

A Letter from Dr. Jamie McManus



Cinch[®] Inspiration Tip: Choosing the Right Physical Activity

Achieving your weight loss goals requires a change in lifestyle. Most experts recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. This can include *structured activities* - like walking, running, basketball, or other sports - or *daily activities* - like doing household chores, yard work, or walking the dog. Picking a combination of both structured and daily activities that fit your schedule tends to work best.

To help you choose the right activity, start by thinking about what you enjoy doing the most. The more you enjoy it, the more likely you'll do it regularly. Next, give some thought to your particular style of doing things. Do you prefer organized activities or something more casual? Do you like to do things on your own or enjoy being part of a group? Depending on your style you may want consider these options:

- **Exercising alone** – this is a good option if your busy schedule prevents you from planning a regular time to be active every day. It definitely requires self-motivation, so be sure you have the desire to follow through.
- **Finding a training buddy** – having an exercise partner helps by making you accountable to more than just yourself. This may make it more likely that you'll keep your commitment to exercise regularly, because you won't want to let your training buddy down.
- **Participate in a team sport or group physical activity program** – organized activities offer the chance to widen your social circle and can keep you motivated because you'll feel part of "the team." However, training sessions and regular matches can also demand a lot of your time so make sure this option fits into your lifestyle.

Also remember to be realistic about your current health and level of fitness. If you're a beginner, the physical demands of some activities (like running) may be too much at first. Start with an easier activity like walking and plan to work your way up. If necessary, start slow – 10-15 minutes a day and work your way up to 30 minutes, most days of the week.

It also helps to choose a variety of different activities to help keep you interested. Always listen carefully to your body. If at any time you experience unusual symptoms - dizziness, chest discomfort or pain while exercising - stop the activity and consult your physician. And last but not least, get support! Encourage your family and friends to support you and be a part of a more active lifestyle. Form a walking group with coworkers or friends, play with your children outside, or take a dance class with your brother or sister. Not only will you improve your own health but you'll be making a difference in the lives of others.