





5 REASONS NOT TO EXERCISE BUT ARE THEY GOOD ENOUGH?

The benefits of physical activity are well known: it can prevent many diseases, strengthen your body and lift your mood. Yet at the moment of truth, why do we so often still reach for the TV remote rather than a pair of training shoes? We all have reasons why we can't exercise today – ones which seem relevant and valid. But you can overcome the barriers that seem to stop you from exercising.

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU TOLD YOURSELF YOU WERE GOING TO START EXERCISING?

The ability to trick ourselves is something that sets humans apart from animals. We usually trick ourselves when we want to justify an inactive lifestyle. As author Brian Tracy once said, 'You can make excuses, or you can make progress' so pick yourself up and make a healthy choice today.

Here are some of the most common reasons we give ourselves to avoid exercise, and our tips to get you into action.

The excuse	Analyse and overcome!
 'I'm too busy' Perceived barrier: Lack of time	Rather than putting an entire morning, afternoon or evening aside for exercise, fit in small chunks of physical activity as you go through the day. Book off 5 to 15-minute exercise sessions in your diary and make them as important as brushing your teeth.
 'I'm too tired' Perceived barrier: Tiredness	Rather than draining your strength, over time exercise increases your stamina and gives you more energy. It's unlikely you'll regret going for a run, but you may feel guilty for not exercising. If you feel tired in the evenings after a busy day, try to exercise in the morning or over lunch breaks, or do less intense exercises. Fight energy dips with regular small meals, and pair healthy foods that release energy slowly. For example, eating whole grains with protein can help keep your energy high.
 'I'll hurt myself' Perceived barrier: Fear of injury	Get advice from a biokineticist or another healthcare professional when choosing an exercise programme. It's also important to progress and increase how intense your exercise is slowly, giving your body time to adapt.
 'I look terrible in Lycra' Perceived barrier: Being self-conscious	Just wear any clothing that makes you feel comfortable. Sportswear that you like can help, but don't forget, most people are far more concerned about their own looks than with yours.
 'I can't afford it' Perceived barrier: Fear of debt	You don't need to buy expensive equipment or a gym membership to become physically active. The only thing that's really necessary is a good pair of training shoes.

We can all think of a reason why we just can't fit a workout in today. But understanding how we justify it can help to break down barriers to exercise.

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