

Getting Past a Bad Week

Everyone has them. You miss your regular walk or scheduled exercise time once or twice, which turns into a week or longer. Relapse from exercise is very common and it will happen to everyone at some point. The sooner you can turn things around the better.

When you have a bad week or find yourself off track with exercise, take some time to refocus. Why did you start exercising before? What benefits did you notice? Did you have more energy, sleep better, or did you lose weight/inches? Remind yourself of the benefits you experienced from physical activity and make this the reason to get back on track.

Examine the obstacles that got in the way of your regular exercise. Some common barriers include lack of time, work schedule, no social support, bad weather, family responsibilities, holidays, sickness, and boredom. Identify one or two barriers that are most significant for you.

Find your "secret sauce" — a plan that works for you. Hearing about what works for other people can help you figure things out, but it is not likely that it will work exactly the same for you. Create an [action plan](#) that takes into account the barriers you just identified. Your action plan should focus on one week at a time and should answer these questions: What? How much? When? How often? The final step of this plan is to ask yourself how confident you are that you will fulfill this contract. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents little confidence and 10 represents total confidence, your plan should rank at least a 7. If your confidence level is lower, adjust your plan so you have a reasonable chance of being successful.

Finally, don't get caught up in an "all or nothing" mindset. When it comes to exercise, doing something is better than doing nothing at all. That is why it is important to find some type of activity that you enjoy doing or that you can share with people you want to be with.

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- National Festival of Breads
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Weekly Meal Planner

Name: _____ Week: _____

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

Stretch your Hip Flexors

Hip flexors are a group of muscles that allow you to lift your knees toward your chest and to bend forward from the hips. Tight hip flexors are a common problem for people who spend a lot of time in a seated position. As a result of these muscles being tight, you could also have low back pain, hip pain, and injury.

Simple hip strengthening and stretching exercises can keep these muscles from getting tight and can reduce your risk of injury and pain.

Hip Flexor Stretches

Seated Butterfly Stretch

This is a good stretch for your inner thighs, hips, and lower back. When doing this stretch, make sure you lean forward from your hips rather than rounding your lower back.

1. Sit on the floor with your back straight, soles of your feet pressed together and your knees dropped to the sides as far as they will comfortably go.
2. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Grasp your feet and ankles and slowly lean forward, keeping your spine straight. Hold this pose for 10 to 30 seconds.

To reduce stress on your knees, move your feet away from your body. To increase the stretch, move your feet toward your body.

Here is a demonstration of the [Butterfly Stretch](#).

Basic Hip Flexor Stretch

1. Start in a half-kneeling position on the floor. Put a cushion or two on the floor for your knee if you have knee stiffness. The back leg is the one you are about to stretch.
2. Hold a stick (ex. mop handle) in front of you and actively push it down into the ground. This will engage your core and help you do the stretch correctly.
3. Keep your body upright, squeeze your butt, and lean forward at the hips to feel the stretch.

Here is a demonstration of the [Hip Flexor Stretch](#).

Hip Strengthening Exercises:

Lunge:

1. From a standing position, place hands on your hips and look straight ahead. Take a generous step forward with your right foot.
2. Bend your extended (right knee) and transfer your weight onto that leg. Continue to lower yourself slowly into the lunge. Your right knee should be directly above your right ankle and your left knee hovers just above the ground.
3. Step back into a standing position and repeat with your left leg. You can also do a "walking lunge" as [demonstrated here](#).

Straight Leg Raise:

This move will help to strengthen your knees and your hip flexors.

1. Lie on your back with your palms at your side; left leg extended and right leg bent.
2. Lift your straight leg up until both knees meet and hold for 2 seconds. Slowly lower your straight leg.
3. Repeat 10 to 20 times on each side.

Demonstration of the [straight leg raise](#):



Bean Power Mini Challenge

For the mini challenge this week make at least three different recipes that contain beans (legumes). This is going to be much easier than you might think!

Canned beans are convenient and tasty, and dry beans are especially economical. One pound of dry beans yields about 6 cups of cooked beans. A half cup of dry beans, cooked from scratch, costs about 17 cents and the same amount of canned beans ranges from 33 to 67 cents.

Beans, peas, and lentils provide a host of health benefits, and research has found that eating these at least twice a week can decrease colon cancer risk by 50 percent. No matter the color — they are all good! Sample them all and decide which ones are your favorites.

Legumes – Nutrition Powerhouses

Legumes (beans, peas, and lentils) are nutrition powerhouses and are unique because, nutritionally, they belong to both the protein and vegetable food groups. They have no cholesterol, are high in fiber, and are naturally low in fat. They are also good sources of folate, potassium, iron, and magnesium. When included in your diet, legumes can help reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers. They are a good choice for people who must control blood sugar, and a good option for a meatless meal.

Legumes are so versatile. They are inexpensive and available dry, canned, or frozen. One half cup of cooked beans or peas equals 2 ounces of protein or a serving of vegetables and provides 10 grams of dietary fiber.

Though dry beans don't require soaking, doing so reduces cooking time and helps dissolve gas-producing oligosaccharides. For soaking, use 10 cups of water per pound. Beans double or triple in size, so use a large pot. Bring water to a boil and simmer beans 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let stand 1 to 4 hours. Drain, add fresh water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer gently until beans are tender but firm. Most beans will cook in 45 minutes to 2

hours. While you can add herbs and spices at any time during cooking, wait to add salt until beans are tender as it tends to toughen them. Acidic foods (lemon juice, vinegar, tomatoes, wine, etc.) should be added after beans are cooked because they can prevent beans from becoming tender.

Lentils and split peas do not require soaking. Sort and remove debris, rinse, and boil lentils 15 to 20 minutes, split peas 30 minutes. Do not add salt during cooking. To save time, cook dried beans and peas, divide into small quantities, and freeze. To reduce sodium in canned beans, drain and rinse them. This will remove about 40 percent of the sodium.

There are many ways to add legumes to your diet. At the salad bar, add garbanzo and kidney beans; add lentils to spaghetti sauce; include beans and lentils when making soup, stew, or a casserole. Enjoy hummus as a snack with vegetable dippers and whole-grain pita bread or crackers, and spread on a sandwich or wrap. Prepare legumes as a side dish, and explore how other cultures feature beans by trying an ethnic recipe. Edamame (green soybeans) are great as a snack, and add them to salads, casseroles, and rice dishes.

For more information on using beans, peas and lentils, go to WalkKansas.org.

Red Beans and Rice

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 ounces turkey smoked sausage, sliced thin
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 15-ounce cans red beans, drained and rinsed
- ¼ cup water
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ teaspoon (or less) cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ¼ teaspoon dried sage
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- Garnishes — minced fresh parsley and sliced green onions

Nutrition Information per serving: 370 calories; 6 g fat; 61 g carbohydrates; 20 g protein; 15 g fiber; 680 mg sodium.

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook green pepper, onion, and celery in oil for 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and sausage, sauté 3 to 4 more minutes.
2. Add tomatoes, beans, water, bay leaves, cayenne pepper, thyme, sage, parsley and Cajun seasoning; stir ingredients. Simmer mixture, covered, on low for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Serve over hot cooked brown rice; garnish with fresh parsley and green onions.

