

# Exercise

## WITHOUT KNOWING IT!

Just because you can't get to the gym doesn't mean you can't exercise. There are inventive ways to slot it into your life, discovers **Kayte Nunn**.

WHEN YOU'RE PRESSED for time, it can seem almost impossible to try and fit regular exercise into an already crammed schedule. However, the good news is that there is a lot you can do in the course of your day to keep yourself fit without having to set aside large chunks of time or use specialised equipment.

As well as being good for your overall health, incidental exercise can also make the difference between being overweight or a healthy weight. A 1999 study found that people who fidgeted and sat down less often put on far less weight than those more inclined to be couch potatoes. An extra 2.5 hours of sitting every day meant that sedentary participants burned 350 fewer kilojoules a day than their more active counterparts.

Exercise physiologist Kathleen Alleaume, from *The Right Balance*, says simply, "Be active every day in as many ways as you can. Make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines, such as remote controls."

Martha Lourey-Bird, an exercise scientist, agrees. "Take 'long' cuts rather than short cuts," she says. "Once you change

your mindset into thinking active rather than lazy, you can become quite creative about your exercise and, rather than resenting it, you actually feel really positive about it."

Kathleen says the recommendation is to do 30 minutes of "moderate intensity" physical exercise on most days of the week. "If finding 30 minutes is challenging, don't fret," she says. "You can accumulate your 30 minutes (or more) throughout the day by combining a few shorter sessions of activity of around 10 to 15 minutes each."

Martha puts it another way. "At the end of the day, what we are aiming for is a minimum of 10,000 steps, so, if you keep that in your head, you can become quite creative," she says. "We're all aware of the ideas of using the stairs instead of the lift, hopping off the bus one or more stops earlier, walking to the train station... all these things really do add up and definitely increase your step count."

Resistance work is also important for good health. "Work with your environment: push the pram, do some push-ups onto the kitchen bench while you wait for the kettle to boil!" Martha says. "Do some heel raises while you clean your teeth, do tricep dips onto

### HOW HARD SHOULD I WORK?

Moderate-intensity exercise will cause a slight, but noticeable, increase in your breathing and heart rate. "A good example is brisk walking that is at a pace where you are able to comfortably talk but not sing. Other examples include mowing the lawn, digging in the garden, or medium-paced swimming or cycling," Kathleen says.

a chair. You don't actually need exercise equipment – heavy water bottles or bags filled with books can work just as well as a set of expensive weights."

Kathleen recommends trying sit-ups, push-ups and lunges during the commercial break when you're watching TV.

## BE INVENTIVE

Just because you're a stay-at-home mum and not able to get to a gym with a crèche, you can still be active. Kathleen suggests finding a good exercise DVD, or using a Nintendo Wii, doing some resistance training with cans of food or working up a sweat by doing the housework to music.

Martha suggests walking places with the kids. "If you can't walk all the way to school, park your car further away and talk to them positively about the fact that you're exercising and building a healthy body," she says.

## OFFICE ACTIVE

Both Martha and Kathleen recommend getting into the habit of going to the bathroom on another floor and taking the stairs to get there, walking to the furthest photocopier and getting up to chat with colleagues instead of emailing. Decide to grab your coffee from the furthest coffee shop, rather than the closest. "Take lunchtime walks," Kathleen says, while Martha suggests doing step-ups and push-ups on nearby benches while outside.

## GOT FIVE?

Martha says that if you can only find time to exercise in five-minute bursts, then it's better than doing nothing at all. "That's the beauty of exercise – something is always better than nothing," she adds.

# THINK YOURSELF THIN

THE FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT STEP on the journey to sustained health and wellbeing is "getting your head right", according to Kellee Waters, a Brisbane-based psychologist, hypnotherapist and personal trainer. "It's not so much the fatty food that is the problem because we've all seen skinny people enjoying cake with lashings of whipped cream," she says. "The real battle of the bulge is the one that's going on inside your head."

### Breaking the cycle

As a child, Kellee was overweight and unfit. As a teenager, she went from yo-yo dieting to suffering from anorexia. "It wasn't until I sorted out my thinking that I managed to get a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle," she says. Since then, Kellee has developed techniques to help others effectively tackle weight and lifestyle changes. "It is so important to enjoy life, nourish yourself and feel your body moving. Walking is a perfect way to get fit," she says. "People overeat for a variety of reasons, but understanding what is motivating you to eat is crucial. Emotional eating happens when you eat to dampen uncomfortable feelings. The feelings can be so strong, you just can't recognise when you're full."

### Stop the sabotage

As you identify sabotaging thought patterns, you can gradually change your lifestyle, Kellee explains. "You have to set achievable goals and take it one step at a time. Start with three to four areas of your life you would like to change. Write them down, pick two and then stick to them. "It may be taking a 20-minute walk at lunchtime or replacing your morning treat muffin with a piece of fruit. Then, every two weeks, just add another change.

### One-woman cheer squad

Kellee warns to look for signs of sabotage. "When the going gets tough and the self-doubter kicks in, call your best buddy – yourself! If you know your thought patterns, you can then alter them to become your best friend and cheerleader. "There are enough people in the world ready to criticise you, so it's time you supported and nurtured yourself to greater personal achievement and resilience."

## MIND GAMES FOR SUCCESS

If you can change your thoughts, you can alter your outcomes.

**INSTEAD OF SAYING,** "I'll have to change everything all at once or it's not worth it,"  
**SAY,** "If I can change one or two things each week, I will be successful."

**INSTEAD OF SAYING,** "I've always failed before, so why should it work this time?"  
**SAY,** "I'm taking it one day at a time and not looking back to the past."

**INSTEAD OF SAYING,** "I've blown it again – I'm a failure,"  
**SAY,** "I've had a slip-up, but I'm still going to continue to meet my goal."

**INSTEAD OF SAYING,** "I'm too tired to walk right now,"  
**SAY,** "I know that once I start walking I will feel better for it."