



December Education

Common Hurdles of Exercise

“It is getting cold and dark outside, and I usually exercise outdoors.”

- Develop a set of regular activities or a circuit that are always available inside or in a covered/lit area regardless of weather (indoor cycling, aerobic dance, indoor swimming, calisthenics, stair climbing, rope skipping, mall walking, dancing, gymnasium games, etc.).
- Warm up indoors and gear up to exercise outside. Start exercise outside once you are plenty warm.

“I just had a baby, and don’t have that much time or energy to work out.”

- Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has small children.
- Have blood work done (iron, vitamin D, etc.): make sure you are not deficient in any nutrients so that you are feeling energetic and pain-free to exercise.
- Jump rope, do calisthenics, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids are busy playing or sleeping.

“I have a chronic pain/injury that I am dealing with, how do I find other ways to work out?”

- Too much of the wrong activity can make pain worse!
- While you are injured, slightly increase your daily protein intake, and slightly reduce your carbohydrate intake. This will aid in injury repair.
- If you have certain pains that are worsened by impact activity, try cycling (recumbent bike, spin bike, road/mountain bike).
- To help alleviate inflammation, try aquatic therapy or exercise, especially in warm water.
- Ask your doctor what type of exercise program would be safe for you. Avoid use of the injured area.
- Start slowly and gradually increase your efforts as you gain strength, flexibility, and confidence.
- Move at your own pace. Never try to keep up with a class or a group if doing so is painful.
- Try exercise classes but inform the instructor of your injury/pain and ask for modifications.
- Have your blood work checked: iron, vitamin D, etc. Solve any deficiencies that may be contributing to pain.
- Strive for a balanced routine of cardiovascular, strengthening, and stretching exercise.
- Accept that you will be able to do more on some days than others. Be patient and don’t overexert.
- Sleep problems also burden individuals with chronic pain, so try and practice relaxation and behavioral therapy techniques.
- Physically active individuals sleep longer and more deeply than those who are sedentary. Exercise also helps to alleviate sleep apnea, a common disruptive sleep disorder that abruptly stops the breath.

“I just had an injury, how do I come back from it?”

- Schedule an appointment with a physical therapist so they can help you build strength in other areas OR to strengthen the injured part of your body.
- Get your doctor’s “OK” to exercise.
- Mentally prepare yourself, think about how you got injured and how you might be able to do something different the next time around.
- Stay positive and take time to rest and recover so you regain fitness level you had before.
- Start slow. Start about 50% of your “normal” level, and increase only 10%-15% each week (assuming your symptoms don’t flare up).
- Take time to warm up before, cool down after, and stretch (listen to your doctor/ physical therapist).
- Branch out and work on different parts of your body to help you stay fit and regain your injured body part’s strength.
- Listen to your body, a little discomfort is OK but A LOT is NOT. Never go through agony trying to stay active. PAIN IS NEGATIVE!

“I used to work out all the time, but I fell off the wagon. How do I start and make sure I stick with a routine?”

- Remember: It’s normal to miss a session once in a while. It’s also alright to stop for a period of time. Our mind and body adapt quickly when we resume our exercise routine.
- Wake up slightly earlier and start the day right, even with a 15-20minute workout!
- Start small and track your progress: 10-15minutes at a time.
- It takes 66 days to form a habit. That seems like a lot, but start small and stay motivated!
- Make a planner for your workouts.
- Write down your goals.
- Have a good evening routine—work out before evening home activities are completed, then cook an easy/quick healthy dinner, spend time with family, take a bath, sleep!
- If you have a busy family life with children, design your exercise routine around the family’s activities or with the family. Assign each family member a day of the week to pick the exercise location and workout, then exercise together. Or, exercise at the kids’ activities.

“How do I come back from an illness?”

- DO NOT neglect nutrition. There are always foods to help you feel better after getting sick. Examples: skin and bones need vitamin A to repair themselves, antioxidants repair damage.
- Skipping breakfast is not a good idea. Eat 5 times a day (3 small- medium sized meals and 2 nutritious snacks).
- Make sleep a priority, you may need more than the average 8 hours of sleep a day.
- Get yourself moving! Physical activity has a positive effect on what is called hemostasis: how the chemicals in the blood interrelate and work together. Exercise also improves the healing of muscles, bones, tendons, and ligaments.
- Exercise helps you heal faster.
- Put your mind to it: reduce your pain, consider mind-body, monitor your mood, surround yourself with love, and tap into your spirituality.
- HYDRATE well!

“I don’t have enough time to work out.”

- Try adding just 15 minutes of exercise into a day. Make the exercise worthy of the 15 minutes. E-mail Kendra.houghton@accgov.com for guidance on worth-it exercise in short periods of time.
- Add physical activity to your normal daily activities. For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize school activities around physical activity, exercise while waiting for others to complete their activities or while you talk on the phone, walk the dog with intensity, exercise while you watch TV, park farther away from your destination, etc.

“I don’t have enough time to work out.” (continued)

- Schedule your workouts into your day like you would a meeting or appointment.
- Break up your workouts! Instead of 30 minutes, do two 15 minute sessions throughout your day.
- Use 15 minutes of your lunch break to complete a circuit, power walk, etc. Bring cleansing wipes, dry shampoo, a change of clothes, etc.

“I lack the resources to work out.”

- Join the ACC fitness center, it is at no-cost for all employees!
- Meet with an ACC Wellness Coach for regular or occasional personal training, or even for workout design that you can apply on your own. E-mail welnessteam@accgov.com to schedule.
- Select activities that require minimal facilities or equipment, such as walking, jogging, jumping rope, or calisthenics.
- Identify inexpensive, convenient resources available in your community or at facilities that your family attends post-work for other activities (community education programs, park and recreation programs, worksite programs, etc.).
- Use local parks, playgrounds, etc.

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“I have family obligations.”

- Do your workouts at the park or playground while kids are playing or at practice.
- Join a gym that offers daycare services.
- Exercise at home or during lunch breaks, so that you do not need to take time away from home.
- Exercise with the kids: go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids and exercise together. Assign each family member a day to choose the exercise location and the workout or form of exercise. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.

“I am having financial problems, and can’t afford a gym membership right now.”

- Utilize your local playground or walking trails.
- Find home workout plans that work for you so you don’t have to go to the gym. An ACC Wellness Coach can provide you with workout plans.
- Get some weights so you can build muscle at home.
- Find someone to power walk or run with once or twice a week, and meet at a different park or other location each day of the week.
- Use the ACC Fitness Center, as it is at no-cost for all employees!

“I work odd hours and can’t find the time to work out.”

- Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.
- Select activities requiring minimal time, such as walking, jogging, or stairclimbing.
- Work out at home to eliminate travel-to-exercise time and make post-exercise clean-up time quick: find an exercise channel or app and search for at-home workout ideas.
- Join a 24-hour gym like the ACC Fitness Center

“I have a fear of being injured while exercising.”

- Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury.
- Take a class to develop new skills. Tell the instructor that you are new to exercise or that form of exercise and ask for guidance.
- Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging.
- Schedule a session with a physical therapist to discuss past injuries/pain, and identify strengthening activities you can do to prevent recurrence.
- Learn how to exercise appropriately considering your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status.
- Choose activities involving minimum risk.
- Ask a trainer to teach you how to properly use equipment. Meet with an ACC Wellness Coach at no cost to you. E-mail wellnessteam@accgov.com to schedule.

“I lack encouragement, support, or self-motivation for exercise.”

- Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule and write it on your calendar.
- Invite an encouraging, supportive friend to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars.
- Join an exercise group or class with fun people.
- Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as the YMCA or a hiking club.
- Try different types of workouts to keep it interesting.
- Meet with a personal trainer like the ACC Wellness Coaches: develop a workout routine to complete with them or own your own and then schedule check-in times several times per month to review your progress and adjust future workout plan.
- Designate an accountability partner: check in together daily, determine goals and plan and rewards together.
- Make several exercise plans so that once you tire of one or the season changes, you can change things up by switching to another that you enjoy.

“I find exercising boring and not enjoyable.”

- Reward yourself with a “healthy” treat like new workout clothes, a movie, a pedicure, etc.
- Make exercise a social activity – find a fitness group or invite friends/family to join you.
- Meet with a personal trainer like the ACC Wellness Coaches for guidance on exercise with purpose: develop a plan that will actually produce results and success. You may begin enjoying exercise!
- Try something new (spin class, swimming, rock climbing, Zumba, etc.)

“I’m too tired and lazy to work out.”

- Schedule exercise at the time of the day that you feel most fresh. Tiredness that prevents us from exercising at the end of the work day is mostly mental fatigue. After exercise, you will actually feel very refreshed and sleep better.

“I’m too tired and lazy to work out.” (continued)

- Reminding ourselves that our family, colleagues and friends depend on us to be healthy can help us sustain motivation to exercise. Whenever you notice you’re having negative feelings about exercising, say “STOP!” in your mind then use positive statements, such as “Let’s do it” or “Stay focused” or “This will improve my health and my relationships with family and friends”.

“I just had surgery, how do I get better?”

- DRINK WATER! Water helps keep your blood flowing, carries nutrients and oxygen to your cells and protects your joints. As your body recovers from an illness or injury, it sends water and nutrients to that location. If you’re not replenishing those fluids, the wound healing and cell repair processes take longer, ultimately hindering your recovery.
- Turn to foods like melons, tomatoes and strawberries which are naturally rich in water and electrolytes and critical to healthy nerve and muscle function as you recover.
- Protein: Part of every tissue in your body, protein plays a major role in building, repairing and maintaining muscle, and transporting nutrients. While injured and less active, it is helpful to consume slightly more protein than when healthy and active.
- Vitamin C: This nutrient helps repair tendons, ligaments and surgical wounds. Look for strawberries, kiwi fruit, baked potatoes, broccoli and bell peppers.
- Vitamin D and Calcium: Consuming low-fat dairy foods will help with repairing and strengthening damaged bones and other body parts.
- Fiber: If you take pain medication following a procedure, offset stressful side effects like constipation with fiber, found in foods like dried figs, raspberries and oatmeal.
- Try to regain muscle strength: your muscles are the key source to helping wounds and energy to heal.
- Light activities like resistance training, daily walks, stretching or yoga can be beneficial, especially if you’re feeling fatigued after a procedure or sickness. Be sure to work with your physician to determine what’s best for you.

Click the Links Below for Source Information

[CDC: Physical Activity Basics](#)

[HealthXChange: 5 Barriers](#)

[WebMD: Fitness After an Injury](#)

[Abbott: Surgery Recovery](#)

[Harvard Health: Exercise Barriers](#)

[Spine Universe: 7 Exercise Tips](#)

[AARP: Super Healing](#)

[TFD: 7 Steps to Working Out](#)

