

[IMAGE]

Winter Fitness Tips

By Editorial Staff

Now that Daylight Savings Time has been put to bed for another winter, many people put their fitness plans to bed as well. Shorter days, colder nights, inclement weather – the "winter blues" can do more than just impact your psychologically; it can push your health and wellness goals, particularly those related to physical activity, off the rails through the new year, if not longer.

But it doesn't have to be that way; not unless you let it. Here are four simple suggestions that can help you stay on course toward becoming a fitter, healthier version of yourself every day, even the shortest, coldest, wettest / rainiest (and don't forget, most hectic / challenging due to the holidays) ones you can anticipate in the next few months:

- *Don't Do It Alone:* If you haven't recruited a fitness buddy already, now's the time. For all those moments when "no" creeps into your thoughts, a fitness partner can help you continue saying "yes" – yes to eating right, yes to working out, yes to staying calm, cool and collected. And remember, these days, a fitness buddy doesn't necessarily have to be a living, breathing one; a variety of apps can help you stay on track.
- *Dress for Success:* Whether you work out at the gym, outdoors or in the comfort of your own home, dress for success with the right attire: breathable, warm (if you're outdoors), properly fitting (especially shoes) and motivating. Love a particular brand and/or color? Wear it, love it and work out with it on – every day if you want.
- *Equip Yourself:* The right vs. wrong equipment can make all the difference in terms of not only motivation, but also results. If you're confined to the home for your workouts this winter (short or long term), it's time to do an equipment check and make sure your home gym has what it needs. That means two things, for starters: strength-training tools (free weights, bands, a Bosu ball, etc.) and cardio / aerobic tools (an exercise bike, rowing machine, elliptical, etc.). If you can't afford any of the above or don't have the space, get to the gym as much as possible, and supplement your workouts at home with body-weight exercises that can still build lean muscle and burn fat (ask your doctor for suggestions; doctors increasingly offer app-based exercise plans that can help increase compliance).

- *Food Isn't Your Enemy*: Your eating habits are also vital to your overall fitness; but unfortunately, they also are subject to disaster during the winter season, particularly as the holidays roll around. The solution: Think about these three components of success: 1) Portion size; 2) Don't skip meals; 3) Treat yourself. Overeating during the holidays can be a nightmare, but you can avoid it by paying attention to how much you 're eating, rather than just "grazing." And if you don't skip meals, you won't be famished by meal time and double down on those holiday dinners. Finally, don't be afraid to treat yourself (within reason). Staring at the cookie tray all night long won't do you any good, and will likely lead to a binge moment at some point. So enjoy a treat or two; but again, within moderation.

winter fitness - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark You have two choices: give up or keep fighting. You know the right choice; but are you willing to make it? Just think about how you'll feel next spring when you raise your arms into the sunlight, feel the warmth on your face, and know you're fitter, healthier (and hopefully happier) than you've ever been – all because you weren't willing to quit when so many others did. Need more help sticking with "the plan"? Talk to your doctor.

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