

Excuses, Excuses: But I Don't Have Time to Exercise You Can Work It Out

By: Karen Feldscher

The truth is you really *DO* have time to exercise. Even if you think you don't.

Sure, you may be really busy with school and after-school commitments. But getting exercise does not have to be a "big deal." You can do it a little at a time. You can work out dressed in any way that works for you. And exercise can take many forms beyond the basic sit-ups, pushups or squats.

Remember, the more you exercise, the more energetic you feel. Exercise can also reduce feelings of depression or frustration. And it's heart-healthy: Every time you do aerobic exercise you make your heart more efficient – and that can protect you from heart attack or stroke in the future.

Let's say, for example, that you don't want to exercise with anyone else around. One idea: even if you've got just 10 minutes, put on some music with a good beat and dance around your room. Got 20 minutes? Dance to four or five songs and you've got yourself a pretty decent workout. Do this three times a week and you've got the minimum recommended aerobic activity for the week.

Do you get a ride to school? Maybe you could bike instead. Or walk (briskly). Both are great aerobic exercise. And all you need for either one are a decent pair of sneakers.

Another easy idea: Whenever there's a choice between taking the elevator or the stairs, head for the stairs. You have to go up anyway; this way you'll get exercise at the same time.

Exercise shouldn't feel miserable or painful. If it does, you'll never keep it up. Find something fun – that's the key.

There's always running, swimming, biking and hiking. And here are some other options:

- Skateboarding
- Yoga
- In-line skating
- Shooting hoops
- Jumping rope
- Playing whiffle ball
- Tennis
- Martial arts
- Ultimate Frisbee

- Cheerleading
- Ice skating

One nice perk from exercising: It's a boost not just for your body, but for your brain, too. Some people get their most creative thoughts while they're exercising.



Daily Dose:

At least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week is the recommended minimum.

A good goal is to try to get your aerobic activity up to a total of 60 minutes a day, but if you can't, no sweat. Even a small amount of physical activity is better than nothing.

Exercise Tips:

- **Make A Date:** Do you have other friends who think they don't have time to exercise? Make an exercise "date" with one or more of them. Studies show that people who exercise with a friend or group exercise more often. And they have more fun doing it.
- **Exercise With Purpose:** Walk the dog, or even make some money, by walking the neighbor's dog. Or, take your brother or sister to the park, and get some babysitting credits while you're at it.
- **Join a Gym:** Check out local gyms for teen memberships. Maybe you could squeeze in some workout time in the morning, before school.

This article has been reviewed by BodiMojo expert Carolyn Butterworth