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HAMPTON
PARKS &
RECREATION

Be Fit-Be Well

Making Time for Healthy Living - Ways to Squeeze in Healthy Habits

By Ellen G. Goldman, Health and Wellness Coach; Sparkpeople.com

You've made the decision to get in shape, lose weight or just live a healthier lifestyle. But you're worried about how you'll manage to find the time to get to the gym, shop and cook healthy foods, or even how you'll keep your goals in mind with so many other things already on it.

Your concerns are certainly valid. As a matter of fact, one of the most common statements I hear from colleagues and friends is, "When things calm down, I really need to start taking better care of myself." Here's the thing: If you are living a full and happy life, it is more often busy than not. And when you have so much to do, doesn't it make sense to take care of yourself and feel well?

There's no debating that you will need to dedicate some time to self-care, but it shouldn't mean you will have to drop your friends, ignore your family or neglect your business. Here are some suggestions of how to create more time for healthy living.

Eating well for good health and/or weight loss requires you to have nutritious foods available and make wise choices when eating out. Here are some ways to make the most of your meals when you're short on time.

Take a few minutes at the beginning of the week to think through your upcoming schedule. How many days will you be home for dinner, and what will you prepare? Do Monday morning meetings always last through lunch? If so, it makes sense to bring a brown bag lunch that day. Will you head to the gym straight from the office and need to bring a healthy snack to fuel you through your workout and hold you over until dinner? Once you have a picture of your week, create your grocery list and plan when you'll head to the store. This extra step will save you tons of time by avoiding multiple trips to the market, or standing in line at the take-out eateries on your way home.

At the market, consider purchasing healthy convenience foods. There are so many to choose from these days. Fresh vegetables, salad greens and fruit are available pre-cleaned and cut. Old fashioned frozen dinners have been recreated to be low-cal, low- sodium, even vegetarian or gluten-free. Check the labels and know which ones to keep in your freezer for nights when you don't have the time to cook. Although you may think these options cost more, they are less expensive than eating in restaurants, buying take-out, or high blood pressure and high cholesterol medicines that often are required after years of unhealthy choices.

If you prefer to avoid the expense of pre-cut fruits and vegetables, invest in crisper storage containers. Spend a little bit of time washing and cutting produce on the weekends, in order to save loads of prep time during the week.

Equip your kitchen with time-saving devices. A slow cooker allows you to quickly throw together ingredients the night before. Plug it in to cook in the morning and a hot prepared dinner is ready when you return home. A microwave will reheat leftovers or frozen healthy choices. An immersion blender quickly makes soups from frozen veggies or smoothies out of frozen fruit. **On days when you have a meal out**, keep in mind that the average restaurant serves two to three times the appropriate portion size. Ask for a take-out container and pack away half for lunch or dinner at another time. Now you've kept to a healthy portion size and you don't need to take time out to prepare another meal the next day.

If you are going to join a gym, make sure it is conveniently located near your home or office. No matter how fabulous the gym in the next town is, if it takes too long to get to, you won't go when you're pressed for time. When squeezing in a formalized exercise **session** still seems impossible to do, know that several short bursts of activity has been shown to add up to great benefit. When ever possible, take the stairs rather than the elevator, walk to your co-worker's office to deliver messages rather than emailing. Use the restrooms on another floor. Purchase and wear a pedometer. Measuring the number of steps you take each day can be highly motivating. Without even thinking about "taking the time out to exercise" you might just reach the 10,000 steps a day to achieve health benefits.

Suggest business meetings at the local walking track rather than the boardroom. Your colleagues may be delighted to squeeze in their activity as well, plus fresh air and being in nature has been proven to improve mood and creativity.

Continued on page 3...

Move of the Month—Kettlebell Clean & Press

As with any workout, be sure to warm up for 5 to 10 minutes before starting the following exercise. If you've never used Kettlebells before, start with the lightest Kettlebell and work your way up as your fitness level increases and you become more familiar with this fitness tool.

Step 1

Stand with your feet slightly wider than shoulder width. Position the Kettlebell between your feet, with the handle in line with your toes. Squat down, bending your knees and lowering your butt toward the ground. As you squat, extend one arm down between your legs. Use an overhand grip to grasp the Kettlebell handle.

Step 2

Bend slightly at the waist to position your shoulder directly over the Kettlebell. Avoid curving or arching your back, and try to maintain a relatively straight line from hips to neck.

Step 3

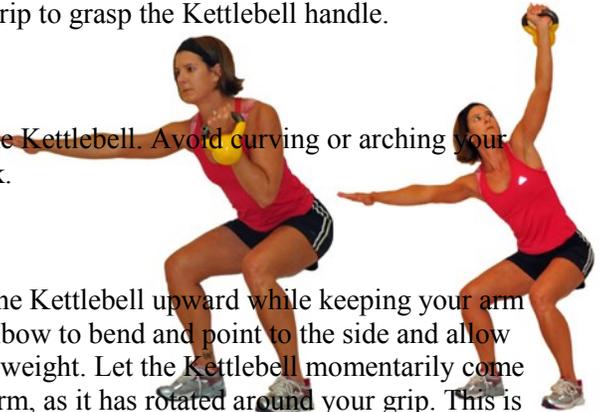
Straighten your legs, pulling the Kettlebell off the ground. Swing the Kettlebell upward while keeping your arm close to your body. As your shoulder lifts the weight, allow your elbow to bend and point to the side and allow your arm to rotate under the Kettlebell as you continue to raise the weight. Let the Kettlebell momentarily come to rest near your shoulder, with the weight on the outside of your arm, as it has rotated around your grip. This is the “clean” portion of the exercise. Bend your knees slightly into a semi-squat. This squat should not be as deep as your initial lifting squat. Bend your knees just enough to provide momentum for the upcoming thrust.

Step 4

Explode upward, straightening your legs and punching your arm and the Kettlebell toward the ceiling. Keep your wrist straight during the entire move. This is the “press” portion of the exercise.

Step 5

Lower the Kettlebell back to shoulder height as you bend back into a semi-squat position. Straighten your legs momentarily, if necessary, to help absorb the weight of the descending Kettlebell. Bend to full squat position. Simultaneously, pull your elbow back and straighten your arm toward the floor. Lower the Kettlebell to the ground to its original position between your feet.



Mexican Chocolate Fudge Pops

.2 c 2 milk 1.2c agave nectar 6 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tsp vanilla extract 1/2 tsp cinnamon 1/8 tsp each nutmeg and cayenne
2 oz. semisweet chocolate

PREPARATION Whisk milk, agave, cocoa, vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg, cayenne, and 1/8 tsp sea salt in small pot. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Add chocolate and whisk until melted. Remove from heat, strain, and divide among 9 ice-pop molds. Freeze until solid, at least 6 hours before serving.

Per Pop: Calories 121, protein 3grams, carbohydrates 23 grams, sugars 20g, fat 3.5grams



KUDOS TO HPR!

On July 26th at Buckroe Beach Pier Hampton & Newport News Parks and Recreation Departments with the Rotary Club gave over 200 children a great fishing experience.

Also the HPR staff put on a “fun-tastic” event for Parks & Recreation month that included water safety hands-on fun, corn hole, tug-of-war, face painting, parachute games and fitness for all ages.

A special thanks to Cathy Morris for coordinating all the events!



Continued from page 1...

Combine exercise with family time. Rather than an outing to the movies, consider the roller or ice skating rink, miniature golf course, park or town pool. You and the kids will both get your exercise and quality time together. You don't have to sacrifice time with your friends to get in a workout. Suggest an active happy hour after work rather than heading to the local bar. Go bowling, or join a baseball, basketball or soccer team. For the really ambitious, train together for an upcoming race.

Deep breathing is one of the best ways to ease stress and takes a mere 30 seconds. Begin to notice the physical signs you experience when stress is mounting. Neck tension, back pain, and queasy stomach are common. Stop what ever you are doing and take a few deep, cleansing breaths. A mantra such as "breathe" or "stay calm" may help. Stress leads to inefficiency and mistakes that then take more time to redo and correct.

Chronic stress can weaken the immune system, exacerbate illness and injuries and lead to lots of time spent at the doctor's office or home in bed. Take time regularly to manage your stress to avoid massive loss of time later. Experiment with what works best for you. Ten minutes of daily meditation, a weekly massage or just an evening out each week with your honey can go a long way to keeping you healthy. When you find yourself thinking "I don't have time for this" remind yourself how time consumed being sick or depressed is! **Stress reduction and sleep** are important to self-care and a healthy lifestyle, but too often neglected when life is frantic.

Many people believe they can gain more time by skimming on sleep. I hope you are not one of them! Just as too much stress will lead to more mistakes, inefficiency, depressed immune system and increased injury and illness, so will lack of sleep. Although an occasional night of reduced sleep won't have long lasting effects, a constant diet of sleep deprivation will. Trying to function on too little sleep will end up causing you to waste time rather than save it.

With some proactive thinking and creativity, creating time for healthy living should not be an insurmountable problem. Self-care can compliment and fit seamlessly into your lifestyle.



**HAMPTON
PARKS &
RECREATION**

Administrative Office - 727-6348
22 Lincoln Street

Fort Monroe Center - 727-6831
100 Stillwell Road

Newtown Center - 728-1710
4315 Kecoughtan Road

North Phoebus Center - 727-1160
249 W. Chamberlain Ave.

Northampton Center - 825-4805
1435-A Todd's Lane

Old Hampton Center - 727-1123
201 Lincoln Street

Senior Services Center - 727-1601
3501 Kecoughtan Road

West Hampton Center - 896-4687
1638 Briarfield Road

YH Thomas Center—727-1200
1300 Thomas Street

www.hampton.gov/parks

Facebook at *HamptonVA*

August Happenings!

- *Kayaking in Hampton, Newmarket Creek; August 9, 9a to 11a \$10 per person. If you have never paddled this scenic waterway you will truly enjoy it as you are guided by one of the HPR Park Rangers. Call 825-4657 to register.*
- *Home Town Hero's Appreciation Night, FMCC; August 15, 6p to 8p FREE for all our Emergency Medical Personnel, Law Enforcement, Teachers, and Active Duty Military at the Fort Monroe Community Center Pool. Call 727-6381 for details.*
- *Workout on the Waterfront, Buckroe Beach Stage; August 17, 8a to 9a FREE*
- *Freaky Kon-Tiki, Mill Point Park; August 16 with new Paddleboard and Kayak Divisions. For details go to www.baydays.com*
- *Kids Fishing, Sandy Bottom Nature Park; August 30, 10a to 11a \$2 per child. Kids learn the basics of fishing, types of bait, and how to bait your own hook. An adult MUST accompany all children. Call 825-4657 to register.*

