

## Tips For Fall Fitness

How many New Year's Eves have you spent sipping champagne and vowing to get more fit in the coming year? And how many times have you failed to follow through? December 31 over a drink is too late to set goals and make promises - think of September as the new year! Here are 10 ways to start making the most of the season.

- 1. Take advantage of the weather.** Fall months are a great time to exercise outdoors and enjoy cooler temperatures. It doesn't have to seem like exercise to be a great workout. Raking leaves or doing some fall outdoor yard work is a great way to get the heart pumping, and a great calorie-burner.
- 2. Think outside the box.** Always wanted to learn to ballroom dance? Attempt to box? Master the jump rope? Fall is a great time to learn something new.
- 3. Be an active TV watcher.** Many people get geared up for fall premieres of their favorite television shows. While you watch, you can walk on the treadmill, do standing lunges, do tricep dips off the couch, or lift weights. During commercials, do push-ups or sit-ups. In a one-hour show, you probably have close to 20 minutes worth of commercial interruption.
- 4. Integrate exercise into your life.** If you're spending the afternoon taking kids to soccer practice, instead of reading a book or visiting with another parent, walk around the outside of the field while they practice.
- 5. Rejuvenate yourself.** Fall is the time to rejuvenate body, mind and spirit. Get a [massage](#) after your run. Learn to meditate. Take an art class. Treat yourself not just with exercise but other activities that promote wellness so you can feel good physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- 6. Remember the 30-day rule.** It takes about four weeks for the body to adapt to lifestyle changes. That's why people who give up on their fitness programs tend to do so within the first 30 days.  
  
So, when the alarm goes off in the morning and it's darker and colder, don't roll over and hit the snooze button. Try to stick with a program for a month. After a month, behavior patterns will have adapted and it will be much easier to stick with it after that.
- 7. Strive for the 3 Cs.** Commitment, convenience, and consistency - having all three will lead to a successful fitness program.
- 8. Deal with darkness.** The best way to enjoy fall is to exercise outdoors. But it is getting darker earlier, and staying dark later in the morning, so be smart and safe. Just because it's 6 p.m. (or a.m.) and dark doesn't mean you can't work out. If walking or running outdoors, wear a reflective vest and carry a flashlight. When cycling, affix a light to your helmet or bike.
- 9. Dress in layers.** When exercising outside, layer your clothing. Before your body warms up, you may feel chilled, but once the blood gets pumping, you'll feel overdressed. These days, there's no

lack of great weather gear. Don't forget the sunglasses, Fall sun can be blinding at certain times of the day.

**10. Find your motivation.** Everybody is motivated by different things. It's important to first discover what your individual goals are, whether it's [losing weight](#), strengthening and toning, or preparing for a race or event. But goals aren't enough to get you there; you have to be motivated by the day-to-day workouts. Choose something you'll enjoy doing and will be likely to keep up, whether it's walking or hiking with a friend, working with a trainer, or taking part in a "boot camp" class. Remember that anything worth having takes work.