

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter

January 2022 Edition



*Happy
New
Year*

Strength Training: Get Stronger, Leaner, Healthier

Strength training is an important part of an overall fitness program. Here's what strength training can do for you — and how to get started.



Want to reduce body fat, increase lean muscle mass and burn calories more efficiently? Strength training to the rescue! Strength training is a key component of overall health and fitness for everyone.

Use it or Lose It

Lean muscle mass naturally diminishes with age. Your body fat percentage will increase over time if you don't do anything to replace the lean muscle you lose over time. Strength training can help you preserve and enhance your muscle mass at any age.

Strength training may also help you:

- **Develop strong bones.** By stressing your bones, strength training can increase bone density and reduce the risk of osteoporosis.
- **Manage your weight.** Strength training can help you manage or lose weight, and it can increase your metabolism to help you burn more calories.
- **Enhance your quality of life.** Strength training may enhance your quality of life and improve your ability to do everyday activities. Strength training can also protect your joints from injury. Building muscle contributes to better balance and may reduce your risk of falls. This can help you maintain independence as you age.
- **Manage chronic conditions.** Strength training can reduce the symptoms of many chronic conditions, such as arthritis, back pain, obesity, heart disease, depression and diabetes.
- **Sharpen your thinking skills.** Some research suggests that regular strength training and aerobic exercise may help improve thinking and learning skills for older adults.

Consider the Options

- **Strength training** can be done at home or in the gym. Try pushups, pullups, planks, lunges and squats.

- **Resistance tubing.** Resistance tubing is inexpensive, light-weight tubing that provides resistance when stretched. There are many types of resistance tubes in nearly any sporting goods store or online.
- **Free weights.** Barbells and dumbbells are classic strength training tools. If you don't have weights at home, use soup cans. Other options include medicine balls or kettle bells.
- **Weight machines.** Most fitness centers offer various resistance machines. You can invest in weight machines for use at home, too.
- **Cable suspension training.** Cable suspension training is another option to try. In cable suspension training, you suspend part of your body — such as your legs — while doing body weight training such as pushups or planks.

Getting Started

Check with your doctor before beginning a strength training or aerobic fitness program, especially if you have a chronic condition, or are older than age 40 and haven't been active recently.



Before beginning strength training, warm up with brisk walking or another aerobic activity for 5-10 minutes. Cold muscles are more prone to injury than warm muscles.

Choose a weight or resistance level heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12 to 15 repetitions. When you can easily do more repetitions gradually increase the weight or resistance.

Research shows that a single set of 12 to 15 repetitions with the proper weight can build muscle efficiently in most people and can be as effective as three sets of the same exercise. As long as you take the muscle you are working to fatigue — meaning you can't lift another repetition — you are doing the work necessary to make the muscle stronger. Fatiguing at a higher number of repetitions means you likely are using a lighter weight, which will make it easier for you to control and maintain correct form.

To give your muscles time to recover, rest one full day between exercising each specific muscle group. Also be careful to listen to your body. If a strength training exercise causes pain, stop the exercise. Consider trying a lower weight or trying it again in a few days.

It's important to use proper technique in strength training to avoid injuries. If you're new to strength training, work with a trainer or other fitness specialist to learn correct form and technique. Remember to breathe as you strength train.

Get Your Greens in Smoothie (the best green smoothie!)

Get your greens in with this delicious healthy green smoothie recipe made with mango, pineapple, ginger, avocado for creaminess and a dose of heart-healthy fats and spinach for nutrition. This simple green smoothie recipe is vegan and dairy free for the ultimate breakfast on the go or refreshing snack.

Ingredients

- ◆ 1 cup frozen pineapple chunks
- ◆ ½ cup frozen mango chunks
- ◆ 1/2 medium ripe avocado
- ◆ 1 inch knob of ginger, peeled
- ◆ 2 cups organic spinach
- ◆ 1 cup unsweetened almond milk, plus more as necessary
- ◆ Optional: 1 tbsp hemp seeds or flaxseed meal

Instructions

In a large high-powered blender, add in all ingredients and blend on high for 1-2 minutes or until all ingredients are well combined. If necessary, add in more milk to thin the smoothie and blend again. Serves 1.

Adding extra nutrition to your smoothies

You can enhance any green smoothie by adding additional nutritious ingredients to really make it your own. Don't be afraid to experiment a little! Here are a few suggestions that you can add to this green smoothie:

- ◆ **Matcha:** if you're a green tea lover, you can add a teaspoon of matcha to your smoothie for green color, antioxidants and earthy flavor.
- ◆ **Flaxseed meal:** for a little boost of fiber and minerals. A tablespoon is plenty!
- ◆ **Chia seeds:** feel free to add in a tablespoon of chia seeds to your smoothie for a boost of healthy fats and fiber.
- ◆ **Hemp seeds:** if you've been wondering what to do with those hemp seeds lurking in your cupboard, feel free to throw in a tablespoon into your smoothie for a boost of healthy fats, omegas and minerals.
- ◆ **Protein:** make this a post-workout smoothie and boost the protein by adding 1/2 cup Greek yogurt or 1 scoop of your favorite protein powder.
- ◆ **Mint:** do you love minty flavor? Add a few fresh mint leaves!

Sources: <https://www.ambitiouskitchen.com/green-smoothie-recipe/>



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS VS. GOALS

So, what are the best New Year's resolutions? Before you answer that, realize the difference between a resolution and a goal. A resolution is a decision to do (or not do) a specific behavior, like eating ice cream before bed. A goal is a series of calculated steps designed to help you achieve the resolution, like starting a mindfulness meditation practice at bedtime. By this definition, it may be more straightforward to think of goals as the planned-out process of achieving your resolution. In other words, your resolution is your desired outcome, while your goals are the steps you must take to accomplish it.

Goals, not resolutions, are the key to long-term growth and success. And the secret to setting compelling goals is knowing *why* it is you want what you want – finding purpose and meaning in your goals. Creating compelling goals will help you stay inspired, even when times get tough. What resolutions are you considering? Whether it's professional development or personal growth, the best New Year's resolutions have purpose, passion and vision behind them.



HOW TO MAKE YOUR RESOLUTIONS STICK

No New Year's resolutions are possible without a strategy for achieving them. Resolutions, like goals, become more attainable when you streamline your goal-setting process. When you're having trouble reaching your resolutions, you need a way to achieve your goals no matter what. Instead of hardened resolve, you need a plan.

Here's how to replace resolutions with objectives that work.

1. DECIDE AND COMMIT TO MAKING A CHANGE
2. DOCUMENT WHAT YOU WANT
3. GET CLEAR ON THE WHY
4. FIND ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY AND TAKE ACTION
5. MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS
6. KEEP GOING
7. CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

There are many tips for keeping New Year's resolutions, but the main one is this: Don't merely tie goals to the new year because everyone else is doing it. Real change comes when you know your outcome and commit to making your goals a reality. Learning to set and achieve goals is a great habit that few master in their lifetimes. Get everything you want this year, and every year, by deciding to set and achieve goals that matter to you.

Article adapted from: <https://www.tonyrobbins.com/productivity-performance/why-not-set-new-years-resolutions/>

Wellness Corner

Proper Posture Is Important for Good Health

"Oh, my aching back."

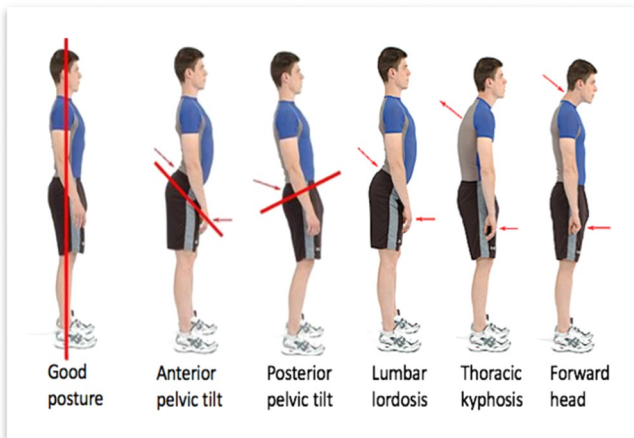
How many of you have said those words about a nagging muscle or ligament problem? While slips on ice, trips over curbs and improper lifting can be the cause of those problems, there's another culprit. Who or what is this guilty party? Poor posture. Yes, lying, sitting, standing and walking with poor posture can put major strain on your body.

According to the American Chiropractic Association, "Several factors contribute to poor posture — most commonly, stress, obesity, pregnancy, weak postural muscles, abnormally tight muscles and high-heeled shoes. In addition, decreased flexibility, a poor work environment, incorrect working posture, and unhealthy sitting and standing habits also can contribute to poor body positioning."

You can limit wear and tear by taking some of these steps to improve your posture

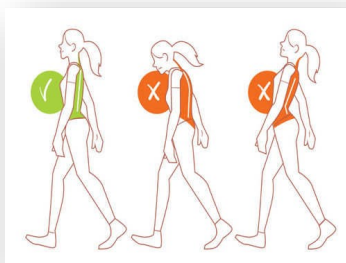
Standing posture:

- Hold your chest high.
- Relax your shoulders and keep them back.
- Pull in your abdomen and backside.
- Don't lock your knees or tilt your head in any direction.
- Balance your weight on both feet.
- Keep your feet parallel.



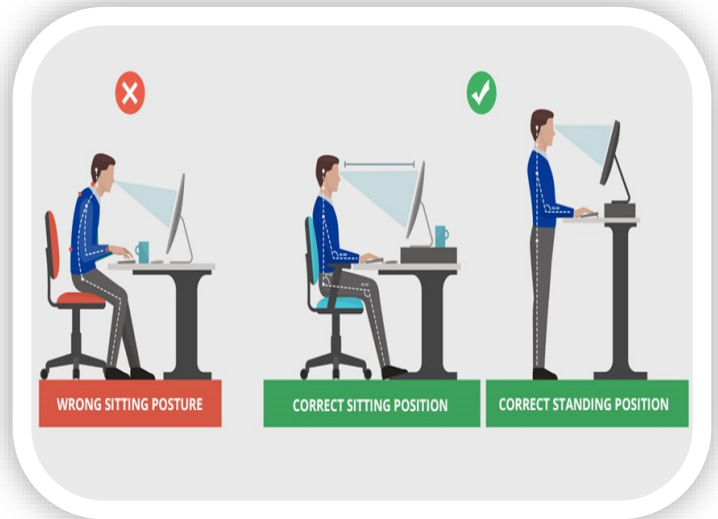
Walking posture:

- Hold your head high.
- Look forward, not down and keep your chin parallel to the ground.
- Lightly contract your abdominal muscles.
- Slightly bend your elbows, freely swing your arms.
- Move your shoulders naturally.
- Straighten and avoid arching your back.



Lying posture:

- Search for a mattress that is right for you.
- Use a pillow when you sleep.
- Don't sleep on your stomach.
- Put a pillow between your legs if you sleep on your side.
- Put a pillow under your knees if you sleep on your back.



Ergonomics at the office

Sitting at a desk all day can contribute to aches and pains. However, practicing good office ergonomics can help you keep your muscles and ligaments healthy:

- Adjust your chair height. You want your chair to be in a position that allows your feet to sit flat on the ground and your knees to be level with your hips. If need be, place a cushion in the small of your back while sitting in your chair. This helps with lumbar support.
- Position your go-to items effectively. You're often reaching for your phone, computer mouse or calculator, so keep these items in easily reachable positions.
- Take care of your wrists. Keep your wrists straight while typing. Also, use a wrist rest for support.
- Sit up straight. While in front of your computer or at your desk, sit up straight and position your body in the center of your work station.
- Use a headset. Wedging your phone between your shoulder and the side of your face while writing isn't a good thing. Use a headset instead to reduce the strain on your body.

Improving your posture helps improve your overall health. Speak with your health care provider if you have further questions about bettering your posture.