

Men's Health



Getting Healthy In Minutes

Everyone is over-scheduled, but there's still time for exercise

It's far easier to get started when things are broken up into smaller intervals.

In fact, most people falter when it comes to getting healthy because they attempt dramatic lifestyle overhauls, with overly restrictive diets, difficult workout regimens and an overly ambitious weight-loss objectives.

Better to set achievable goals that you can build upon. Start with a series of individual exercises that you can do in essentially 10 minutes. Some are as simple as walking or meditating. Others are more in the traditional mode of gym workouts – but on a much narrower scale.

Start small and slowly build your way to strength, health and wellness. You're far more apt to stick with this kind of gradual plan, since you'll be working your way up slowly – while avoiding round after round of potential disappointment when you fall short of initially unreachable targets.

MOVING AROUND

They say sitting is the new smoking, in the sense that so many people do it in our modern world – despite a growing body of evidence about the health impacts. Remaining so sedentary can caught deterioration of musculature, while



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leading to other health problems relating to your heart. Set a timer for every 30 minutes or so, and take a walk around – even if it's just to get a drink of water.

BETTER SNACKING

Instead of salty chips or sugary candy bars, considering more regularly eating nuts.

The New England Journal of Medicine reports that people who regularly do so are significantly less likely to deal with a variety of potentially life-threatening issues – including cancer, heart and respiratory disease, among other maladies.

QUIET TIME

Meditating has been linked

to an impressive range of benefits for both the body and the mind. Take a moment to bring mindfulness to your day. If you're unsure how to find this centered place, or feel awkward when getting started, ask friends or download an app for guidance. This is another example of how incremental activity can make a huge impact.

INTERVAL TRAINING

We often envision a trip to the gym as requiring hours of commitment. High-intensity interval training follows a different model, where there are very short rounds of exercise. So, 40 seconds of jogging in place and then 20 seconds of rest, and so on. Rotate to jumping jacks, keeping it all within a 10-minute window.

It's Not All About Money

Don't let too much personal value become tied up in your work

Thankfully, old ideas about pursuing a career at all costs have become outdated.

We now know that stress from these situations can be incredibly damaging to men's health. Still, this stereotype of the ego-driven work horse developed for a reason: Too often men still fall victim to this dangerous cycle where the work/life balance tips in the wrong direction.

They're no longer typically the sole breadwinners, however, as more and more women have moved into the workplace. That's made it easier than ever to move past a life dominated by the suit, tie and briefcase. Stay-at-home dads are on the rise, and hybrid work models have allowed spouses to become more present.

A NEW PARADIGM

A pair of unforeseen setbacks, 2008's Great Recession and 2020's COVID-19 pandemic, helped galvanize ideas around a new paradigm where the meaning of what we do matters more than the money. Working at the expense of personal goals made less sense when the economy could fall apart with such sudden force, or a coronavirus could infect and ultimately kill so many.

Fulfillment, family time and health became more import-



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ant. Resignations followed by the millions, as people completely reconfigured the role of work in their lives. Men were nudged down a new path, away from the office and toward things that bolstered their sense of well being.

TIME TO DISCONNECT

Focusing less on work has often meant less time with

internet-connected devices, with important emotional and physical benefits. Isolation and anxiety can give way to more grounded activities, including exercise, time spent with family and friends, starting a new hobby or joining a new group. Finding common purpose with others yields huge rewards, and finding that your hopes, dreams and

worries are reflected back by others can lead to a growing sense of self worth.

NEW AND BETTER HABITS

Challenge yourself to find a new rhythm, even if you can't afford to quit your job – or aren't allowed the luxury of hybrid or remote work schedules. Create a new and better

habit every day, whether that's exercising, listening to music, reading, prayer or meditation. Make it a point to talk to friends and family – really talk, not just texting. Small moments will ultimately grow into a lifetime of trust and emotional support. Those relationships were always your true legacy, not whatever you accomplished from 9-to-5 on weekdays.

Improve Your Heart Health

Heart disease remains a leading killer of men, despite medical initiatives

As hundreds of thousands die annually, it's up to those who remain to turn the tide.

We understand more than ever how to fight it. There are incredible new medicines. But so much of heart health comes down to making the right choices, taking care of yourself, and following doctor's orders.

Get started today with this checklist of things you can do to immediately improve your heart health. They can help you get back on the path to wellness, or avoid suffering from this awful disease:

QUIT SMOKING

Smoking is one of the most common contributors to developing high blood pressure, which increases your chances of suffering a stroke or heart attack. The sooner you quit, the sooner your body can begin to heal itself. If you've tried but haven't been able to stop smoking, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers useful free tips – and a handy guide to finding local resources to help. Caring professionals are standing by to support your efforts to break this unhealthy cycle, including recommendations for medications that can ease the process along.

GET MOVING

Exercising helps you lose

weight, which leads to better heart function, while strengthening your cardiovascular muscles and improving circulation. That's why it's so important to get moving. But don't fret that you'll have to run a marathon to see these results. The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of moder-

ate-intensity activity per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity. Spend less time in your chair, even that just means light-intensity activity like taking a spin around the office every 30 minutes or so. As you get stronger, increase the intensity and length of your workouts.

STOP STRESSING

Intense stress can raise men's blood pressure, providing a potential trigger for a heart attack. It's also associated with coping behavior like overeating, heavy drinking and smoking that damages the heart. Stress relief can be found in a variety of activities beyond common

suggestions like exercise. Hobbies, leisure activities and group projects are all known to lower stress, along with more personal activity like meditation, praying or yoga. If you've tried those things and are still battling symptoms of stress, consider signing up for therapy sessions to talk things out.



Colon Screenings

One in just over 20 men will develop this potentially deadly disease

Early screening is a key element in saving lives, but it all starts with making healthy lifestyle choices.

Tens of thousands of Americans die of colorectal cancer each year, according to the American Cancer Society. It's been cited as the third-leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men.

Keep yourself safe by taking part in regular screenings after middle age, and learn more about symptoms and how better living can help limit your risks:

REGULAR SCREENINGS

Men who have been deemed at average risk of colon cancer are asked to begin regular screenings at age 50, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They're generally given every 10 years. Higher risk categories include those with a family history of this form of cancer, and they may be asked to have screenings on an earlier timeline and to have them more often. You'll be instructed to completely empty your colon before the procedure, meaning you won't be allowed to eat solid food for a day beforehand.

WHAT THEY LOOK FOR

Colonoscopes with a light



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and video camera are used by doctors to search for polyps, which are small growths that can become cancerous. If found, they are removed and then subjected to a biopsy to determine if any danger for disease exists. Patients are under moderate or deep sedation. The entire procedure lasts around half an hour, and full recovery follows within a

few hours.

COLON CANCER SYMPTOMS

The only way for a doctor to detect colon cancer early is with a colonoscopy. This gives patients the best chance at meaningful treatment and potential full recovery. If the disease advances past these early stages, sufferers will

experience a number of different symptoms. They include constant pain in the abdomen, blood in their stool or blood stains in their underwear, and unexpected weight loss. Anyone with these issues should get immediate medical attention.

HEALTHY HABITS

Drink plenty of water and

get regular exercise. Doctors recommend at least 32 grams of dietary fiber every day. Limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol. Regular bowel movements without pain are a good indicator that everything is normal. Constant diarrhea may be an early warning sign that proactive measures need to be taken to improve your colon health.

Express Yourself – For Health

We're all subject to mental-health issues, but men are less likely to seek help

Suicide rates continue to rise, and it's now one of the Top 10 leading causes of death among men.

Depression and other mental disorders are often to blame, and without medical intervention these terrible outcomes will only continue. The path to recovery begins with opening up.

Here are some warning signs to look for as you evaluate your own moods, and those of the men around you – and tips on what to do next.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Feelings of depression make it easier to avoid other problems that may crop up along the way. Suddenly, men can begin to feel overwhelmed and increasingly isolated. These mental-health crises often begin with early warning signs like changes in appetite, substance abuse, trouble sleeping, and aggressive behavior. If you or someone you love experiences symptoms like those for a sustained period of time, open a conversation. If the issues persist, seek medical assistance.

TALKING IT OUT

As things spiral, men might turn to drugs, alcohol or other destructive behaviors. Health problems, financial stress and, in way too many instances, suicidal thoughts can follow. But



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relief can be found in talking to trusted loved ones and doctors. Professional help will typically include therapy and perhaps even prescription medication to help manage these feelings. Be honest about what you are going through with everyone in these non-judgmental settings. Once the cause of your depression is pinpointed, a plan to cope can finally come into focus.

Of course, feelings of anxiety, stress and anxiousness are part of every-day life. But overwhelmed employees or those suffering from personal and marital problems may find themselves experiencing these feelings without warning – and in some cases might not be able to manage them. Some even experience panic attacks, where they have accelerated

blood pressure, shortness of breath, trembling or shivers and a sense of impending doom. Family support, therapy and prescribed medicines can help.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Unending or increasing stress can be a contributor to the development of a mental-health disorder. The

National Alliance on Mental Illness recommends a variety of activities to combat feelings of being overwhelmed, including daily exercise, taking time for yourself, and employing better time management skills. One of their most important recommendations, however, will always be expressing your feelings. Bottling them up only makes things worse.

There Are Apps For That

Sorting through this growing pile of computer-assisted help isn't easy

The app market for mobile devices is dominated in some areas by fitness- and health-focused innovations.

These apps are nothing new, of course, but emerging wearable tech has supercharged the segment in the years since the Fitbit tracker took them into the mainstream in the 2000s.

Today, navigating the virtual marketplace for the right app can be exhausting. As with gym memberships of old, many of these purchases begin with a flurry of activity only to be abandoned after a few weeks. Here's how to find an app that matches your personal needs and goals.

CALORIE COUNTERS

The best way to get healthy, lose weight and keep it off, is through a regular regimen of diet and exercise. This isn't always easy for anyone who can't afford a personal dietician to keep them motivated and focused. Diet trackers help you maintain entered goals by counting calories based on what you consume each day. The best apps will offer a huge database of foods, including most name-brand and restaurant-sold foods. New models even sync with other wearable tech and health apps to give you the fullest possible picture of how



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you're doing.

FITNESS TRACKERS

The first fitness tracker, pioneered by Fitbit, brought affordable motion-based counters to market long before smartwatches. The company continues to innovate and expand, even as countless others have produced their own updates and accessory-laden models. They deftly combine

style, affordability and functionality with next-generation features that go well beyond step counting. They'll monitor your heart and track your sleep, while boasting much, much longer battery life.

EXERCISE AND TRAINING

If you're having trouble getting to the gym, can't afford a membership or prefer to workout along rather than in

crowded spaces, bring your workout home with one of the modern exercise and fitness apps. They'll produce weekly plans based on your personal goals, combined with new challenges like high-intensity interval training.

EMOTIONAL MOTIVATION

Positive thinking remains an essential element in well-

ness, and app technology can help balance your health and fitness goals with a sense of contentment. You'll typically be asked a series of questions which the app will then use to track your progress toward goals. This kind of encouragement can be very helpful, even if it's only in the form of online activities and games. We all need a little boost sometimes.

Focus On Your Skin

Men under 49 are at a higher risk of melanoma than any other cancer

U.S. males are also 55 percent more likely to die after developing melanoma than women of the same age.

These sobering numbers from the Skin Cancer Foundation also note that the highest risk age group of 15 to 39 year olds, likely because they spent so much time outside. Education is often a key element in these bad outcomes, too.

Most skin cancers, including melanoma, have a very high cure rate when caught and treated early. We can also do more to protect ourselves before we go out in the sun.

Why are men more susceptible, and what can be done about it? Let's go inside the numbers:

WHY THE NUMBERS ARE UP

Men's skin actually contains more elastin and collagen than women, which makes ultraviolet rays more dangerous, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. Men also tend to be less educated about the danger, in particular as it relates to sun exposure.

As a result, men age 50 or older have become much more likely over the years to develop melanoma than their female counterparts.

GENETICS PLAY A ROLE

Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer, and family history is one of the principal predictors for development according to the National Cancer Institute. Research any history of cancer in your extended family, and share this information with your physician or dermatologist.

These professionals will then develop a strategy of examination and treatment to increase the chances of early detection and wellness. Those with a family history of skin cancers also have as much as a 20 percent chance of relapse within the first year after diagnosis.

PREVENTION TIPS

Men should protect them-

selves when outside, in particular when they are going to in the sun for long periods of time at work, playing sports or at the beach. In some cases, it's practically impossible to entirely avoid the sun. So make sure to use a broad-spectrum sunscreen on exposed skin, and make sure it has an SPF of 15 or higher. Swimmers should look for

protection that is water resistant, and be vigilant about reapplying.

Create still more protection by wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV-blocking lenses. Then schedule regular well visits for skin examinations, since successful treatments for this disease so often hinge on early discovery.



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