



Texas DPS Fitness Wellness Unit

Wellness Tips
December 2018

December 7, 2018

Eating Well On the Go

Whether work keeps you out on the road or just traveling for the holidays, being away from the comforts of a kitchen and on the go is a common nutritional challenge. Despite a challenge, it is still important to prioritize healthy eating even when out on the road, extremely busy, and away from the comforts of a kitchen.

While prepping items to take with you can help ensure you stick to your plan, we all know life happens and there are times when the plan goes awry. Good news is that with a little thought, options to help you stay on track can be found almost anywhere – even at a gas station or on the go at the airport. A simple suggestion for making a decent gas station meal includes 1-2 proteins along with 1-2 carbs as well as 1-2 fats and then load up on veggies for bonus points.

A few suggestions for okay and better suggestions within the categories of proteins, carbs and fats include:

- Okay Protein Suggestions for on the go include string cheese, protein bars, pre-made protein drinks, beef jerky or yogurt
- Better Protein Suggestions for on the go include packaged hard boiled eggs, plain greek yogurt, protein powder or even edamame
- Okay Carbohydrate Suggestions for on the go include pretzels, granola bar that is oat based, cereal bars, or crackers
- Better Carbohydrate Suggestions for on the go include fresh fruits, vegetables (carrots), whole grain breads such as whole grain English muffin, whole grain bagel, or unsweetened dried fruits
- Okay Fat Suggestions for on the go include trail mix, dark chocolate, or flavored nuts
- Better Fat Suggestions for on the go include mixed nuts, hummus, sunflower seeds, or guacamole

As you add to the above-mentioned suggestions, remember that veggies are always a great option, think of less processed and watch the added sugars.

Bottom line: Even while out on the road for work, traveling or just staying busy, with a little bit of thought and thinking of the aforementioned suggestions, you can stay on track with your nutrition, even if having to grab food while on the go at a gas station or at the airport.

December 14, 2018

Let's Tabata

Boredom can easily set in when a workout regime becomes stagnant. One option to help add variety to workouts is Tabata training.

Tabata training is a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workout, featuring exercises that traditionally last 4 minutes. However, Tabata protocols can also be altered to other durations. Tabata can be utilized for a variety of the different fitness components.

As a beginner of Tabata training, it is recommended to have a baseline of fitness and ease into the protocol with shorter durations closer to the traditional 4 minute segments. With continued Tabata training, then times can be increased to add additional challenge. With a 100% effort, Tabata training can be an effective training tool. One option for Tabata training includes:

- Work out hard for 20 seconds
- Rest for 10 seconds
- Complete 8 rounds

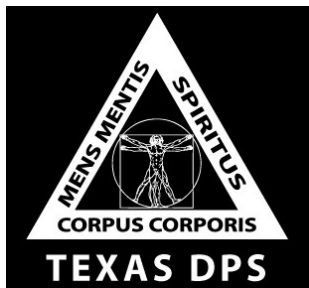
It is suggested that individuals give close to a maximum effort for 20 seconds and then rest for 10 seconds for one set. Then this is repeated to complete eight sets of each exercise.

Tabata can be performed using multiple exercises and modes such as the rower, weight training, track workouts, medicine ball training, flexibility training, and others.

This online Tabata example uses the Concept 2 Rower for a quick progressive workout.

For additional information visit the DPS Fitness and Wellness page.





December 21, 2018

Ways to Strength Train Anywhere

Being on assignment out on the road, in an office with limited access to a traditional gym or traveling for the holidays are frequent barriers to working out. However, creating a traveling gym can help overcome these hurdles. Using your bodyweight, a resistance band, and/or what is around you (such as a step or railing you can do pull-ups with or lay under to do rows) can help create a traveling gym, allowing you to workout anywhere while still having a plethora of exercise options such as:

- Bodyweight squats or lunges
- Step-ups or Step-ups onto a bench, stable chair or stair step
- Push-ups or Tricep Dips off a step
- Crunches

Without taking up much space in a car, bag or office, a resistance band is another great exercise tool and is easy to take while traveling. Bands are available at a low cost and available as looped bands or with handles. Utilization of bands is simple and should start by inspecting the band to ensure no tears. Next, depending on the exercise, the band should be securely anchored –this can be done by stepping on the band with the middle of the foot or wrapping around a pole in front of or behind the body. Then perform exercises such as chest press, bicep curls, squats or rows in a slow, controlled manner.

To provide long term benefit, regardless of equipment availability, it is important that exercises continue to challenge the body progressively. While increasing the number of repetitions performed or moving to a heavier resistance band can be used, there are also many other ways to progress exercises.

A number of common variations that can be utilized with body weight exercises include:

- Changing lever arm length –During a modified push-up, 53.56% of body weight is supported in the up position and 61.80% is supported in the down position (Cogley, et al., 2005). Changing to a full push-up, requires 69.16% of bodyweight to be supported in the up position and 75.04% to be supported in the down position. Another example might include placing the arms overhead during an abdominal crunch to make the torso longer.
- Changing angle of exercise or elevating a limb –Performing push-ups with feet on a 6” box compared to feet on the ground has been shown to increase force applied against the ground during a push-up by 10% (Ebben, et al., 2011). Performing an abdominal crunch on a decline compared to flat on the ground would also be an example.
- Changing Range of Motion -such as progressing from a half push-up to a full push-up or from a half squat to a full squat or doing a step-up on a taller step.

Bottom line, exercise can be done anywhere with your bodyweight as well as with a few simple tools that can be taken anywhere and results can be elicited as long as the body is progressively challenged.

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