

HOW TO STAY FIT AFTER COVID- WELLNESS GUIDE

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Abstract

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has witnessed unprecedented shifts in daily routines, lifestyle choices, and overall well-being. As societies adapt to the 'new normal,' individuals are increasingly recognizing the paramount importance of prioritizing their physical and mental health. "How to Stay Fit After COVID: A Wellness Guide" offers a comprehensive roadmap to navigate the post-pandemic landscape, empowering readers to reclaim control over their health and vitality. This book transcends conventional fitness manuals by addressing the unique challenges posed by the pandemic and its aftermath. Drawing upon evidence-based research and expert insights, it provides actionable strategies tailored to the diverse needs of readers. From establishing sustainable exercise routines and crafting nutritious meal plans to fostering mental resilience and nurturing holistic wellness, each chapter offers practical guidance to cultivate lasting habits that promote overall health.



1. Introduction

Welcome to a transformative journey towards reclaiming health, vitality, and resilience in the post-pandemic world. As we navigate the aftermath of a global crisis that has reshaped our lives in profound ways, prioritizing our well-being has never been more crucial. The challenges we face today are unique, but so too are the opportunities for growth, renewal, and transformation. In the pages ahead, you'll discover evidence-based strategies, practical tips, and inspirational insights to help you navigate the complexities of staying fit and

healthy after COVID-19. This guide is more than just a compilation of exercises and diet plans—it's a holistic approach to wellness. We delve into the science behind stress management, sleep hygiene, and immune support, recognizing that true health encompasses physical, mental, and emotional well-being. As we turn the page on a chapter marked by adversity and hardship, let us embrace the opportunity to emerge stronger, healthier in Perth, and more resilient than ever before. Together, we can overcome the challenges of today and lay the foundation for a brighter, healthier future.

2. Build a Good Morning Routine



You may have seen videos on YouTube like: "My super productive 5 a.m. morning routine" or "Why I wake up at 4 a.m. every day and love it!" While these might seem drastic (and some of them are), there are benefits to developing a morning routine you can keep.

A morning routine with a typical wake time, a healthy breakfast, and some exercise is a great place to start, says Erin Engle, PsyD, a licensed clinical psychologist at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Having a more intentional approach to the day early on can help instill self-confidence and lead to a more productive rest of the day, says Engle.

1. Maintain a fixed bedtime and waking time

Consistency is at the heart of any routine, says Engle. She recommends setting a fixed bedtime and wake-up time and sticking to them as often as you can. Not only will this set you up for a better day ahead, it can also provide more restful sleep at night.

That's because waking up and falling asleep at the same time sets your internal clock, or circadian rhythm, which makes for better quality sleep.

2. Plan how much time you'll need

Engle recommends giving yourself enough time in the morning to accomplish everything you need to do. She suggests planning backward from your first engagement, like your first meeting, or the starting time of your children's school, and waking up early enough to fit everything in; you may need anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes for your morning routine, depending on how many tasks it involves.

"Engaging thoughtfully in each part of the routine may reduce rushing and reactivity, and increase the sense of calm and pleasure obtained from completing the routine," says Engle.

3. Don't hit snooze



"Snoozes are a false start to the day. In the short-term, hitting snooze may feel like a win but it has limited utility in advancing the goal of achieving rest long-term," says Engle.

If you find yourself hitting snooze a lot, Engle suggests reworking your expectations of what can be accomplished by waking up early. If your body needs more rest, then you may need to adjust your schedule accordingly. Adults typically need between seven to nine hours of sleep per night.

On the other hand, if you're hitting snooze because you're feeling overwhelmed by everything you have to do in the morning or trying to avoid the day ahead, Engle suggests waking up and doing one or two activities that bring you peace and enjoyment. For instance, you could wake up and do a little meditation, take a walk around your neighborhood, or cook yourself a healthy breakfast you enjoy.

4. Get out of bed

While you may be tempted to lay in bed and scroll through your phone for some time before you get up, Engle suggests getting out of bed instead.

"Getting out of bed is the first step. Then, select one activity that you can bring full attention to, whether that be prayer, affirmation, a physical stretch, or brushing your teeth," says Engle.

She says with practice, following a chosen routine can help you weather external stress, enhance your capacity to cope with challenges, and better engage with the day ahead.

5. Avoid your phone



Scrolling through the news or your social media feeds is a passive activity that could detract from the productivity of your morning.

"Engaging with this type of content before one is fully awake or out of bed may make it tempting to mindlessly read content, which may feel purposeful, but is actually a passive activity," says Engle.

6. Try self-affirmation

Saying positive affirmations out loud or writing them down can help build confidence, counter negativity, and potentially benefit your relationships in the long run.

You can choose your own affirmations or try some of these:

I am smart, strong, capable, and kind

I am worthy, grateful, and blessed

Today will be a great day

7. Drink some water

Eleana Kaidanian, RD, CPT, a nutritionist with her own practice, recommends starting your day with water, rather than tea or coffee. She suggests keeping water by your bedside and drinking eight ounces when you wake up. Water is essential because it helps your body digest the food you eat, absorb the nutrients from it, and get rid of the waste products.

3. Start Exercising



Everyone should aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, preferably all, days of the week. Moderate-intensity physical activity is an activity that is energetic and raises your heart rate, but doesn't make you too breathless, such as fast walking.

If you are pregnant, have been previously inactive, or suffer from any medical conditions, it is recommended that you seek medical advice before commencing vigorous physical activity.

For best results in achieving a healthier lifestyle in Perth and reducing your risk of developing a chronic disease, combine physical activity with healthy eating.

Build up slowly

Some physical activity is better than none, and more is better than a little. But you don't have to exercise to the point of being in pain to get a health benefit.

If you don't do any physical activity at all, start by just doing some. You can build up gradually.

It can be a good idea to set short-term and long-term goals. Make your goals specific, measurable and achievable. Rather than a vague goal like 'I will get fit', try 'I will walk every day for 10 minutes after meals' or 'I will get on and off the bus/train 2 stops away from my usual stop'.

Make time to exercise

Make time to be physically active and schedule it as you would an appointment. Set a date for when you will start. Write the date down and stick to it.

One idea is to make an activity planner so you can put the times and days you will do each activity.

Do not give up before you start to see the benefits. Be patient and keep at it.

Choose activities that are right for you

Do something that you enjoy or go for something different you've always wanted to try, such as walking, jogging, joining a team sport, taking a group fitness class, dancing and swimming.

You can get back on your bike with AustCycle, which provides cycling courses for people who want to ride bikes for recreation and transport. Courses are run by trained teachers who help participants improve their riding skills and safety, and encourage them to ride more often.

Try some strength training by joining a Lift for Life program. Lift for Life is a strength training program designed specifically for people with, or at risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Build physical activity into your everyday life

Try to look for opportunities to build as much physical activity into everyday activities as you can. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Buy yourself a pedometer — a wearable gadget that counts how many steps you take. Use this to motivate you to keep increasing your daily steps. 10,000 steps is a website dedicated to motivating people to build up to 10,000 steps a day.
- Walk or cycle instead of using the car for short trips.
- If you have to drive, park further away from your destination or get off the bus, train or tram one stop early.
- Rather than spend 5 minutes circling a car park looking for that 'perfect space' near the entrance to the shops, park 5 minutes away and spend that time walking instead.
- Walk on escalators — it's quicker so you'll actually save time. Or better still, use the stairs.
- Work in the garden — get into some energetic gardening activities like digging, shifting soil, and mowing the lawn to raise your heart rate.
- Clean the house! Activities like vacuuming, cleaning windows and scrubbing floors that raise your heart rate are all good examples of moderate activity.

Make it fun



Physical activity can make you feel good about yourself and it's a good opportunity to have fun with other people or enjoy some time to yourself.

Planning physical activity with others can help you stick to your plan and achieve your goals.

Ideas for physical activity you can do with other people include:

- Join a walking group. Walking groups are an enjoyable way to get active and provide an opportunity to socialise and meet new people.
- Catch up with friends by walking together rather than meeting for coffee or a meal
- Join a gym with a friend.
- Find a park run near you.

Your local library or community centre will list local community activities that involve doing physical activity with other people.

Get active with your family



- Play actively with your children — kick a footy around, skip, jump on the trampoline.
- Go on a family bike ride.

- Take your dog (or the neighbour's dog) for a walk.
- If possible, walk to school with your children or park further from the school and walk part of the way.
- Buy a fitness DVD and get the whole family to join in — a great way to have a laugh and be active.

Getting active at work

- Park further away from work (or get off public transport a few stops early). If you walk for 10 minutes to and from work, you'll have done 20 minutes without even noticing.
- Keep a pair of comfortable walking or running shoes at work and you will always be ready for a walk or run.
- Go for a short walk during your lunch break.
- Start a walking group with work colleagues or friends and stick to a routine of certain days or times to go out together.
- If you work in an office, try to avoid long periods of sitting and get up as frequently as you can.
- Walk the long way to the bathroom and kitchen/canteen.

4. Healthy Eating Habits



The recommendations in the Australian dietary guidelines and Australian guide to healthy eating help us choose foods for good health and to reduce our risk of chronic health problems.

If we are carrying extra weight, the Australian dietary guidelines can also help us lose weight. They steer us towards foods that are high in nutrients but lower in kilojoules. These choices are nutrient dense but less energy dense and helpful for both achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

People wanting to lose weight will also find this information useful for planning meals and snacks. Following the recommended number of serves from the five food groups and avoiding the discretionary foods will result in a gradual but healthy weight loss for most people in Perth. However, some people, particularly younger men and people who are taller than average or more active, may need additional serves of the five food groups.

Adult shopping with child in cart choosing produce in supermarket

You can also check by taking the 'Are you eating for health?' quiz in the Dietary guidelines summary booklet.

Eating regularly



It's essential for weight control and especially weight loss, to recognise and act on the feedback your body gives you about when and how much you need to eat. However it's also important to aim for a regular eating pattern of meals, or meals and mid meals.

A planned pattern of eating is more likely to include the recommended number of serves from the five food groups. A spontaneous, unstructured eating pattern is more likely to include too many discretionary foods which means too much saturated fat, added sugars, added salt and kilojoules at the expense of fibre and important nutrients.

Don't skip breakfast?

Breakfast skippers are more likely to be tempted by unplanned discretionary choices during the morning and large serves at the next meal or snack. Just think of how yummy those large baked muffins look at morning tea if you've missed breakfast!

People who regularly eat a breakfast based on wholegrain cereal or bread, low fat milk or yogurt and maybe some fruit or vegetables are much more likely to be eating well and lose weight than those who skip breakfast.

Eat with other people not TV



We also know that people who eat with others and eat at the dining table, are more likely to eat regularly and eat well than those who eat alone or in front of the TV. Meals with others tend to include more foods from the five food groups. For example, people often report that they can't be bothered cooking vegetables just for themselves.

Television watching is associated with eating more discretionary choices like take-away or convenience foods and fewer foods from the five foods. It also makes it much more difficult to recognise and respond to our body's signals about hunger and satiety.

Good meal planning and making healthy choices can sometimes be tricky but a few useful tips can make it easier.

5. Exercise While Doing your Housework



Busy people may not find time in their schedules to do the recommended 150 to 175 minutes of moderate cardiovascular exercise per week. An study found that the average British woman spends 143 minutes per week cleaning their house. If you are the main caretaker of your own house or another residence, then you may be able to count regular cleaning and chores as part of your exercise time. Many household chores are considered medium intensity cardiovascular or strength-training exercises. Plan your chores in a way that allows you to do them in succession to increase heart rate and work your major muscle groups. Read more to find out how to exercise while doing your housework.

Indoor Housework Workout

Set a timer for 30 minutes, the minimum amount of moderate-intensity exercise you should have in a workout session. Constant exercise is the key to turning regular chores into an aerobic exercise that helps your heart and lungs.

Turn on some fast music. Recent studies have shown that loud music with at least 120 beats per minute (BPM) helps to increase the rate at which you exercise. They also can distract you and improve your mood, allowing you to workout for a longer period of time.

Put on flexible clothing and athletic trainers before you workout. Some household chores require good foot cushioning and stability in order to perform them without the risk of injury.

Vacuum your entire house. The forward and back motion of vacuuming is a great workout for your abdominal muscles (abs). Flex your muscles 1 at a time, beginning at your pelvis and moving into your upper abs, and keep them flexed for the entire duration of your vacuuming.

Sweep and/or mop your floors. Ready the floors so you can do as many surfaces as possible in succession. Flex your ab muscles and squat rather than bend if you need to get into a hard to reach space.

Run or walk up and down your stairs 5 to 10 times. You can do this while tidying different rooms, bringing objects from 1 room to another. You can also do it simply to burn more calories and increase the intensity of your workout.

Do calf raises as you hand wash dishes. Start with your legs hip-width apart. Move onto your toes and hold for 3 to 10 seconds, and then slowly come down.

Squat as you pick up a laundry basket, and then set it on a table or couch near a wall. Lean against the wall with your feet hip-width apart and 2 to 3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) away from the wall. Flex your abs, bend your knees and move your back down the wall, squatting as you fold laundry for 10 to 30 seconds.

Clean all your windows to work your arms. Use your left and right hands equally as you wipe in a circular motion. Reach up as high as you can to work your abs, glutes and lower back muscles.

Outdoor Chores Workout

Weed or hoe your garden. Make sure to use proper knee cushioning and engage your ab and lower back muscles if you lean forward. This gardening exercise burns approximately 289 calories per hour.

Wash your car by hand. The motions of wetting, scrubbing and rinsing can work your arm, back, and leg muscles. Try to squat every time you wet your chamois or sponge into soapy water, instead of bending over.

Clean your gutters. Flex your ab and gluteal muscles as you stand on the ladder, which will improve your balance. This burns approximately 320 calories per hour.

Paint indoors or outdoors. Use either brushes or rollers and tighten your abs as you reach to get higher places. Before using a ladder, try to reach as high as you can get on the wall, as it strengthens your core muscles.

5.1. House Cleaning Workouts That Beat The Gym



Cleaning your home is essential to maintain household hygiene and curb the transmission of infectious diseases. When you have a clean home, it boosts your immunity and improves mental well-being.

Therefore, it is vital to sanitise your abode routinely and prevent the build-up of illness-causing germs. Hiring the best vacate cleaning in Perth is a practical solution if the cleaning required is extensive and you lack the time, energy or effort for vacate cleaning.

However, you should perform simple house cleaning tasks, as they can help burn calories. Remain physically fit and agile by dusting, sweeping, mopping and managing other tasks.

Do you need more motivation for house cleaning? Below are tips for getting a full-body workout while sanitising your home. Have a look.

Dust The Entire House

Dusting requires stretching, bending and lifting, helping you burn around 160 calories in an hour. You can burn around 40-50 calories even if you dust for 10 minutes every day. Thus, make sure dusting is one of your regular house cleaning checklist tasks. It also helps remove germs lurking in common household areas.

Burn more calories while dusting by squatting rather than bending down

Get on your hands and knees to wipe baseboards, storage units and other lower areas

Stretch reachable areas to wipe them and alternate your hands to give both arms a workout

Declutter & Organise

Walking around has multiple health benefits, as you can exhaust 150-170 calories in an hour. Thus, while decluttering, you burn 4-6 calories in a minute.

To make this activity more challenging, turn walking into lunges and go up and down the stairs multiple times. Also, manage light weight-lifting by carrying the laundry basket, small furniture, and other household items.

Wash Windows



Since this task requires scrubbing, stretching and quick movements, you can burn about 5-6 calories per minute while washing windows. Thus, if it takes 5 minutes to wash one window, you can burn 25-30 calories each time.

If the windows are heavily soiled, you can burn 318-378 calories or more in an hour while deep cleaning windows tracks and other parts of the fixture.

Ensure to move top to bottom when cleaning, a professional technique of vacate cleaners in Perth to prevent recontamination of cleaned spots. Use a step ladder to reach high windows and go up and down the steps a few times to get maximum exercise.

Sweep & Mop The Floors

You use your legs, biceps, triceps, and shoulders to sweep and mop floors, making these tasks excellent for intense exercising. What's more, you use balance and core strength to sweep and mop, which helps reduce fat in your body and makes you more agile.

Both these activities require walking around the house, which helps exhaust 24-30 calories in half an hour.

Wash Your Clothes

Doing laundry every week can help you get rid of 180 calories in an hour as you need to carry the clothes, fold them and ensure they are in the right place. People with semi-automatic washing machines will get a better workout doing laundry. It requires you to rinse & dry the clothes separately.

Vacuum Carpets, Upholstery & Beddings



These items gather moisture, dust, dirt, and grime, making them hot spots for germs that cause infectious diseases. Therefore, you must vacuum the carpets, upholstery and beddings. Move the equipment in a 'w' pattern like the professional vacate cleaners in Perth to get the maximum benefit.

You will burn approximately 80 calories while vacuuming for an hour. Therefore, this activity will improve your well-being by removing germs and making you physically active.

Since most household vacuum cleaners are lightweight, carry the equipment room to room. Also, take it up and down the stairs to make your workout more strenuous.

Iron Your Clothes

Select a day in a week to iron all the clothes while standing you want to wear for the week. If you iron clothes for at least 3 hours, it will easily burn 420 calories in a day. It is equal to 1 hour power Zumba. Through this activity

Clean The Bathroom



This room has many dirty spots. Thus, by sanitising dirty surfaces and fixtures and then disinfect them, you can get a good workout out of shower cleaning, scrubbing the toilet etc. It can help tone your arms and leg muscles along with strengthening your core.

Conclusion

As we embark on this journey together, let us commit to prioritizing our health and well-being, not just for ourselves but for the world we inhabit. By embracing the lessons learned from the pandemic and integrating them into our daily lives, we have the power to create positive, lasting change. Through resilience, determination, and a steadfast commitment to our health, we can navigate the uncertainties of the post-pandemic world with confidence and grace. "How to Stay Fit After COVID: A Wellness Guide" serves as a beacon of hope and empowerment, guiding you towards a brighter, healthier future in Perth. So, let's take the first step towards a healthier, happier tomorrow. Let's cultivate habits that nourish our bodies, minds, and souls. And let's embark on this journey together, knowing that with each step we take, we move closer to a life filled with vitality, joy, and resilience.

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