

strength in motherhood

MOM LIFE: HOW TO MAKE TIME TO EXERCISE

Once you're out of the newborn fog and through sleep regressions and teething phases, you find yourself immersed in this new phase of motherhood where your little one isn't a baby anymore; perhaps they're crawling and walking now, a toddler starting preschool, entering kindergarten or middle school, or going off to college. Postnatal is forever; once you become a mother, you're a mom for life.

These tips will help you make time for the healthy habit of daily movement, whether you're a stay-at-home-mom, working mom, traveling mama, or at any stage and age of motherhood.

1. Rise n' shine.

Set your alarm an hour earlier and sneak off to the gym, a FIT4MOM Body Back class, Pilates, yoga, or make time for an at-home workout, or stretch routine. After a long day, it can be hard to commit to movement when you're exhausted and busy with your kiddos' nighttime routine. A morning workout can help you establish a healthy routine, gain more energy, may help lower your blood pressure, sleep better at night, lower stress, and boost mood (2*).

2. Remember that something is better than nothing.

Set small, achievable goals and focus on the statement: less can be more. Get out of the mindset that a "good workout" has to be an hour run, 45 minute cycling class, or training for a

marathon. You're a mom - you don't have a lot of time. So if you're having trouble getting to the gym, an in-person class or studio, or committing to a 5k, 10k, or Turkey Trot, remember that a 5, 10, or 20 minute workout (even if it's just a walk around your neighborhood or workout video streaming from your cell phone) is better than nothing. Do what you can, when you can, with what you have.

3. Move on your lunch break.

Pretty day outside? Put on some sunscreen and go for a walk on your lunch break, walk or bike to grab lunch instead of driving, or take your hour lunch break to attend a workout class. If you work for a company that has an in-house gym, take advantage of work perks and amenities at your fingertips. Whatever you do, get away from your computer during your lunch break and try to find some fresh air, a change of scenery, and sneak in some stretches or movement to reset, refresh, and make the rest of the work day more productive.

4. Make exercise and healthy habits easy and fun.

If you're at work, find a workout buddy who's down to pop into a yoga class or go for a walk or run with you on your lunch break. You can catch up with non-work conversation and fresh air. If you're at home or off work, grab your jogging stroller or bike, and go for a walk or a ride with just yourself or the whole family. At the park on



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the weekend so your kids can blow off some steam? Sneak in a workout while you keep your eyes on them. Need company and socialization to break up your day as a stay-at-home mama? Get out to Stroller Strides.

5. **Spice up date night.**

Looking to do something different for date night than a movie or dinner? Get active—go to a climbing gym, studio class, join a co-ed sports team, or sign up for a healthy cooking class. Reconnect with your partner while doing something good for you and your relationship.

6. **Squeeze in movement during quiet time, toddler nap time, or bedtime.**

If you're still on maternity leave, working from home, or a SAHM and out of the newborn stage / no longer napping when the baby naps, squeeze in some movement when your little one is asleep. There are plenty of at-home workout moves that are simple, safe, and quiet (shhh...sleeping toddler). Consider a quick workout made up of bodyweight moves like planks, sit-ups, crunches, hip-bridges, lunges, etc.

7. **Make time for yourself, and write it down to hold yourself accountable.**

Just as you schedule work meetings, networking events, and social events in your calendar, do the same for your workouts. Block out time that you can dedicate to yourself, uninterrupted.

Whether you can set aside 5 minutes or 50 minutes for exercise during the week, we hope these tips help you get moving amongst your work day, your weekends, or when you're home with your little one(s). Remember a good workout doesn't have to be intense; do what works for you, where you are at this stage of motherhood, with what you have space for.

Sources:

(1) <https://mayoclinic.in/2DUKHBp>

(2) <https://bit.ly/2VA1By6>