**10 Minutes To A Fitter You**

**Regular exercise can help you stay healthy, active, independent, and productive. Contrary to what many people think, you can enjoy its benefits without having to slog through lengthy workout sessions. Simply adding a few short minutes of exercise throughout your day can improve your health. Always check with your doctor before beginning any new exercise program.**

A recent survey found that nearly two-thirds of Americans ages 50 to 79 believe that exercise is the "best thing" they can do for their health. Also, nearly 90 percent of the respondents think that they need to exercise 20 to 30 minutes per session at least three times weekly. These people were on the right track on the first question. Exercise can help you stay healthy, in turn helping you to enjoy your later years in many ways. Weight-bearing activities, such as walking or playing tennis, can help maintain healthy bones, reducing your risk of osteoporosis, the bone-weakening disease that's a common cause of disability.

However, the survey-takers weren't quite right about how often to exercise. You should strive for at least 30 minutes of endurance exercise on all or most days of the week. These are activities that cause you to breathe harder, such as bicycling or even yard work. But if you don't want to work out for half an hour at a time, you can break up your exercise into three or more 10-minute sessions.

Here are six easy ways to get your body moving for those 10 minutes:

* Weed your flower bed or perform some gardening outdoors.
* Instead of taking your grandchildren to the ice cream shop for a treat, head to the park to throw a ball or swing on the swings.
* Take your dog for a walk around the neighborhood. Clip on a pedometer, so you'll know how many steps you took, then take a few more the next time.
* At work, don't rely on e-mail as much. Go visit co-workers to deliver messages. The small break will also refresh your mind for the rest of the day as well.
* If you use a bus for transportation, get off a stop away from your destination, and walk the rest of the way.
* Keep your walking shoes and clothes in your car, so you can get some exercise whenever the mood hits you.

Whenever you add any of these activities to your day, you'll be increasing your activity level along with your fitness. Plus, when you get your exercise 10 minutes at a time, you don't have to worry about fitting gym time in your schedule.