The Importance of Exercise

So, you've created a list of New Year's resolutions. Is exercise on that list? Well, this blog is for you! Just make sure chiropractic is on there too;)

Exercise: How Important Is It?

Let's Start With Some Quotes And Studies:

"Those who think they have no time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness."- Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby

"Failure to exercise a minimum of 3times per week for at least 30 minutes in duration each time is the equivalent of smoking one pack of cigarettes each day. What this means is that exercise is no longer just good for you, it is bad for you if you don't exercise." Surgeon General, July 11, 1996.

Exercise Is Just Good For You! This is definitely a wow study! - 2½ hours of exercise per week decreases the risk of all disease by 60%!

Framington Heart Study

What If You Don't? People 70 lbs overweight will spend $30,000 extra in their lifetime for health care. Scientific American, 2011

Metabolism

Beginning in your 30's your metabolism slows by 5% a decade due to muscle loss. By 65 you can lose half your muscle mass and decrease your metabolic burn by 200-300 calories.

Can I Turn It Around?

It is never too late! People who became more active in their 40's cut their risk of heart disease by nearly the same amount as those who had maintained a lifetime of activity. University of Heidelberg, 2006

Top 15 Benefits of Exercise

1. Increases metabolism to burn calories by increasing oxidation (breakdown & use) of fat.

2. Improves blood sugar control. With inactivity the body becomes more resistant to insulin, increasing the risk for type 2 diabetes.

3. Improves immune system function.

4. Protects the body from cancer & increases digestive efficiency decreasing the risk of colon cancer 30-40%!

5. Increases aerobic capacity.

6. Develops new blood vessels in the heart & muscles.

7. Increases hemoglobin level, for better oxygen transport.

8. Decreases blood pressure, increases HDL cholesterol & decreases risk of blood clots, heart disease & stroke.

9. Maintains, tones & strengthens muscles & increases muscular endurance. Inactivity causes

muscles to atrophy, for women in their 40s & men in their 50s.

10. Increases bone strength. Lack of activity leads to bone weakness, osteoporosis & bone loss.

11. Increases thickness of joint cartilage.

12. Increases blood flow to the skin.

13. Improves sleep patterns.

14. Decreases risk of cognitive decline & dementia.

15. Decreases risk of depression & symptoms of those already depressed.

What Should I Do?

Current recommendations: 30 minutes of exercise 5 days per week. Remember there are 1,440 minutes in a day and 168 hours in a week, 30 minutes is only 2% of a day! One of the easiest ways to fit exercise into your day is to do interval training. This is where you choose one kind of cardio exercise that when you think about doing it, you don't say to yourself "Ughh!!". I recommend using a bicycle (standard or stationary), elliptical trainer, rowing (on the water or a good stationary one like a Concept 2 or similar) or swimming as these are all low impact on your joints. For 90 seconds, you do a medium-level speed - this is called the low interval. Then for 30 seconds, you go all-out, as hard as you can - this is the high interval. Of course, if you haven't been doing much exercise, you can modify this by only doing 10-15 seconds for the high interval and not going all-out but at a higher rate than the low interval. Increase your time of doing the high interval until you are able to do 30 seconds. Then, after that you can start increasing the intensity of the high interval. At the 90-30 second intervals, that is only 2 minutes per segment. If you do this for 10 repetitions, that is only 20 minutes. If you follow that up with a few minutes of stretching (always a good idea if you have done some exercise, even walking), you are still just under the suggested 30 minutes per day.   I will go into this in more depth in future blogs.