

7 Ways to Sneak In More Exercise

More than ½ of all adults living in the United States don't exercise. What do you think is the number one reason why they don't?

If you said "lack of time", you're right!

Time Spent or Time *Invested*?

For many people, getting in a daily dose of exercise takes too big of a chunk of time out of an already jam-packed day. And it's no wonder.

If you factor in the time it takes to get dressed, drive to the gym, workout, shower and then drive home, you're talking possibility the better side of 2 - 2 ½ hours. Having this amount of time available 4 to 6 times per week and on a regular basis is a **luxury many people just don't have.**

Time for a New Definition!

Since I am all about finding solutions to problems, I suggest it's time we **change our definition of "exercise"** and perhaps broaden it a bit. You can do this by starting to simply look for opportunities to get up and MOVE your body more throughout the day- no matter how small or insignificant it may seem.

Rather than thinking we have to allocate large amounts of time to "workout", let's be creative and find ways to sneak it into our daily routines.

Unfortunately many people have the idea that if they can't spend at least 30 minutes sweating on a cardio machine or 2 hours at the gym lifting heavy weights then they shouldn't even bother to lace up their sneakers.

There are two main limitations with this idea. Not only is proper exercise program design much more diverse and all-inclusive than that, but the **belief that we are restricted to such a rigid, "formal" exercise format** is just plain false.

The key here is to simply take as many opportunities as possible to get your body moving. EVERY LITTLE BIT COUNTS!

It's a Lifestyle Thing

If you focus on living a more active lifestyle in general, then you might find that there are more ways to add exercise into the course of an average day than you might realize.

Here are 10 Ways I Use to Sneak In More Exercise

1. Every hour, get up from your desk and **stretch** your back, chest, neck and hips. This just takes a minute and is such a well-worth it relief to your body. Put a stick-up note on your computer or set a timer to remind you if you tend to get too caught up in your work.
2. The next time you're just standing, perform ankle, hip, arm and neck circles to help **increase circulation and blood flow throughout your joints**, chakras and body. Adding little things like this to your day help keep you from getting more and more stiff and immobile as you age.
3. The next time you are seated, **point and flex your feet** while spreading your toes and stretching your calves. This helps to keep the circulation running up and down your legs, hips and back. (Do this with shoes off if possible)
4. When talking on the phone, use a **portable telephone** sometimes so you can walk around and move a little, maybe even going outside for a breath of fresh air and a bit of warm sunshine while you chat!
5. As you go about your day: outside running errands, buzzing around the house or at the office- pick up the pace and **walk fast or move briskly**. You'll give your body a little wake-up call and burn a few extra calories in the process!
6. Do some **yoga** while chatting on the phone. (This is best with a portable phone.) All you have to do is get down on the floor and S-T-R-E-T-C-H something! I know you'll find something tight! If you prefer not to be on the floor you can still do some stretches by putting one leg up on a chair and stretching your hips, bending over and touching your toes, reaching up to the ceiling or stretching your chest in a doorway.
7. **Create a health habit**. One of the little health habits I started sometime ago is a little commitment I made with myself to get down on the floor and foam roll (stretch) my back and chest after sitting at my desk all day. No matter what I'm wearing (I've done it in miniskirts!), how tired I am or how rushed I might be to get out the door, the very last time that I that I leave my desk for the night I get down on the floor and roll-roll away! This quick little habit only takes about 20 seconds, but not only do I get a nice chest-opening stretch, but I get the good feeling inside of knowing that I kept a commitment to myself and my posture.

8. Next time you are scheduled to meet a friend, instead of going out for drinks, dinner or a movie, plan to meet and do something physical together. One of my favorite things to do is to get together with some of my best girlfriends and take a nice walk. Talk about the ultimate multi-task! By doing this, my friends and I can talk and **catch up on our lives, get some fresh air and burn calories all at the same time!** Of course this works with family members too. After school or work, take a walk with one of your kids or significant other and use that time as quality time to connect and be healthy together!

(And don't let bad weather stop you. If it's too cold, rainy, windy or snowy to be outside, just make plans to meet at a local yoga or exercise class or even just get together and pop in a yoga or exercise video that you can do together)

9. Get in the habit of randomly throughout the day doing various **callisthenic exercises** like push-ups, squats, sit-ups, lunges, heel raises or if you're feeling really inspired, try jumping jacks, knee-lifts or jogging in place. You can either do these exercises for 30 seconds or a minute each or just do each for 20 reps and have fun. To make this even better, if possible put on one of your favorite songs and just go crazy!
10. Did you know you can flatten your abs while buying a coffee? Another trick I do is to do **abdominal exercises whenever I find myself waiting in line.** Next time you find yourself in line for anything- be it the grocery store or gas station, take a deep breath, lift your chest, press down your shoulders and then exhale and pull in your abdominals up and in. By doing this, you can use idle time to your advantage using it to tone and strengthen your tummy!

Lastly, there are **two important points that you must keep in mind** when trying to sneak more exercise and activity into your lifestyle:

#1: Remembering to do it! Don't get so caught up in your daily tasks that you forget to do one or two of your new-found tricks. It takes only 10 days to create a new habit so start today and you'll be doing it automatically before you know it!

#2: Be creative. Depending on your daily routine, environment and work schedule, applying a bit of innovation can do wonders. Remember, there are no rules and nothing is too small or insignificant to count. Even if you just start with breathing more deeply, you are already making a positive difference!

I hope you enjoyed the **10 Ways I Use to Sneak In More Exercise** and it gave you some ideas as to how to create your own health habits as a regular part of your daily routine. Think out of the box, remembering that they don't have to be anything formal or elaborate to still be effective and well worth it.

You might not always have big chunks of time to perform formalized exercise routines, but it's important to note that **being active is a lifestyle** and that it all adds up in the end to a healthier, more fit you!

Amy Fournier Constantino is a holistic nutritionist and lifestyle coach and a fitness and dance instructor. She is available for speaking engagements, workshops, media opportunities, group exercise classes and private consultation. To learn more about Amy or to contact her, please visit: www.therippleeffectdiet.com, email: therippleeffect@aol.com or call: 978-500-8943.

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