



Timing is everything: When to exercise

Some people swear by a 6 a.m. run each day. Others are night-owls and hit the gym after dinner. Still others might go to a yoga class on their lunch hour. When is the right time of day to work out?

Experts say there is no big difference in the time of day - as long as you stick with it. The key is to find a time that works for you and your schedule, according to the American Heart Association.

Workout partners

Studies show that people who have an exercise buddy are more likely to exercise regularly. If you can meet a friend at the gym or walk together, find a time that works for both of you.

Think about sleep

If you already have trouble falling asleep at night, a late-night workout probably won't help. Exercise can make you feel more energetic and alert, instead of allowing you to wind down for rest. Schedule your workout at least two hours before you plan to go to sleep.

Morning means consistency

If you have a busy schedule, it may be easier to fit your workout into the early morning hours. People who exercise before work or other commitments find that they can get it done and "out of the way" before other things can interfere.

Make it work for you

If you dread going to the gym, you're less likely to do it. Try different times of day and different routines to see which ones suit you best. Make it as fun as you can, and do it at a time of day when you feel your best. It can take two weeks or longer to build a habit, so give it a chance - and don't give up if it's difficult at first. You may find that over time, you have more energy and start to look forward to your exercise routine.

Another reason to get moving

During exercise, your body releases endorphins, which are special chemicals in the brain that reduce stress, relieve pain, and help you sleep better.

Source: Anxiety and Depression Association of America

