

What Motivates You?

The healthy people most of us know aren't super athletes who spend every weekend running a marathon. They're people we see and work with every day, and their fitness secret is deceptively simple: They know what they like and what motivates them.

Make this connection between your interests and your personality, and it can take just 30 minutes of moderate activity five days per week—even broken into small increments—to start seeing health benefits, says Jessie Fudge, MD, a physician with Group Health's Activity, Sports, and Exercise Medicine Department.

To get healthy on your own terms, think about who you are, what you enjoy doing, and why. A team sport like soccer can be a draw for social types who are also a bit competitive. Nature walks can appeal to those who love being outside. If you're a techno geek, you might enjoy a workout that involves using a smartphone app—there's one for whatever gets your heart pumping.

The important thing isn't what you do—it's finding something that you're willing to do consistently. No time to exercise? Even if you have a super busy schedule, it's often possible to work in 10 minutes of exercise here and there, says Dr. Fudge. Consider how you can make exercise part of your commuting routine by biking, or taking the bus and getting off at a stop or two early to add some walking to your routine. Whenever there's a choice, take the stairs not the elevator. Don't park at the closest spot at the grocery store. March in place while watching TV, do some yard work, take the kids to the park, or the dog for a walk. "It all counts toward your daily 30 minutes," says Dr. Fudge.

Match yourself with one of the following personality types for activities that might motivate you.

Goal-oriented. If you love the words "Ready, set, go!" sign up for a fitness event, such as a triathlon, 5K, community fun run, or a bike ride and let the training begin. Or jump on a high-tech treadmill with interactive video routes. Both choices provide specific dates or goals to work toward, and the training gives you the motivation to keep moving.

Nature lover. If communing with nature sings to your soul, then hiking, kayaking, or trail running are good choices. Or try geocaching, a treasure hunting activity where you discover trinkets hidden by other players in the great outdoors using a GPS device.

Competitive. If you hate being chosen second and love a bruise or a high-five along the way, look for a competitive team sport. Most communities offer recreational soccer, kickball, softball, and dodge ball leagues on weekday evenings, from social "no contact" leagues to full contact

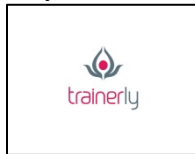
Loner. If you prefer being by yourself, you might enjoy swimming laps or running somewhere away from the crowd, or even using an exercise or yoga DVD in your home. "Your goal is to get moving, whether you're out in nature or in your living room," notes Dr. Fudge.

Social butterfly. You might blossom at dance classes (Zumba is popular now) or by joining a community sports team where getting to know each other and having fun is more important than

winning. Also check your local parks department or community center for group walking programs that might involve activities such as bolting at gardens or historic buildings in your community.

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