

Fall into Fitness

As summer winds down and the air gets cooler you may find yourself enjoying the outdoors more with an evening walk. Physical activity is essential for weight management, disease prevention, and overall well-being. Identifying fun ways to incorporate activity into your routine will help you adhere to your fitness routine. Many people are apprehensive to start a fitness routine because they don't know where to start. In this issue we will show you that fall is a great time to start your fitness regimen.

How Much Activity?

In general, all adults should avoid inactivity, but when it comes to knowing how activity much we really need it can be confusing. It is recommended that adults participate in moderate-intensity aerobic activity for 150 minutes per week or vigorous-intensity aerobic activity for 75 minutes per week. Moderate-intensity activities include brisk walking or tennis. Vigorous-intensity activities include jogging, running, and swimming. Even greater health outcomes are seen with an increase in activity to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity. According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion within the Department of Health and Human Services the benefits include lower risk of premature death, coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and depression.



Getting Started

Physical activity requires no special equipment, just comfortable clothes and shoes. Sometimes the best place to start is with walking. Walking is a great way to achieve your weekly goal of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity. This is the perfect time of year to walk outside as the weather starts to cool. There are many ideal places to walk in Pittsburgh with routes, trails, and many parks walking is a great way to experience the season.



Pittsburgh's Scenic Destinations

There are so many great places to walk in the city and surrounding area. Get out of your neighborhood and check out one of these fun places to make your walk more exciting.

Frick Park: 644 acres located in Pittsburgh's east end with many trails both paved and rocky.

<https://www.pittsburghparks.org/frick-park>

South Park: 2,013 acres including wooded trails in Pittsburgh's south hills.

<http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks/south-park/index.aspx>

North Park: 3,075 acres including a 65-acre lake and boathouse complete with kayak rentals located in Pittsburgh's north hills.

<http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks/north-park/index.aspx>

Schenley Park: 456 acres including wooded trails and multisport facilities right in the heart of Oakland.

<https://www.pittsburghparks.org/schenley-park>

Three Rivers Heritage Trail: 24 miles of trails along Pittsburgh's riverfront with segments on all three rivers. This trail also connects to the Great Allegheny Passage and C&O Canal trail which bikers can take all the way to Washington, D.C.

<https://friendsoftheriverfront.org/trails/three-rivers-heritage-trail/>

Fun Fall Activities

If walking and exploring Pittsburgh's parks is not exciting enough for you consider one of these fall activities.

Apple picking at a local orchard: You may be pleasantly surprised that not far from our city there are acres of apple orchards for you and your family to walk. Refuel with apples along the way! Check out where there is a u-pick farm near you at the following website: <https://www.visitpittsburgh.com/restaurants-culinary/farms-farmers-markets/u-pick-farms/>

Train for the YMCA Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot: This race takes place every year running through downtown Pittsburgh and the north side. Proceeds from this race support efforts to eliminate food insecurity in Pittsburgh. Food donations are also accepted at the race. Many runners don their best turkey costumes making this 3.1 miles of family fun. Starting a couch to 5k program is a great way to start running. Register for the race here:

<http://www.ymcaofpittsburgh.org/turkeytrot/>

Gear Up

As the weather gets cooler remember to layer up. Dressing in layers allows you to adjust your clothing as your body warms up during exercise. Wearing a hat and gloves will keep your ears and fingers warm.

Fueling for Fitness

Whether you're training for your first 5k this fall or biking along the riverfront staying hydrated and fueling properly is essential. In early fall the weather can still be hot and humid. Be sure to bring water with you while you're exercising if the temperatures are high. Eating balanced meals before and after your activities ensure you will be adequately fueled. Balanced meals include appropriate portion carbohydrates, protein, and fat. If you plan to be out for an all-day trip be sure to pack plenty of snacks. Here's a recipe for some healthy, portable energy snacks.

Pumpkin Cranberry Energy Bites

Recipe by Alex Caspero

Ingredients

- 2 cups instant or rolled oats
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup pepitas (shelled pumpkin seeds)
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup peanut butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin puree
- 1/3 cup chocolate chips



1. Place oats, cranberries, pepitas, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and salt in a large bowl.
2. Whisk together the peanut butter, honey and pumpkin puree. If the mixture is thick and not pourable, then microwave the mixture for 20-30 seconds. A softer mixture will make it easier to mix together.
3. Pour the honey mixture into the oats and stir until combined. Gently fold in the chocolate chips.
4. Scoop the mixture into small bowls (I used this [1 tablespoon scoop](#)) and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Continue with the rest of the mixture, then place the baking sheet in the fridge or freezer until hardened.
<https://www.delishknowledge.com/pumpkin-cranberry-energy-bites/>

Need a Dietitian?

Registered Dietitians are here to help you with your nutrition questions. To make an appointment call 412.692.4497 (Oakland location) or 412.623.2421 (Shadyside location).