



Focused awareness and engagement to heal and increase vitality of the body (mind, spirit).

Pointers:

- Current fitness guidelines recommend 150 min of moderate aerobic exercise + 2 strength training sessions/week to maintain your current level of health. For weight loss and maintenance, the aerobic component increases to between 250-300 min/week for weight loss and to maintain a lower body weight after weight loss goal has been achieved the goal is between 350-400min moderate aerobic activity/week. Stretching and range of motion exercises are also important such as like yoga, qi gong, etc.
- Exercise benefit is seen with any increase in activity but in general the physiologic shifting is most noticeable in additive increments of 10-minute sessions. Start the goal that you are at least 80% confident you will be successful even if it is just 5 minutes/day and then extend from there until you are meeting your goals. [In general 40-45 minutes most days of the week.] Check in with yourself 1 hour after exercise. If the exercise dose was right for you, you will notice an increased sense of vitality.
- Keeping track of your steps with a pedometer or Fitbit can also be useful. First start by just noting your current average steps/day and then increase from there by adding 500 steps/day/week until you reach 7,550 to 13,000 steps/day as you are able. Many people find that they can get 500 steps walking a normal pace for about 5 minutes.
- Most people find the most reliable way to create an exercise habit is to find an exercise routine that you enjoy and or that is personally meaningful for you. For example, walking with family/friends/pets in nature or running for a charity.
- Additionally, sedentary lifestyle has been recognized as the new high-risk, disease-causing lifestyle trend or "the new smoking". This cannot be neutralized with planned exercise doses. Ideally, movement every 40 minutes or so helps decrease the workload of the heart and decrease the stress physiology related to immobility (increased cortisol levels, etc.). Aim to move for about 2 minutes every hour or so and set an alarm to trigger your activity.
- Exercise snacking can be helpful to reduce the bulk of stress physiology throughout the day. Studies have shown that 10 minutes of activity can break a craving cycle and re-establish the relaxation response in the body. This can be a helpful practice if late night overeating is an issue. An exercise snack can give the body the dopamine response it is seeking.
- In general, Awareness Movement can be used to decrease stress physiology of the body and cultivate the relaxation response.
- Aerobic exercise: the focus is on the breath rhythm, or the cadence of walking, or jogging, bicycling, or swimming. You can practice Japa meditation by repeating a mantra throughout the activity.

- Weight training/core strengthening: the focus is on the muscles and how it feels to move them through their full range of motion and through the physical challenge.
- Yoga/Tai Chi/Chi Gong: focus is on the breath and the fluid movement/awareness of the body's chi (energy).

Books:

Exercise Benefits

Spark by Dr. John Ratey

Your Brain on Nature by Drs. Eva Selhub and Alan Logan

Yoga

Do Your Om Thing by Rebecca Pacheco

Mudras, Yoga in Your Hands by Gertrud Hirschi

Inner Bridges: A Guide to Energy Movement and Body Structure by Dr. Frederick Smith

The Breathing Book by Donna Farhi

From Root to Bloom: Yoga Poems and Other Writings by Danna Faulds

Prayers to the Infinite, New Yoga Poems by Danna Faulds

Stretching / Posture

The New Rules of Posture by Mary Bond

The Anatomy of Stretching by Brad Walker

Running

Ready to Run by Dr. Kelly Starrett

DVDs:

Qi Gong for Healthy Joints and Bones by Lee Holden

Qi Gong for Seniors by Lee Holden (This has seated versions of Qi Gong)

On Line Resources:

Amy Cuddy

http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?language=en

Useful Links:

Mudra Gallery

<http://healing.about.com/od/east/ig/Mudra-Gallery/>