "take two 24Cycle classes a week." Establish long-term goals as well as targets to shoot for every 6 weeks.

Work with a Trainer

Cheerleader, drill sergeant, teacher—a trainer can play plenty of motivating roles. If you don't know a deltoid from a deadlift, a trainer can show you the ropes, but even veterans have a lot to gain from professional instruction. "The science of fitness is constantly changing," Thompson says, so a trainer can freshen up a tired routine.

Find Your Motivation

"When my clients tell me, 'I want to lose 10 pounds,' I ask, 'Why?'" Thompson says. "It takes some digging to find their true motivation." Once you identify yours—to feel good on the beach next summer, beat back

diabetes, or whatever, you'll have more incentive to keep huffing and puffing when the going gets tough. Thompson weighed more than 200 pounds and had high blood pressure before she joined 24 Hour Fitness and ultimately became a trainer. "When I didn't want to keep going, I'd think, I'm doing this so my kids have a mom."

Start Off Easy

If your holiday exercise program consisted of bicep curls with your eggnog mug, now isn't the time to try bench pressing your body weight. Exercisers who come back like gangbusters tend to fizzle out quickly or get hurt. Injuries such as shin splints and tendinitis can develop quickly, but it can take months to recover. Don't try to pick up where you left off. Start with a modest regimen of short, easy workouts. "You should leave the gym feeling energized rather than exhausted," Thompson says.

Find a Buddy

Research shows that social support—think "peer pressure"—really helps people stick with it. In one study, married couples who exercised together had a 35 percent higher attendance rate at a health club than did married people who worked out alone. "If

you're having a bad day, then your workout partner will give you a boost," Branker says. If you don't have a spouse or buddy to exercise with, join a group class.

Use Your iPod

"I tell people when they're doing cardio to pick five songs," Branker says. "When the songs are over, they've done 20 to 30 minutes." Studies show that people enjoy exercise more and work out longer when they distract themselves with music.

Reward Yourself

Just not with a hot fudge sundae. "I have clients who get a manicure or splurge on a new pair of shoes when they've lost 10 pounds," says Wendy Thompson, a trainer at the Carlsbad Active 24 Hour Fitness in California. "Little things that don't necessarily cost you a lot can really help keep you going."

No matter which of these strategies you try, give yourself 6 weeks to make exercise a habit again. "Once you hit that 6-week mark," Thompson says, "you're going to start wanting to work out, as opposed to having to do it. Walking through the door is half the battle. You can feel good just knowing you got there. Once you're in, you're going to do great."

Source: You 24. Used with permission.



Looking for a great deal? Invest in yourself!

The International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) announced today its call to action for anyone looking to live a happier, healthier, longer life - invest in yourself; join a health club.

Exercise is one of the best medicines we have to help keep us healthy and living longer. During times of stress and financial uncertainty, staying healthy is of the utmost importance. In our current economy, everyone desires a high return on his or her carefully planned investment. Such a return is achievable if you invest in yourself and your health this year, and exercise at a health club. You will reap the rewards of good health, happiness both year-long, and throughout your life.

IHRSA offers the following Ten Reasons To Join A Health Club In 2009:

1. Heal Your Mind and Body

Exercise can aid in the rehabilitation of illnesses and chronic disease, and improve your muscle strength, cardiovascular health, reduce stress, and help ease the effects of depression and other diseases.



2. Practice Prevention

Exercise is a form of preventative medicine that research has proven can lower the risk of many chronic diseases, improve overall health and help stave off the effects of aging, arthritis, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and osteoporosis.

3. Improve Your Work Life

Studies have shown that exercise can boost employee morale, increase productivity, minimize stress, and lead to decreased absenteeism.



On average, frequent exercisers among health-club patrons were absent from work only 2.11 days per year, compared to 3.06 days for inactive individuals.

4. Save Money

Membership is an incredible value for the cost, especially when you consider the health benefits of exercise.

Exercise is a preventive medicine and is part of the answer to health care reform. Sedentary lifestyles and their effects have driven up the cost of health care to all time highs. In 2000, obesity-related health care costs totaled an estimated \$117 billion.

In a 2008 study, participants who averaged at least two health club visits per week over 2 years incurred at least \$1,252 less in health care costs in year 2 than did those who visited on average less than once per week.

Exercise may help you save on medical costs in the long run. Obese adults who are 30 or more pounds overweight incur medical costs that are \$5,000 to \$21,000 higher than those of healthy weight individuals. Adults who are overweight by 70 pounds or more have lifetime medical costs that are \$15,000 to \$29,000 more.

5. You Can Make a Difference

Rates of overweight and obesity in America have never been higher. Today, roughly 34% of adults and 16% of children are obese. So play your part in reversing the nation's overweight and obesity trend, and exercise.

6. Spread the Health

Take the lead and be the example of healthy living and wellness for family, friends and your community.

7. Weather the Storm

Health clubs provide a safe, and protective environment for working out, no matter what the weather.

8. Better Together

Health clubs are a supportive environment to meet new people, build friendships, network, and find a workout buddy. Enlisting the support of others can increase motivation, help develop a sense of camaraderie, and better help you achieve your health and fitness goals.

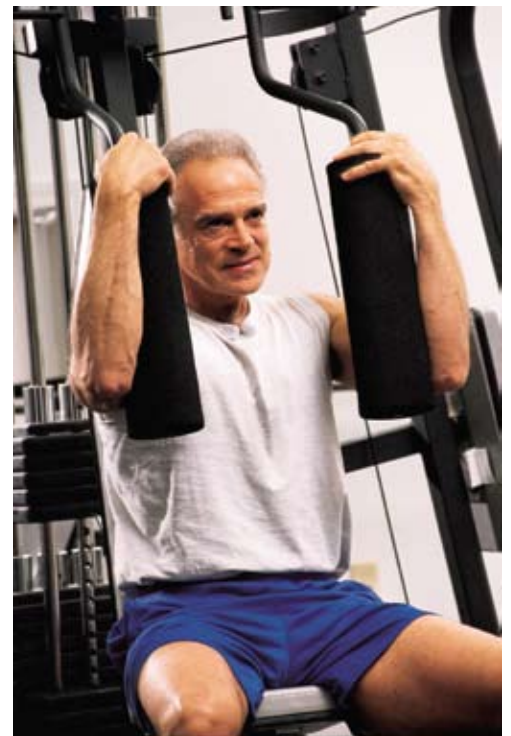
Under the support and guidance of a professionally trained staff, including certified personal trainers, you can get the most out of your workout at a club.

9. Variety is the Spice of Life

Health clubs offer more workout options in one space, than any other facility. From machines, classes, and basketball, to yoga, personal training and racquetball, you will never run out of ways to spice up your fitness routine at a club.

10. You Deserve It

A health club membership is not a luxury; it is an investment in your health.



Even a little overweight, inactivity hurts the heart - By Ed Edelson, HealthDay Reporter

Even a few extra pounds and just a little inactivity increased the risk of heart failure in a major study of American doctors.

"What this study shows is that even overweight men who are not obese have an increase in heart failure risk," said Dr. Satish Kenchaiah, lead author of a report on the finding in the Dec. 23 issue of *Circulation*.

As for exercise, "even a little amount of physical activity appears to decrease the risk of heart failure," said Kenchaiah, who did the research as an epidemiologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and is now at the U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

The study has followed more than 21,000 doctors for two decades, measuring among other factors the influence of overweight and physical activity on development of heart failure, the progressive loss of ability to pump blood, which is often a prelude to major coronary events.

Outright obesity, defined as a body-mass index of 30 or over, has long been known as a risk factor for heart failure. The new report concentrated on men who were borderline overweight, with a body-mass index of 25 to 29.9.

About 5 percent of the doctors were obese, and 40 percent were overweight, when the study began. Adjusting for other risk factors such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, the study found a 49 percent increased incidence of heart failure in overweight men compared to those with a body-mass index of 25 or less. Incidence of heart failure was 180 percent for the obese men compared to the leaner ones.

It was the same story for physical activity. "Men who engaged in physical activity anywhere from one to three times a month had an 18 percent reduction in heart failure risk," Kenchaiah said. "For those who were active five to seven times a week, the reduction was 36 percent. The more you exercise, the more reduction you achieve."

The association of even minimal physical activity with reduced risk could be explained as an indicator of good habits in general, he said. "It is possible that they have a healthier lifestyle in general," Kenchaiah said.

The study found that doctors who rarely or never exercised were older, smoked cigarettes more often, and were more likely to have high blood pressure or diabetes.

"This new report reinforces what we've said in the past," said Dr. Gerald Fletcher, a preventive cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla. "Not being obese but being overweight is definitely a risk factor for heart failure."

While Fletcher said he would have liked a more definitive indicator of physical activity -- the report described it as simply breaking a sweat -- he said the study showed again that "vigorous exercise makes the difference. The more you do, the better it is for you."

Two-thirds of Americans have excess body weight, and only about 30 percent exercise regularly, Kenchaiah said. About 660,000 new cases of heart failure are diagnosed each year in the United States, he said, and 80 percent of the men and 75 percent of the women aged 65 and older who are diagnosed with heart failure die within eight years.

SOURCES: Satish Kenchaiah, M.D., U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Bethesda, Md.; Gerald Fletcher, M.D., preventive cardiologist, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Fla.; Dec. 23, 2008, *Circulation*

Make a resolution to eat breakfast! - By Larissa Beznacuk-Smyrnew, Mansfield Nutritionist

When did people stop eating breakfast? Suddenly, a meal that was as regular as brushing our teeth has become something that is only enjoyed on the weekends. This year make a resolution with yourself to eat a healthy breakfast on a regular basis. This is the number one change that you can make in your diet to feel healthier, have more energy and maintain your weight. Whether it be a smoothie, toast and peanut butter or eggs just make it something that you eat within an hour of getting up in the morning.

When you wake up in the morning, your stomach is running on empty. In order to get an energy boost and to stimulate your metabolism, it is essential to "break" your fast. The growing problems of obesity have been partially blamed on consuming too many calories at the end of the day when we are winding down by making the excuse that we have practically eaten nothing during the day.

A recent study partly funded by the National Institute of Health has shown that teenage girls who eat breakfast regularly have less

weight problems now and in the future compared to those who did not. Those who did not eat breakfast would eat higher fat foods later on during the day. These higher fat foods lead to weight gain in addition to low energy levels and feeling "sluggish".

When you wake up your insulin levels are low so by eating something within an hour of getting up it stabilizes them again and by eating at normal intervals during the day you are less likely to consume empty calories, such as soft drinks, candy and chocolate. How many times do you just feel like you need that chocolate bar in the middle of the afternoon, try eating a good breakfast and eventually that urge will subside.

Scientists have reasoned that breakfast in a way kick starts your metabolism and allows you to make better food choices during the day because you are not famished. In addition, a breakfast habit developed early will help with weight management in the long run.

Here is an easy granola that can be made on the weekend and then eaten in a rush in the mornings with milk, yogurt or just plain on

the way to whatever you are up to that day. It is also good layered with berries and vanilla yogurt as a dessert.

Almond and Dried Fruit Granola
2 ½ cups large flake rolled oats
½ cup sliced or slivered almonds
¼ cup apple juice or cider
3 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
1/3 cup brown sugar or maple syrup
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, apricots, currants)
1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl combine oats and almonds.
3. In a small saucepan combine apple juice, oil, sugar and cinnamon. Bring to a boil over medium heat and then pour over the oat mixture. Stir well.
4. Pour the granola onto a cookie sheet and bake for 40 minutes stirring at 10 minute intervals.
5. Remove from the oven and stir in the dried fruit. Allow to cool completely until crisp and then store in a container for up to one month.

Obliterating obesity, one marathon at a time



Leaving obesity (and 200 pounds) in the dust, Seth Margolies is running 12 marathons in 12 months. And that's just the beginning.

After four century rides, a 2-month bike-across-America from California to

Florida, and his latest endeavor—12 marathons in 12 months from November 2007 to November 2008—Seth Margolies still doesn't consider himself an endurance athlete, or even an athlete at all. "I'm just a guy willing to plow through and do it," he says. There's a reason he wants to be considered an average Joe who just happens to run and bike his brains out. After spending the first four decades of his life struggling with obesity and fighting a food addiction, he knows what it's like to finally find the strength and tenacity to overcome overwhelming obstacles.

Now exhilarated by achieving a variety of high-bar fitness goals, he's determined to share his story. "I am tired of waiting for others to lead the charge," he says. "If a former 400-pound man can bike for 60 days straight from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic and run marathons each month, anyone can dedicate 30 minutes a day to exercise."

A Long Road

While being 200 pounds overweight makes every day a struggle, Margolies suffered from

obesity-related health problems as well, including hypertension, high cholesterol, and sleep apnea, and his doctor warned that his weight was a grave concern. So Margolies underwent bariatric surgery in 2003, which he knew was just the first step.

While shedding the weight, he charged hard at the gym and worked with a trainer to build his core and ease some of the back pain he experienced from being so heavy. As the weight fell off and he was able to exercise more rigorously, he began to feel strong physically and mentally. He eventually gained the courage to try a spin classes at the Glendale Supersport 24 Hour Fitness in California, initially hiding in the back of the class. But as time went on, his cycling instructor Alicia Loerzel soon became a trainer and friend. Together they started racing in century rides, marathons, and a triathlon. "He came out of his shell and has a level of dedication you rarely see," Loerzel says. "He's an amazing man with a heart full of life."

Of all his grand athletic feats, nothing quite matches up to how he felt at the start line of the March 6, 2005 L.A. Marathon. It was his first marathon and his 40th birthday—the same milestone his doctor once said he might not live to celebrate. With tears welling up in his eyes, he knew if he could make it to this start and finish line, there's no telling what else he could do. Two years later, he found himself ambitiously biking across America as the first sponsored "bariatric athlete," stopping off along the way to talk to school kids about fitness and health.

Margolies is more than half way through his 12 marathons in 12 months quest, which began

last November at the New York City Marathon, the same race where he hopes to end his marathon tour in 5 months. It's been a tough road, plagued with injury, illnesses, and bouts of what-the-heck-am-I-doing syndrome, but nothing quite like what he faced in Hawaii.

En route to the Honolulu Marathon last December, Margolies suffered a nasty stomach flu. On race day he couldn't keep down anything but a few teaspoons of rice before. Walking to the starting line, a torrential downpour began and continued for the duration of the race. Drenched, tired, and sick, Margolies waded his way to the finish in a haze, until mile 18. There he saw a woman walking and crying, about to quit. He stopped to talk with her, encouraging her to continue. As a water-logged duo, they walked the rest of the race, picking up the pace for a running finish. Margolies didn't care about his time. After all, the motivation of his 12-marathon quest was to psych people up and inspire them to attempt things they previously thought they couldn't.

Although Margolies has been on the road a great deal, he still frequents the gym for cross training—zeroing in on the stationary bike, elliptical trainer, and pool to keep up cardio while giving his feet reprieve. "It's not about the next marathon," he says. "It's about the 30 minutes in the gym that will make me a stronger athlete." From struggling up a small flight of stairs to powering through double- or triple-digit miles, Seth has been there and knows how tough it can get. "I want to show people that, hey, I was there," he says. "I couldn't get up and down steps. But look at me now."

CHIP Spin for Teens raises \$115 000

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Our bikes - Mansfield Athletic Club, McGill, Club CDL, YMCA Westmount, Atwater Club

ALL OUR PARTICIPANTS - watch for all the photos on our website early next week.

On behalf of everyone at CHIP, we would like to thank you for your support and participation

at the CHIP SPIN for Teens event on Sunday, November 30, 2008. We couldn't have done it without you!

Once again, we had a sold out event with 300 participants. So far, and we're still receiving donations so it's not too late, we have raised \$115,000 for the CHIP for Teens program and other CHIP initiatives! WOW!

It is with great pride and pleasure that CHIP is able to offer our programs to the Montreal community. We will continue in our fight against heart disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer and we hope that we can count on your support and participation next year.

Sign up now and reserve your spot for next year's event!!