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Overcome Excuses for Inactivity

Everyone knows we should be physically active, yet many of us are not. We resort to a list of “reasons” for being inactive. Sadly, most of these “reasons” are invalid excuses and many are easily overcome. Here are some of the most common excuses and how to overcome them:

No time. Try to make time. Schedule an appointment with yourself and don’t break it. Ask a fitness professional for ideas to squeeze exercise conveniently into your busy day. Exercise at home, to avoid the time wasted travelling to do your workout.

Interferes with work or studies. Activity improves the mind and body. With clearer thinking and increased energy you’ll be more productive and have greater control of stress.

Family obligations interfere. Get your family involved. Plan more “active” get-togethers.

Too tired. Regular exercise increases energy levels. Improved blood circulation brings vital oxygen more efficiently to muscles and the brain.

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Seniors Tip-Senior Health : Brain Healthy Foods

Although it has been proven that healthy eating can lower your risk of diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, the jury is still out on whether it can do the same for Alzheimer’s. However, there are foods that researchers think will help keep your whole body healthy, including your brain.

Oil-based Salad Dressings - Data supports the claim that eating foods that are high in vitamin E, including healthy vegetable-oil-based salad dressings, can help protect neurons or nerve cells. In Alzheimer’s disease, neurons in certain parts of the brain start to die, which jump-starts the cascade of events leading to cognitive deterioration.

Fish - Salmon, mackerel, tuna and other fish are rich in heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids, including docosahex-aenoic acid (DHA). DHA seems to be very important for the normal functioning of neurons.



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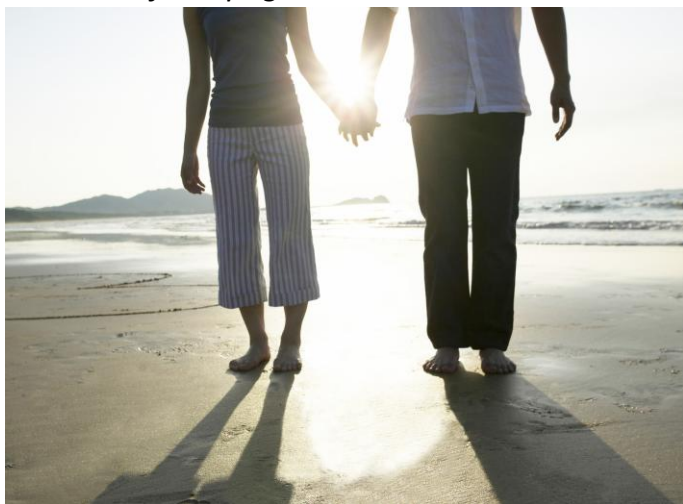
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Overcome Excuses for Inactivity

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Exercise is hard. You don't have to do a sport that requires a special skill or complicated choreographed movements. Find an easy activity (walking is easy). Progress at a moderate pace.

I'm too busy. Good health is more important than anything else in your life. If you aren't healthy, you aren't operating optimally – at home or at work.

Bad weather is a deterrent. Dress for it or exercise indoors. Many activities can be done inside – like wall climbing, tennis, even golf. Check your local shopping mall to see if they offer mall walking.

Exercise is boring. Find a fun activity or choose from several to avoid boredom.

No facilities or equipment. You don't need a gym or equipment. Hike or take a brisk walk outside.

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Seniors Tip-Senior Health : Brain Healthy Foods

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Avocado - This creamy fruit (which many mistakenly consider a vegetable), is a rich source of the antioxidant vitamin E as well as vitamin C.

Sunflower Seeds - Seeds, including sunflower seeds, are also a good source of vitamin E. One ounce of dry-roasted sunflower seeds contains 30 percent of your recommended daily intake. Sprinkle them on top of your salad to help give your brain a boost.

Peanuts and Peanut Butter - Although both are high in calories, peanuts and peanut butter tend to be a source of healthy fats. They are also packed with vitamin E.

Berries - The latest research has found that blueberries, strawberries and acai berries may help put the brakes on age-related cognitive decline by preserving the brain's natural "housekeeper" mechanism, which wanes with age. This mechanism helps get rid of toxic proteins associated with age-related memory loss.

Whole Grains - Fiber-rich whole grains are an integral part of the Mediterranean diet, which is also loaded with fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, olive oil and wine.

Research out of Columbia University Medical Centre in New York City shows that this diet may be linked to a lower risk for the mild cognitive impairment that can progress to Alzheimer's disease.

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Overcome Excuses for Inactivity

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Do calisthenics in the convenience and privacy of your own home. Search the internet for exercises and proper technique.

Too expensive. Brisk walking is cheap. For weight training exercises, use your own body weight or improvised equipment, like soup cans.

Fear of injury. Choose an activity with a low injury risk. Avoid injuries by learning proper technique from a personal trainer, tennis or golf instructor, etc.

Self-conscious about appearance. You can exercise in the privacy of your own home. No one has to see how you look or what you wear. After you've become fitter and are more confident with your appearance, treat yourself to a gym membership and a new exercise outfit!

Lack of motivation. Exercise with a friend. Choose activities you enjoy. Set goals. Hire a personal trainer to inspire you.

Health problems. Everyone can do some kind of activity. Talk to your doctor and work with a fitness professional or physical therapist. Gentle exercise is healing!

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Seniors Tip-Senior Health : Brain Healthy Foods

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Note: Since all the foods that we eat may interact with medical conditions, or medications, it is vital that you speak with your doctor before making any major changes to your diet.

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Did You Know?

Stress Relief: Laugh Out Loud

People who laugh are much healthier than those who don't. Research has shown that the health benefits of laughter range from strengthening the immune system, to reducing food cravings, to increasing the threshold for pain. Laughing also reduces stress hormones and increases endorphins - the hormones that make you happy. And it's a great workout!

Source: www.stress.about.com, Reprinted with Permission from Living Assistance Services.

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Southwest Shrimp Cups



Fresh bright flavours and textures make these lettuce cups perfect appetizers for a holiday get-together or anytime. Let guests help themselves or fill up the lettuce cups and serve on a platter alongside fresh vegetables. Makes 16 cups.

- 1 lb (500 g) large raw shrimp, tails off, peeled and deveined
- 1 tsp (5 mL) canola oil
- 1 tsp (5 mL) ground cumin or chili powder
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) fresh ground pepper
- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced red bell pepper
- 3 tbsp (45 mL) chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) plain 0% Greek yogurt
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) grated lime rind
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) lime juice
- 1 head Boston lettuce

Directions

1. In a bowl, toss together shrimp, oil, cumin and pepper until coated.

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2. In a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat; sauté shrimp, stirring for about 5 minutes or until pink and firm; remove from heat.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together yogurt, lime rind and juice. Add cooked shrimp, avocado, red pepper and cilantro and toss well to coat.
4. Separate leaves from lettuce head for the cups and fill each with some of the shrimp mixture to serve or let guests help themselves by spooning out the filling into their lettuce cups.

Tip: These can be served warm or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information Per Serving (2 shrimp cups)-Calories 100, Protein 11 g, Total Fat 5 g, Saturated Fat 1 g, Cholesterol 90 mg, Carbohydrates 4 g, Fibre 2 g, Sodium 109 mg, Potassium 297 mg

Recipe developed by Emily Richards, PH Ec.
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Quote of the Month

"Friendship is born at that moment when one man says to another: "What! You too? I thought that no one but myself . . ."

C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves