

FOUNDATIONS TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

WEEK 6

“Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions.”

- Dalai Lama XIV



YMCA of Greater Westfield
67 Court Street, Westfield, MA
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WEEK 6

FITNESS CHALLENGE

CARDIO PLUS

**Increase cardio time to 30 to 45 minutes or try a new exercise class for the week,
or B. use different cardio machines/programs
or C. a combination of 1 new class & 1 new cardio machine
or D. Different fitness apps/ On Demand fitness classes
or outside activity**

It is important to change up a fitness program when you experience a plateau. Similarly, it is essential to adjust your fitness program when you notice boredom, disinterest or no longer feel challenged or see the physical fitness benefits that you are used to.

Some reasons for reaching an exercise plateau have ranged from not overloading the neuromuscular system properly, overtraining with inadequate recovery, or not changing fitness program often enough. It is integral to try new things, expand our comfort zones, and strive to new limits.

1. SHIFT INTENSITY

Consider shifting the intensity of your workouts to reduce monotony and increase the physical challenge. You can change up the parameters of your exercise prescription to make a change. You might consider changing up your program's FITT principles (FITT stands for frequency, intensity, time, and type of exercise).

Changing these specific fitness principles can help you improve results, increase motivation towards exercise, reduce boredom, and counteract a plateau.

Either too much intensity, or too little, can impact your exercise motivation and commitment. To continuously improve your fitness goals, you need to overload the neuromuscular system with physical demands continually. If we do not do this and our body gets used to the status quo, we will not see the results we desire. Trying new things is a surefire way to break through fitness plateaus. Make an appointment with a trainer to help you set your goals.

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FITNESS CHALLENGE

CARDIO PLUS

2. TRY SOMETHING NEW

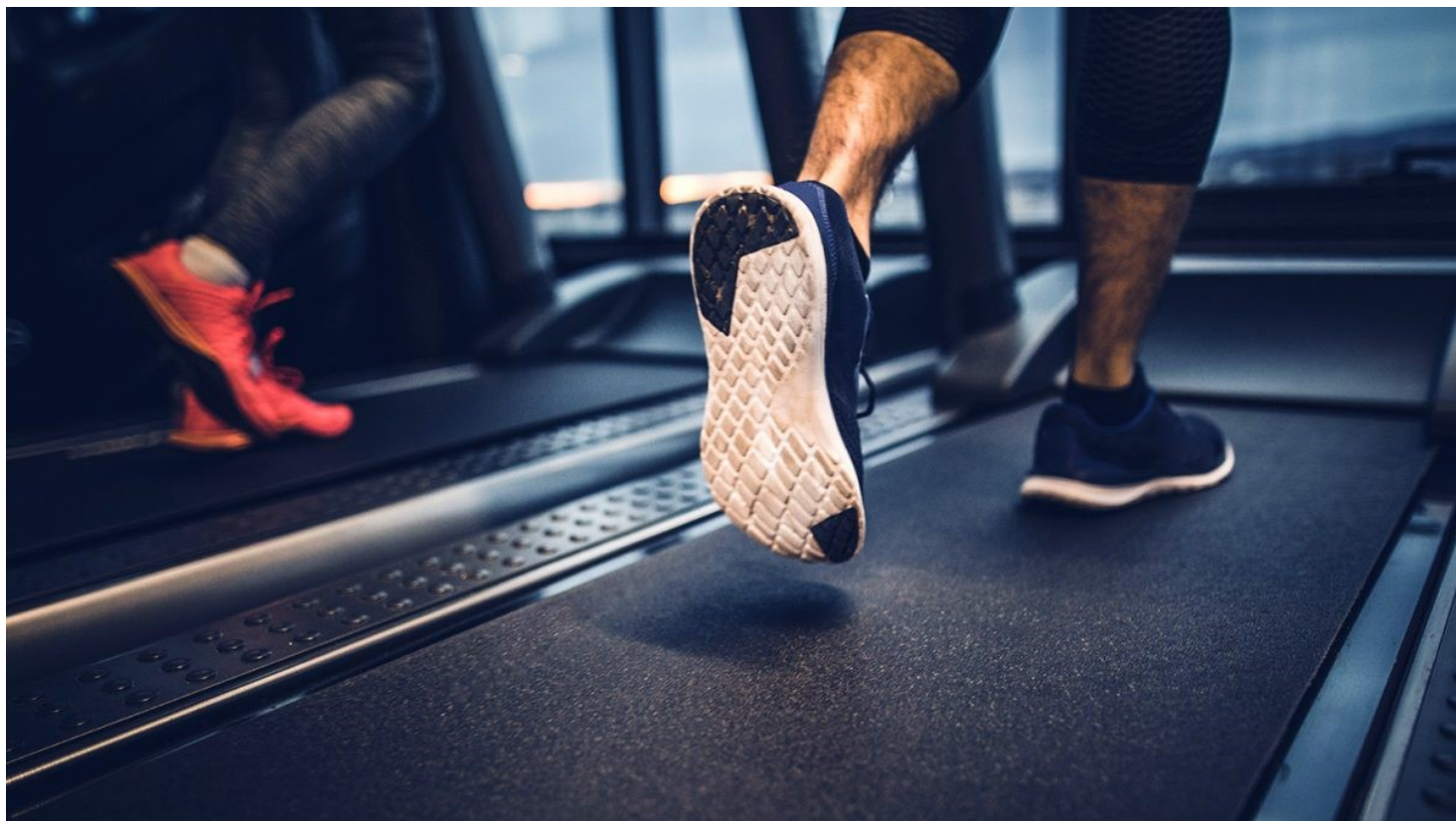
Overall, do not be afraid to try something new and change up your mode of exercise. If you are a long-term runner but feel bored with running, why not try something different? Do you feel burnout from weight training? What about swimming a few days during the week to change up the resistance workout?

Similarly, if you have always wanted to take a dance class but never have, now is the time. Making these types of changes might be what you need to reset motivation. Ask yourself what sounds exciting or fun and try that. Even if it's short-term behavior, it might be the break you need from your current exercise modality or program to re-energize and re-motivate.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY AND THEN MAKE A PLAN!

It is important to stay receptive to what our body is telling us. Staying responsive to our own internal cues of disinterest and boredom, and what our response to exercise is telling us, is an essential first step. The second step is to create a plan to adjust one's exercise program. Additionally, shifting frequency, intensity, flexibility, and trying new

Need help developing a plan? join us on Zoom Tuesday, 7PM, for additional tips on breaking through plateau's.



WEEK 6

NUTRITION CHALLENGE

NO ADDED SUGAR FOOD FOR 5 DAYS

- The Hardest Challenge has been saved for last.
- Sugars in your diet can be naturally occurring or added. Naturally occurring sugars are found *naturally* in foods such as fruit (fructose and glucose) and milk (lactose).
- Added sugars are sugars and syrups put in foods during preparation or processing, or added at the table.
- To tell if a processed food contains added sugars, you need to look at the list of ingredients. Sugar has many other names. Besides those ending in “ose,” such as maltose or sucrose, other names for sugar include high fructose corn syrup, molasses, cane sugar, corn sweetener, raw sugar, syrup, honey or fruit juice concentrates.
- The major sources of added sugars are regular soda & sports drink, fruit juice, alcohol, candy, cakes, cookies, pies, dairy desserts, (ice cream, flavored low-fat yogurt and flavored milk; and grains: cereal, granola bars, protein bars, flavored toast (like cinnamon and raisin), waffles, ketchup, barbeque sauce, spaghetti sauce, jelly, salad dressings, frozen meals and some canned soups. You need to check both the food label and the ingredients to make sure there is no added sugar.
- Men should consume no more than 9 teaspoons (36 grams or 150 calories) of added sugar per day. For women, the number is: 6 teaspoons (25 grams or 100 calories) per day.

BENEFITS OF EATING LESS SUGAR

Increased Energy

Sugary foods are famous for providing a “high,” or hyper feeling that the brain translates as high energy. This is not actually the case however, since sugar highs usually end in hard “sugar crashes,” depleting energy and replacing it with lethargy and sluggishness.

Improved Weight Management

Sugar is known to house empty calories – calories that are added to the body but provide no source of nutrition. To safely and effectively lose weight, the body needs adequate amounts of fiber to metabolize and combat sugar, including natural sugar found in fruits and some vegetables. Food items with added sugar turn straight into glucose and is then stored as fat in the body. Eating foods that contain added sugar regularly can make the body resistant to insulin, and insulin resistance increases the risk of diabetes.

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NUTRITION CHALLENGE

NO ADDED SUGAR FOOD FOR 5 DAYS

Enhanced Mood, Mental Clarity, Focus, and Health

- Sugar is often a source of reward, when emotions run high or stressful situations occur. Eating sugar as a compulsive reaction to “feel better” does more damage than good, though. Sugar only aids in greater mood imbalances, stress, poor eating habits, and feelings of tiredness. The more people give into their sugar addiction, the more troubles they will have with their mental health.
- Studies show that 80 percent of people who stopped eating sugar and other unhealthy foods found that their mental health greatly improved. Scientists who studied the group found that patients had decreased depression, anxiety, fewer mood swings, and more mental focus.
- Quitting sugar may come with side effects such as “sugar headaches,” which is the body suffering from sugar withdrawals. Soon after replacing sugary foods with brain foods – fish, nuts, leafy greens, and lean meats – sugar headaches will disappear.

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Reduced Inflammation

- One concerning downside to eating sugar is that it increases inflammation in the body.
- Inflammation often leads to chronic pain, headaches, and food allergies. Research shows there is a direct link to inflammatory diseases and sugar.
- There is now recent evidence to show that inflammation is linked to Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and other brain-related disorders, that impact mental health and aging.
- Once a person quits sugar, he or she can expect to experience decreased levels of inflammation in the body, including a reduction in nerve, muscle, and joint pain.
- Combining exercise, increased daily water intake, and reduced sugar intake are some of the best ways to treat pesky inflammation problems and reduce chronic pain in the body.
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Congratulations!

You completed the basic foundations to a healthier lifestyle.

The challenge began with finding your own starting point for each exercise and building upon each step. We understand having a family member, friend or a workout buddy helps with accountability and makes working out fun. Recording workouts and food journaling helps with tracking our success. We discussed the principles of cardio, strength, and flexibility and how it relates to the quality of our daily lives. We know that food is the fuel that makes our body go which plays a major role in how we feel physically and emotionally. Being mindful of our eating habits, trying new plant based recipes, reading labels especially for sugar content, meal prepping and moderation when eating makes for a healthier lifestyle. The next step is to consistently add exercise into your daily routine and continue with the foundations of a healthier lifestyle.



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