



Activity on the Run –Keeping Regular Exercise Regular.

There are primarily two approaches to regular exercise. There's the scheduled routine, where a predetermined time and place is designated for the specific purpose of exercise. And there is what we call "Activity on the Run," which basically involves seizing opportunities throughout our busy day to work in small doses of exercise. So which approach should you choose? That's an easy one. *Both*. Exercise keeps your weight in check and your energy level high. And the more you can weave exercise into the fabric of your everyday life, the healthier you'll be.

Besides that, let's admit that schedules are not always easy to keep. Unexpected demands come up from time to time that make it necessary to rearrange our priorities. And *scheduled* exercise is often the first to go. *Regular* exercise, however, should be non-negotiable. It's just too important. That's where Activity on the Run comes into play. And work. And whenever.

What sorts of ways can you exercise as you go? A lot depends on what works for you personally. We all have unique lives with unique demands, and that's what will determine our Activity-on-the-Run opportunities. Here are some ideas that have worked for others:

- We'll start with a no-excuses suggestion, because there are some exercises that work just about anywhere you are. There are walking lunges, squats, triceps dips, crunches, and just plain walking. And if people want to stare, let them. They know it's what they should be doing too.
- Keep walking shoes and a personal CD player with headphones handy, like in your car. If you get a spare five minutes or so, put them on and go.
- While we're on the subject of inexpensive equipment, think about keeping a set of weights at home.
- Climb stairs. Did you know you can take off about 1 ½ calories for every step, not to mention that you're toning your leg muscles?
- In case you're thinking at this point something like, "What good can a few steps or five minutes of walking really do?" it's a good time to remind you that the small stuff adds up pretty quickly by the end of the day. Let's continue...
- Do you have *ten* minutes? Walk up and down some stairs, or jump on your exercise bike. It's called a "cardio-quickie." (It's fun just saying that, isn't it?)

- Turn down the thermostat, then get your own inner furnace going on a treadmill or stationary bike. (This suggestion came from one of our friends in Alaska. Surprise, surprise.)
- If your job allows it, take a five-minute break each hour and hit the stairs. A smart boss will be all for it, because your increased circulation will make you more alert and productive.
- Do some crunches while your children are playing. Or better yet...
- Join in the play. Take them to the park. Ride bikes together. Walk around. Or really go for it and roller blade (remember to start slowly on that last one.)

Of course there are as many different ways to exercise as there are opportunities to exercise. Your mission, as the primary custodian of your body, is to look for those opportunities. Then get creative. Make it fun. Before long a regular program of Activity on the Run will be as second nature as... well... *walking*.

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