

## - Health

# Take action for a healthy body

Technology makes life easier, and us lazier in many ways, writes We may be the “pinnacle” of our creator’s hand, but that does not change who we are.

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OUR ANCESTORS NEVER HAD the luxuries and comforts of modern living that most of us enjoy today, so we can say without hesitation that “technological progress has made our lives easier”. And that is a good thing. Or is it?

Truth is, easier is not always better. As hunter-gatherers, our ancestors never thought twice about using their muscles and bones the way they were created to be used because actively using them was built into “surviving”. Physical activity was not something they had to consciously think about or incorporate into their day.

So, while the technological progress of modern society has eliminated the need for us to actively “catch our dinner” and allotted us more down-time/leisure time/ sitting time, like everything else in life, it is a trade-off and comes with a price tag.

Unfortunately, the price we pay for leading a sedentary, inactive lifestyle is directly connected to our health in detrimental ways. We have become physically lazy and mentally slothful (and forgetful) and we seem to have forgotten some especially important “facts/rules of life”. The reality is, it matters not what we believe philosophically or what our religious bend may be or who we surround ourselves with, there is one thing that all of us share and have in common and that is “as human beings, we are all part of the animal kingdom”.

We may be the “pinnacle” of our creator’s hand, but that does not change who we are. As part of the animal kingdom we are subject to birth and death and all laws of the animal kingdom.

We navigate through life, blessed with love, joy, and happiness but just as other animals are subject to illness and disease, injury, and pain, we are as well. The sad fact is many current diseases and illnesses have been brought on and are a direct result of our modern, sedentary lifestyles.

“Use it or lose it.” Our skeletons, muscles and bones were created with a purpose

— so that we can actively move — walk, run, jump, lift, push and carry etc. In other words, live life to the fullest. Since we no longer need the type of mandatory activities that drove our ancestors to survive, we must consciously take the initiative and create ways of mimicking their active behaviour if our health and mobility is important to us.

It means taking the initiative to consciously exercise our muscles and strengthen our bones by being physically active and exercising. Unfortunately, just hearing the word “exercise” elicits painful, uncomfortable memories for many. In their minds, abandoned exercise equipment and unused gym memberships immediately identify and label exercise as something to be avoided.

If nefarious thoughts attack when exercise comes up, just think back to that old car you saw sitting idle in the field rusting and wasting away because of lack of activity. Or how about that house that sat empty with no one to love or look after it? Without activity, it too goes into disrepair.

Those images provide an accurate picture of what happens to our body when put into a sedentary state. When our bodies are consistently in “inactive mode”, our muscles and bones get a clear message that they are no longer needed and begin the process of decomposing. Joints tighten up, bone density shrinks, muscles atrophy and strength wastes away.

Sadly, our modern sedentary lifestyles have more people in “lose it” than “use it” mode and most are not even aware of the silent but deadly carnage being done to their once-strong, healthy body.

If you fall into “lose it” mode, and endurance, strength, balance, and mobility are important to you, it is time to take stock of your life and make serious changes.

Rather than sit for hours in front of the TV, computer, tablet, or cellphone lost in “virtual reality”, it is time to actively live and use this amazing body as it was intended.

Everyone has different motivating factors for wanting to be healthy and in good shape physically, and we need them to get us going and keep us moving.

The key is to tap into what motivates us personally.

Some people respond to positive reinforcement — I exercise because:

It makes me feel good

It provides a strong healthy body that I can use to play — run, swim, hike, bike, snow ski, travel the world, play with my kids and grandkids

It helps me to avoid injuries due to weakness such as back strain

It gives me mobility and freedom It provides healthy longevity

Others respond quicker to negative messages/images:

A glance in the mirror or a picture that does not lie

A doctor’s visit revealing something is amiss and health is struggling

Loss of the ability to perform normal daily chores

Loss of freedom and mobility (seeing a friend or relative in a wheelchair)

While our modern lifestyles may have cheated us out of being physically active, it has also provided us with unlimited ways to stay in shape physically — there is something for everyone.

Socialising and exercising or taking classes at the gym is the ideal situation for many while others enjoy more quiet, private workouts at home or weather permitting outside running, biking, skiing, swimming, hiking or taking a brisk walk in the fresh air.

Whatever your cup of tea when it comes to staying in shape, being physically active and honouring the health of your mind and your body, it’s time to stop thinking and talking about it and take action and “just do it”.

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