**Smart Start**

Stop! You can't just jump on a treadmill and start running at 6.0 mph if you have not been working out for years and your 10 year high school reunion is in one month. You need to ease into an exercise program. For those individuals who have not exercised regularly in the past, are over 40, have a chronic health problem or are at an increased risk of heart disease, you need to consult your doctor before you begin any exercise program. Below are a few pointers for those beginners. Remember it is never too late to start!

- **Begin with familiar exercises** - your chances of sticking with your program will increase if you start with activities you know and enjoy.
- **Ease in** - start with 2 or 3 days a week, 5 to 10 minutes each session, and slowly increase the duration and intensity.
- **Keep an exercise log** - track your progress and motivate yourself by writing down your activities and how long you did them.

*Source: HealthQuest, Mayo Clinic, May 2001*

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**Calories Vs. Cardio**

People exercise for different reasons. The two most obvious reasons are to lose weight and to keep their heart healthy. If your goal is to keep your heart strong, several short exercise sessions in a single day (when you have no time to spare) can bring cardio benefits similar to one long workout session. However, if you are trying to lose weight, a single longer workout will burn slightly more calories than several short workouts.

*Source: RealAge.com*

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**Pumping Iron**

Did you know that each decade between the ages of 30 and 70, you lose about 5% of your lean muscle mass. However, strength training can slow this aging process. Below are five more reasons to start lifting weights:

- **Firms your flab zones**
- **Keeps bone disease at bay**
- **Battles life’s little hazards**
- **Makes you look leaner**
- **Helps your heart**

*Source: Mayo Clinic & Kelly Smith’s Lift Weights to Lose Weight*

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**Simple Activities to Burn Some Calories**

- **Play tennis** - 475 calories per hour.
- **Go bowling** - 200 calories per hour.
- **Pull your children in a wagon** - 275 calories per hour.
- **Putt through a miniature golf course** - 200 calories per hour.
- **Clean the gutters** - 340 calories per hour.
- **Play active games** - such as hopscotch, dodge ball, or tag - with the kids - 340 calories per hour.

*Calorie calculations are approximate and estimated for a 150-pound person.*

*Source: HealthQuest, Mayo Clinic, June 2001*