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Your New Year's Resolutions - Focus On Exercise

Like most adults, your New Year's Resolutions probably involve creating and maintaining a regular exercise program. Experience and research show that maintaining your interest in healthy exercise is an important part of maintaining your health.

A fun but challenging workout may help you stick to and actually attain your "get regular exercise" resolution this year.

Strength and Resistance Training for Health

Strength, or resistance training, may well top the list of beneficial exercises - especially as we age. It is helpful for weight management, maintaining muscle mass and strength and combating osteoporosis. Resistance exercises tend to target and strengthen those bones most susceptible to breakage and, when combined with balance and power moves, can help you stay active and avoid fractures.

Avoid Sit-Ups - Do a Plank Instead

Current literature indicates that the sit-ups we grew up with as part of an exercise routine are particularly hard on the back. "Crunches" are an improvement but the new standard in core strengthening is now "planking." Planking recruits more than just the abdominal muscles - it uses all of the core muscles to improve balance and strength through motions that are more relevant to everyday activities - remember good form is important so find the level of "plank" that best suits your current fitness level and work up from there. Planks are the new power move.

Burning Fat

Exercise benefits extend beyond burning calories & improving muscle. There are two types of [fat cells](#) in the body, white and brown. White fat is the storage form that we typically think of, but brown fat is a metabolic tissue that actually burns energy.

Exercise causes the body to generate a hormone called [irisin](#) which transforms white fat to brown and helps prevent the cellular changes that lead to type 2 diabetes.

Discoveries, such as irisin, can lead to some amazing new therapies after much study and time, but you can enjoy some benefits now, for free, by making the lifestyle choices that support your body and health.