

Quirks & Tips

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Fitness for Overachievers

“Getting fit...without compromising your crazy schedule”

By Jim Rohn

Because we're busy people, we like to say that staying fit is not about the way we look in a bathing suit. It's about self-confidence and performance. We want to go nonstop, alert and energized 18 hours a day. Still, it doesn't hurt to look good too.

If you haven't yet celebrated your 30th birthday, physical fitness, boundless energy, and an enviable body may seem like givens. But just wait. You'll get yours. If you have already begun the slippery downhill slide, here is a routine that will make you look and feel great.



Getting fit and looking good comes from managing four things:

1. Stress
2. Exercise
3. Nutrition
4. Rest

And the nice thing is you can do it without compromising your crazy schedule. Here's how:

1. STRESS

Do some yoga or tai chi in your free time. At work, follow these three rules:

- Stress Rule #1 - Wait 24 hours before responding to bad or disappointing news.
- Stress Rule #2 - Be realistic about your deadlines. Don't give yourself more to do than you can actually handle.
- Stress Rule #3 - Never work more than 90 minutes without a break.

2. EXERCISE

There are three aspects to exercise: developing strength, developing flexibility, and developing endurance.

Use Stress Rule #3 to get your strength and flexibility workouts without leaving the office. The trick is to take a five- or 10-minute refresher break every 60 or 90 minutes. Get yourself an egg timer and get up out of your chair when it buzzes. Go somewhere relatively private and do one of the following:

- for strength: dumbbells, calisthenics, or isometrics
- for flexibility: some form of stretching exercise

If you limit each workout to five or 10 minutes, you won't have to worry about getting sweaty or tired. Do your exercises slowly and perfectly. After you can perform a particular movement easily, challenge yourself to a more difficult one. Keep it short, fun, and challenging.

To build endurance, you need to do some type of cardio exercise. It doesn't have to be high-intensity, but you may prefer to do it before or after work so you can shower afterward. This should be fun. My favorite routines are biking (anywhere), stair climbing (you can watch your trashy TV shows on video guilt-free this way), or walking the dogs.

And it's great if you can add some kind of active recreational activity to the mix - something you really love, like tennis, handball, etc. Even if you do it only on weekends.

3. NUTRITION

There's nothing that affects your health, fitness, and energy levels more than what you eat. Here's the short of it:

- Sugar and starches are poison.
- Fat is OK in moderation.
- The vegetables you don't like are the ones that are best for you.
- Eat enough so you are never hungry.

One great routine (which will keep you young and lean) involves eating six small meals a day:

- protein when you rise
- a vegetable shake three hours later
- a lunch of salad and fish or meat
- a protein and berry shake in the late afternoon
- a dinner much like lunch but including rice or potatoes (no breads or pasta), and
- then more protein, if you feel the need, as a snack at night.

This will control your insulin levels. (Insulin is the major aging hormone. It is what makes you tired and cranky. It gives you wrinkles. It causes you to overeat. It's terrible.)

4. REST

This one is easy. Find out how much sleep you need. And get it. The sleep you get before midnight is twice as good as the sleep you get afterward. So go to bed early.

In fact, your entire health-and-fitness program should be based on the early to rise concept. Get to bed early enough so that you can wake up refreshed, eat properly, get your cardio workout done, and get to work at least an hour before you have to. (Two hours earlier is better.) Then, during those early morning hours when there is next to nobody around anyway, you'll be able to do a few of your mini-exercises in privacy.

By the time the laggards roll in at 9 o'clock, you will not only have done a day's worth of business, but also will have finished a good chunk of your daily exercise.

One more thing: It's easy to put off taking care of your health. It definitely falls into the "Important but Not Urgent" category. So, if you want to be fit - and look it - make sure you highlight your fitness tasks on your to-do list and get them done as early in the day as possible.



Get started now!

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