



Make Exercise Work for You!

Did you know that laughing 100 times may burn as many calories as ten minutes of cycling? Laughter provides a mini workout for abdominal, respiratory, facial, and back muscles, and it releases endorphins, just as a jog around the block does. Although you will probably not see laugh classes at your local gym anytime soon, the surprising benefits of laughter show us that even if we have abandoned our gym membership and buried our running shoes in the back of the closet, there are many ways to add more exercise into our lives!

We have heard many times how important exercise is to our well-being. It affects heart health, metabolic health, cancer, bone density, muscle strength, mental health, mood, and lifespan. It is also important to keep in mind that exercise does not act alone—diet is vital as well. For example, an hour of activity such as biking may burn 400 calories, but the small milkshake you buy as a reward for exercising may have 550 calories. The milkshake may also contain over $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar, which will undo many of the exercise benefits you just worked for, such as healthier blood sugar levels.

We all want to be healthy, so why is it hard for many of us to exercise? For many, the key is to integrate exercise into daily life, rather than having it be an extra thing that you “have” to do just because it is “good for you”. To make exercise a part of life, it should be enjoyable, and also must fit into your schedule. So remember two tips for increasing your physical activity to fit with your busy schedule: make it fun, and make it fast.

Make it Fun!

- Try a new group class, like Zumba or dance. Group activities can help you stay motivated.
- Hiking, fishing, climbing, walking, and other outdoor activities are fun hobbies and also great exercise.
- Playing with your children can be a great way to keep both you AND your children healthy.
- If you or your children play video games, try so called “exergaming” - video games that are active and engage the whole body such as the Xbox-Kinect or Wii.
- Recreational sports leagues can be a low-pressure way to get active and meet new people.
- Instead of a coffee date with a friend, grab your coffee to go and have a walking coffee break.
- Instead of going out to dinner in the summer, consider bringing your food to the park for a picnic and strolling through the park or throwing around a Frisbee.
- Remember that time spent doing daily activities such as cleaning and gardening count as physical activity. Put on some music to make it less of a chore.
- Don’t forget about raking the leaves and shoveling the snow this fall and winter!
- Biking or walking to work may be more fun than sitting in your car while getting stuck in traffic. Multitask by using your commute time as exercise time. And if that is not an option, at least try to park as far away as possible.
- And, remember, if work or an appointment requires you to go up a second, third, or fourth floor, take the stairs! These steps can go a long way.

Make it Fast!

Did you know that short bursts of exercise can be just as effective as longer ones when it comes to our health? This is the idea behind high-intensity interval training, or HIIT. In HIIT, periods of intense activity are alternated with periods of low activity. The periods are short; for example, one exercise involves 20 seconds of all-out effort, followed by two minutes of exercising at a slow pace. This is repeated two more times, and includes two minutes of warm-up and three minutes of cool-down. Studies have shown that this 10-minute session is effective at increasing aerobic fitness and blood-sugar control, when repeated only three times a week for 12 weeks. HIIT can be practiced with any kind of activity, whether running, swimming, cycling, walking, or any type of activity that can lead to exertion. A recent study showed that even climbing up and down stairs can be an effective HIIT activity.

As you can see, there are many ways to get more exercise besides more time on the treadmill. Use one of the ideas here, or think of your own ideas about what kind of activity will fit into your lifestyle. And remember, if you are enjoying some couch-potato time, consider putting on something funny to watch!

Sources

<https://laughteryoga.org/thoughts-about-burning-calories-and-the-video-from-the-university-of-exeter-2/>

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/features/give-your-body-boost-with-laughter#1>

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000385.htm>

Biddle SJH, Batterham AM. High-intensity interval exercise training for public health: a big HIT or shall we HIT it on the head? International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. 2015. 12:95. <https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-015-0254-9>

Science Daily. New study recommends using active videogaming ('exergaming') to improve children's health.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/05/130517085817.htm>

Science Daily. Researchers find brief, intense stair climbing is a practical way to boost fitness.

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Best Practices for Food Safety while Outdoors

This time of year often makes for a great time to get outdoors to be active as summer temperatures begin to drop, but before colder temperatures set in. In Colorado, we love to be outside and active so this often means planning for food to eat on the trail or at a campsite. Warm weather is also connected with higher risk of foodborne illness so it's important to focus on ways to keep food safe in outdoor settings. This requires planning and consideration prior to going hiking or camping, but taking the extra steps will be worth it to prevent those 'bad bugs' from spoiling the fun.

Elderly persons, pregnant women, young children, and immune-compromised individuals are more vulnerable to foodborne illness so it is especially important for these individuals or their caregivers to follow recommended food safety practices. All adventurers are susceptible to illness caused by food so everyone needs to understand and practice the following [food safety recommendations](#):

1. Clean hands

Handwashing is the best way to prevent spread of germs but it is usually more challenging in outdoor environments.

- Use biodegradable soap and warm water, when possible.
- Scrubbing the entire hand is a key step in handwashing, especially in less-than-ideal conditions.
- Hand sanitizer or wipes can be used if soap and water are unavailable; however, they are not as effective in destroying viruses.

2. Clean water and contact surfaces

Cleanliness includes using a clean water source. Even the most pristine-looking water can be contaminated by microscopic pathogens.

- Always filter or boil water for safe drinking and dishwashing.
- Choose a method appropriate for potential risks in your water source and follow the instructions carefully.
- It's important to note in our state that at higher elevations, water will boil at lower temperatures so allow for extra cooking time.
- When camping, boil a pot of water while enjoying your meal to have ready for washing dishes afterwards.
- Keep dishes and food prep area clean, and separate raw products from other foods to avoid cross-contamination. Raw meats should be sealed in separate packages or double bagged. Don't put cooked meats or ready-to-eat foods on dishes that held raw meats and wash utensils before reusing.

3. Check time and temperature

Bacteria can grow rapidly between 40°F and 140°F and Colorado summer and fall temperatures often fall within this 'Danger Zone.' Before food is cooked or after it has been prepared, limit the amount of time that perishable foods are left out to 'no more than two hours or one hour if the outdoor temperature is 90°F or higher.' Some bacteria produce toxins that cannot be destroyed by heating, making it especially important to keep foods such as cut fruit and vegetables, ready-to-eat salads, milk products, poultry, eggs, and meats at safe temperatures.

- Keep cold foods cold and heat hot foods to appropriate temperatures.

- Do not bring raw meat, including poultry, products unless you can keep them at proper temperatures until use.
- If perishables are kept cold in a cooler, then cook thoroughly to [USDA Safe Minimum Internal Temperature](#) guidelines.
- The best way to know if food has reached a safe cooking temperature is bring a meat thermometer and use it!

4. Plan ahead

Prepping foods at home can make outdoor trips more manageable, like cracking raw eggs into a leak-proof container, as long as these foods are held at 40°F or below until ready to use. When organizing a longer trip, consider freezing cold foods to [pack in a cooler](#) and use early in your trip, and plan to enjoy nonperishable or dehydrated foods later in your trip. For short excursions or for those times when you can't bring a cooler, shelf-stable snack foods like meal replacement bars, trail mix, whole fresh fruit, or a simple peanut butter and jelly sandwich can be safe and nourishing options.

For more details and tips on food safety in the outdoors, including seafood safety, please view the US Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, fact sheet: [Food Safety While Hiking, Camping, and Boating](#). CSU alumna, Cornell University food safety expert, and outdoor enthusiast, Gretchen Wall, shared some of her tried-and-true foods safety tips on [“How to bend those food safety rules \(a little\) while camping.”](#) Also remember to pack out what you pack in, help keep our wild areas clean and enjoyable for the next adventurer.

Hyperlinked Resources:

Colorado State University Extension, Colorado Farm to Table. (2016, May). *How to Pack a Cooler*. Retrieved from: <http://farmtotable.colostate.edu/eat-resources/pack-cooler.php#.WUGHlWjyuUI>

Foodsafety.org. (2017). *Your Gateway to Federal Food Safety Information*. Retrieved from: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/>

GrindTV. (2017, March 17). *How to bend those food safety rules (a little) while camping*. Retrieved from: <http://www.grindtv.com/camping/bend-food-safety-rules-little-camping/#FV5rI0oTDT0CCv0P.97>

USDA FSIS. (2015, January 15). *Safe Minimum Internal Temperature Chart*. Retrieved from: https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/safe-minimum-internal-temperature-chart/ct_index

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