

Monthly Newsletter

Fitness in a Flash- Exercise That Fits into Your Schedule

You've heard it all before: that exercise is important, good for your health and happiness, and for some it is a necessary ally in their battle to maintain a healthy weight. You know you should be doing it, and if you are already exercising, that you could be doing more. The question left on so many of our minds though, is **Where Do I Fit it All In?** Between work, family, community, and social obligations most of us are left with precious free time and a thousand gadgets just begging for us to fill up that time with. How can you balance the needs and pressures of your life with the benefits of regular physical activity?

There is hope for those of us with a tight schedule, and a desire to be happier and healthier (that's not you, is it?). Recent research has shown us that there is a training style that allows us to get the major benefits of extended exercise, in a short time frame. This training style is termed "**HIITS**", which stands for **High Intensity Interval Training System** and it allows you to achieve the benefits of a full hour of training in as little as 15 minutes. You read that correctly, don't worry, and it is a welcome piece of information for many.

If you are just beginning a workout routine, it's important that you see your physician to make sure that you are physically ready for the increased stress that exercise places on your body. Here a few things to keep in mind while incorporating HIITS into your lifestyle:

Turn Up The Intensity: The key to HIITS is the term "High Intensity", and it is relative to your fitness level. For some, what may seem like a breezy five mile jog before breakfast would be a nightmare on par with a Stephen King novel for another. When we talk about intensity, we use a scale of 1-10 to rate how you feel, called the Rate of Perceived Exertion, or RPE. A "1" would be equivalent to sitting quietly on a couch reading, and a "10" would be going through boot camp with a drill sergeant yelling in your ear for 30 more push-ups.

HIITS incorporates short periods of high intensity work (think of feeling like an 8 on the scale of 1-10), with periods of lower intensity work, or rest. An easy example of this would be to sprint as fast as you can for 1 minute, and walk slowly in between for 2 minutes, repeating this cycle 5 times to reach the 15 minute mark. A study presented by the American College of Sports Medicine showed that just 2 weeks of HIITS cardio training reaped the same benefits as 6-8 weeks of regular endurance training.

Start Small, but Think Big: Start gradually, and work your way up to higher intensities over time as your body acclimates. This may mean that your High Intensity Interval is a slow jog, with complete rest in between. As long as you feel you are working hard, then you are meeting the requirements. Think of using big body movements, like exercises that use a few muscles at once rather than one at a time. An example of this would be riding your bike, which uses the muscles in your legs, back, and abdominals; versus doing bicep curls which only focuses on your bicep muscles. You can use HIITS as a strength training method as well, but think of using compound movements (meaning 2 or more activities combined) like combining a squat with a bicep curl at the same time to increase the intensity.

No Gym Needed: Since HIITS training is based on short bursts of physical activity, you can complete entire workouts with little to no equipment necessary. Some examples of great HIITS activities include: Jumping Jacks, Running (even in place), Jumping Rope, or Rapid Push-Ups (these can be modified if you are a beginner by trying them on your knees, or against a wall). Any activity that gets your heart rate up quickly can likely qualify for a HIITS workout, just make sure that you pay attention to your body and stop if you feel pain or dizziness.

Feel the (after) Burn: Due to the intense nature of HIITS training, your body stays in a high calorie burning state for up to 24 hours after a HIITS style workout. This means that while you are back at your desk checking emails, your body is still reaping the benefits of your workout 2 hours ago. This training style also has been proven to increase levels of the Human Growth Hormone, which not only is associated with burning more fat, but also has a positive effect on the immune system. Keep in mind that with any high intensity exercise, you want to give your body a chance to rest and recover afterwards which means you should perform a HIITS workout on alternating days of the week.

Cardio Challenge: High intensity training is not something you can do while joking with a friend; it is designed to be a challenging workout. The upside is that it is short enough for you to push through it, and be done so you can move on with your day. Because it elevates your heart rate in rapid succession, it has shown to have a positive impact on your Heart Health. Keep in mind that if you are under care for a cardiovascular condition, you should monitor your exertion carefully and keep in communication with your physician about any changes in your health.

HIITS is simple to do, and can be done anytime, and anywhere. The question that we are left with then is, what are you going to do with all of your free time now?

Monthly Newsletter

Double the Fun: Combining Exercises to Multiply the Benefits

Strength training is an excellent way to increase your strength, bone density, and balance capabilities, while also having a positive impact on your HDL (good) cholesterol and well being. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends strength training on 2-3 days of the week, in addition to your cardiovascular exercise. If you are short on time but looking for a way to fit this into your schedule, consider doubling up your exercises to save on minutes, but splurge on your calorie burn.

When you combine two exercises into one, often called compound exercises, they work more than one muscle group at a time. You can think of this as multi-tasking in the exercise world, and the more tasks you are doing at once, the more your heart and breathing rates go up which equates to more calories being burned. It also cuts your workout time almost in half, which is good news no matter which way you look at it.

Here is an example of a full body workout using compound exercises. Complete 2-3 sets of each exercise before moving on to the next.

Start with a 5-10 minute warm up to get your heart rate elevated and your muscles ready to work, like walking briskly or using an elliptical.



Squat and Press: Either holding dumbbells at shoulder level, or using your own bodyweight, squat down with your hips back as if you were about to sit into a chair. Make sure to keep your chest upright, and pull your abdominals in to protect your spine. Once your thighs are parallel to the ground (or as close to it as you can manage) stand upright, and simultaneously lift your hands straight overhead. Repeat for 8-10 repetitions, resting between sets.

Lunge and Curl: Holding dumbbells or other resistance (water bottles, for example) with your arms at your side, step with one foot forward into a lunge position and sink your back knee until it almost touches the ground. Make sure to keep your upper body upright, and your abdominals pulled in. As you push back up to standing, curl your arms up towards your shoulders to complete a bicep curl. Repeat, switching legs for 8-10 repetitions on each leg.

Push-Up and Plank: Holding yourself in push-up position (either on your hands and knees, or hands and toes) slowly lower yourself down so that your chest touches the ground or until your elbows make a 90 degree angle. As you push yourself back up to the starting position, hold the "up" position for 10-15 seconds, repeating this exercise 8-10 times and resting between sets.

Wood Chop: Stand with feet slightly farther than shoulder width apart. Hold a medicine ball or weight, and as you squat slightly bring the weight to one side of the body. As you stand, slowly rotate and bring the weight overhead and to the opposite side of the body. Repeat 8-10 times, and then switch sides.

Remember, fitness can fit in anywhere. Try adding just one of these activities into your daily regimen starting today, and slowly add on each week until you are completing this entire workout. When and where you fit this in depends on your energy levels throughout the day, but when you make it something that works with your lifestyle it becomes a habit that can last a lifetime.

Monthly Newsletter

MEAL TIME

Grilled Chicken with Pineapple and Tomatillo Salsa

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons canola oil, plus more for oiling the grill
- 1/2 large sweet white onion (such as Vidalia), cut into thick rings
- 6 pineapple spears
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 1/2 cups tomatillo salsa
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves



Nutritional Information

(Per Serving: 2 tostadas)

Calories: 300 (90 from fat)

Sugar: 18 g

Fat: 10 g

Saturated Fat: 1.5 g

Protein: 30 g

Carbohydrate: 20 g

Dietary Fiber: 1 g

Cholesterol: 75 mg

Sodium: 930 mg

Oil grill grates and preheat grill to medium-high heat. Brush onions and pineapple with 1 tablespoon of the oil then season with salt and pepper. Grill, flipping once, until just charred in spots and softened, 6 to 8 minutes total; transfer to a plate. When cool enough to handle, roughly chop onions and pineapple and transfer to a bowl. Add tomatillo salsa, cilantro, lime juice, salt and pepper and toss gently to combine.

Brush chicken all over with remaining tablespoon of oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill, flipping once, until deep golden brown all over and cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes total.

Transfer chicken to a platter, spoon grilled pineapple salsa over the top and serve immediately.