

Health is a treasure

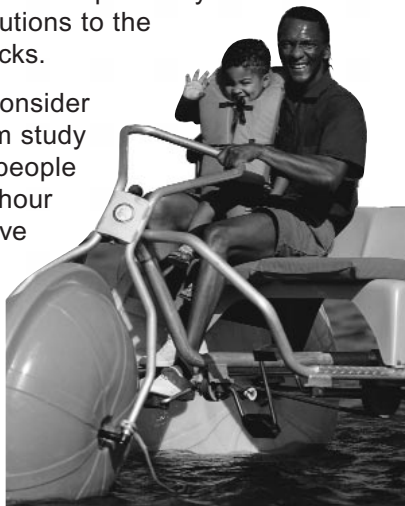
Exercise Part 2 of 3

by Donald R. Hall, DrPH, CHES

Many people express an interest in physical activity and becoming more fit, but they never seem to get started or if they do their good intentions are short lived. If this seems to fit your life you can take comfort in the fact that you are in the majority. Most people don't have a regular physical activity program. By not getting started, however, they are missing out on many good health benefits such as: more energy, a slimmer figure or stronger physique, a healthier heart, better mental and emotional health and a host of other great benefits. If you are missing out on these benefits, consider this list of common reasons why many people say they don't exercise. Think positively. There are possible solutions to the most common roadblocks.

• **I don't have time.** Consider this. A recent long-term study involving over 16,000 people showed that for every hour people exercise they live an extra two hours. Invest in your future. Be physically active daily.

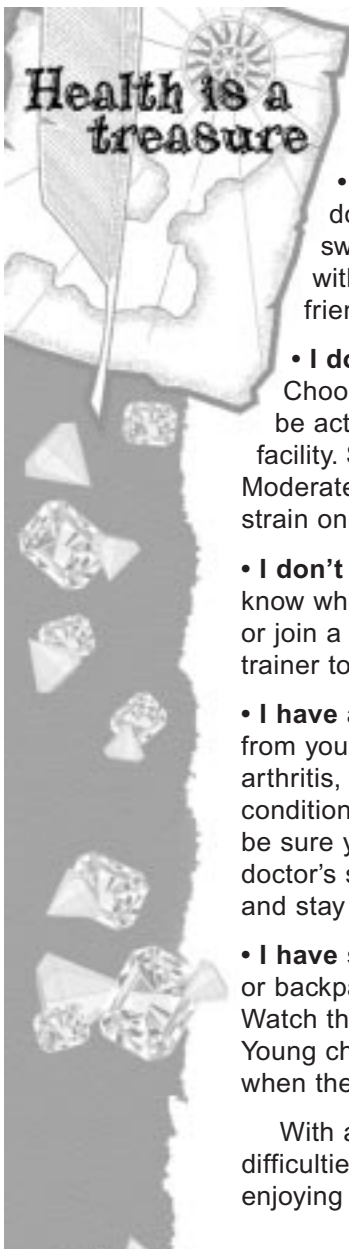
• **It's not safe.** Go with a friend. Find neighborhoods that are quiet and safe.



Bike on cycle trails and walking paths away from the traffic. Wear protective gear. Join a fitness club or center. You can also exercise in your own home with music, exercise videos, stair stepping, and home gym sets.

• **The weather's too hot, cold, or wet.** Walk in an air-conditioned shopping mall before stores open. Join a gym or YMCA. Exercise to music in your home with family or friends. In cold, wet weather bundle up. Wear a hat. Take

Of all temporal possessions health is the most precious. Wealth, learning, and honor are dearly purchased at the loss of health. None of these can secure happiness if health is lacking. CDF 20



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an umbrella. Enjoy the brisk air. In hot weather, go early, or late, in the cooler part of the day. Drink plenty of water and be careful not to overdo.

- **I don't like to exercise.** Don't do activities you don't enjoy. Look for fun alternatives (bike, skate, swim, garden, hike, play games, walk the dog, play with the kids). Exercise to music. Exercise with a friend. Join group activities.

- **I don't like to sweat.** Avoid strenuous exercises. Choose the cool times of the morning and evening to be active. Exercise in an air-conditioned room or facility. Swim. Walk at a brisk but comfortable pace. Moderate exercises are very beneficial and put less strain on your body, joints and cooling system.

- **I don't know how to get started.** Ask a friend you know who is active to help you get started. Take a class or join a group fitness program. Contact a personal trainer to help you get started.

- **I have a health problem.** Get advice and guidance from your physician. Most health problems including arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and heart conditions, improve with physical activity. You just need to be sure you go about your activity correctly. Get your doctor's specific guidance. Choose moderate activities and stay within your bounds or limits.

- **I have small children.** Take them with you in a stroller or backpack. Take turns with your spouse or a neighbor. Watch their kids while they exercise and visa versa. Young children also need activity. Take them with you when they can walk well.

With a little creative effort, you can overcome most difficulties. Find a solution that works for you and begin enjoying the benefits of a fit, healthy body!

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