



MAY 2015

## OUTDOOR FITNESS

Do the long, warm days of spring and summer have you itching to get outside for some fresh air and sunshine? Now is a perfect time to take your fitness routine out of the stuffy gym and into local parks and nature. If you are just beginning a fitness program, let the change in season inspire you to get outside.

While biking, walking and running are obvious choices, there are a number of other ways to get moving and enjoy the great outdoors.

**Interval Training:** While many of us think strength training only happens at the gym, your backyard or a local park can be a perfect place for this type of workout. Interval training is a great way to combine cardio and strength training in one session. Alternate 3 minutes of harder exercises with easier ones, then take 30 seconds to catch your breath. Incorporate bodyweight exercises such as push-ups, sit ups, squats and lunges.

**Hiking:** Hiking will get your heart rate pumping while allowing you enjoy the quiet beauty of nature. There are a number of online resources that list local trails with details on length and level of difficulty. Experienced hikers will often review trails and conditions. This can help you choose the right trail for your fitness and skill level. Local outfitters and sporting goods shops will also have books and suggestions to help you decide.

**Water Sports:** Swimming, canoeing, kayaking, sailing and even fishing (when you hook a big one) are all great fitness builders. Check your local parks and recreation department for information on renting equipment. And don't forget the sunscreen.

**Get Pickin':** Are you looking for some bending and stretching exercises? Try berry picking. U-pick berry-farms give you the opportunity to work muscles you haven't used all week long. Plus you get to eat the healthy fruits of your labor! Check online for u-pick farms nearby.

**Group Activities:** The more the merrier! And this goes for physical activity as well. Grab a partner and head to the local park for a game of tennis. Enlist a few more friends for a game of basketball. Even more and you can get a game of volleyball or softball going. Most public parks have courts and fields for whatever type of game you may want to play.

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## QUICK TAKES



### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- National guidelines recommend you aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week.
- Try for 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week.
- Moderate-intensity exercise includes activities such as brisk walking, bicycling under 10 miles an hour, tennis, water aerobics and ballroom dancing.
- You can measure intensity by the "talk test." You should be able to talk, but not sing, during a moderate-intensity exercise.
- If 30 minutes sounds too long, you can break activity into 10-minute chunks.
- Do muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week. Work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms).

## WILL ENERGY BARS AND SPORTS DRINKS BOOST YOUR WORKOUTS?

Most ads for energy bars or sports drinks make it sound like they're all you need to power through a really tough workout. And honestly, who couldn't use that boost?

Energy bars and sports drinks can help, but it's important to read the labels. Some sports drinks have as much sugar as a can of soda! This isn't going to be helpful if you're trying to lose weight or if you have diabetes. That being said, if you're doing tough workouts that last longer than an hour, sports drinks may help. They provide the carbs and electrolytes, like sodium and potassium, which replace what is lost during exercise. If, on the other hand, your workouts are less than an hour or are not too hard, here are some other options:

- Plain old H<sub>2</sub>O
- Unsweetened coconut water
- Flavored waters that are not sweetened with sugar

Energy bars can be great if you need a quick snack. Some meal replacement bars can also be a healthier alternative to fast food when you're on the go. Again, check the labels and make sure you're not getting too much sugar. Some of these bars contain peanuts and soy. If you have food allergies or sensitivities, be sure to check the ingredients. Also, consider the calories. Is your energy bar a hearty 200-calorie snack or a light 350-calorie lunch? Of course, you might not want to eat one right before your workout. Waiting 30 minutes might help prevent indigestion during your workout. Other options include:

- Raw veggies with hummus
- A piece of fruit with a tablespoon of peanut butter
- A few whole-grain crackers and string cheese
- Dried fruit and a small handful of nuts
- Yogurt topped with fresh berries

## STRAWBERRY LASSI SERVES 2

Here's a berry twist on a traditional mango lassi, the refreshing beverage served in north India. When buying strawberries, look for fresh, plump, firm, and bright red berries. Avoid berries with green or white patches. Check basket bottoms to make sure there's no bleed-through from crushed or spoiled berries.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pint fresh-picked strawberries
- 1 cup plain nonfat yogurt or Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 cup ice-cold water
- 4 ice cubes
- 1-2 teaspoons rose water or orange blossom water, optional

### DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse, hull and slice strawberries. Setting a few slices aside for a garnish, combine the strawberries and other ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Pour the lassi into 2 tall glasses and garnish with strawberry slices.



### NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

115 Calories	28g Carbohydrate
4g Fat	2g Fiber
0g Saturated fat	45mg Sodium
0g Trans fat	100mg Calcium
4g Protein	