

Get Back into Fitness

Most of us fall off our exercise routines at one point or another. Whether it's a schedule conflict, injury, TDY, leave, stress, or COVID even the most dedicated gym goer takes an occasional break. The trouble is, for most of us, it can be daunting and feel impossible to return to exercise after a long break.

Here are some tips to make your transition back to fitness more manageable.

- ✓ **Manage Your Expectations:** You won't have the same level of fitness you once did. This is often difficult to accept, but attempting to work out like you used to will only lead to injury, lost motivation, and deconditioning. Gradually increase your workout duration and intensity. When you start out, leave a few reps in the tank!
- ✓ **Set Realistic Goals:** Goals should be specific, realistic, and attainable. Also, tracking small steps toward goal accomplishment is a great way to see progress.
- ✓ **Vary Your Workouts:** Vary intensity, frequency, and type of workout you do. Our bodies don't respond well to the same repetitive action and the same sport over and over and over again. This becomes more important the older you are. Include both cardio and weight training into your workout schedule and each will complement each other and lead to faster fitness gains.
- ✓ **Stay Motivated:** It can be frustrating if you don't see fitness gains right away. But remember, fitness gets easier with habit and time. Consider making your workouts a social event, exercise with friends or a workout partner and include activities that you enjoy doing.
- ✓ **Make Sure you Cool Down and Stretch:** A recovery routine is vital to staying injury free. Include daily stretching and adequate cool down time after every workout.
- ✓ **Have A Backup Plan:** Life happens! And can oftentimes get in the way of workouts. Plan regular time in your schedule to exercise, so that if you miss a workout it won't hamper your progress that much.

Although these tips focus on your exercise routine, don't forget that the preparation before a workout is also very important. It is vital to stay active outside of workouts, eat a balanced diet, stay hydrated, get adequate sleep, and stay emotionally healthy.

Questions? Contact us at 363ISRW.ART.363ISRW@us.af.mil or at 757-764-9316

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