



# Better Safe!



WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

## Preparing to

# Exercise

### Five Steps For Success

Making physical activity a part of your daily life isn't an easy undertaking. It takes dedication, will power, patience, and a lot of hard work. But believe it or not, it's not as hard as it may first appear, and you might even be surprised to find that you enjoy your newfound lifestyle and the benefits it offers. But before we jump right in, we'll want to look at five steps that will help you stay safe, have fun, and be successful at getting fit. Let's take a look at these five rules.



#### Talk With Your Doc

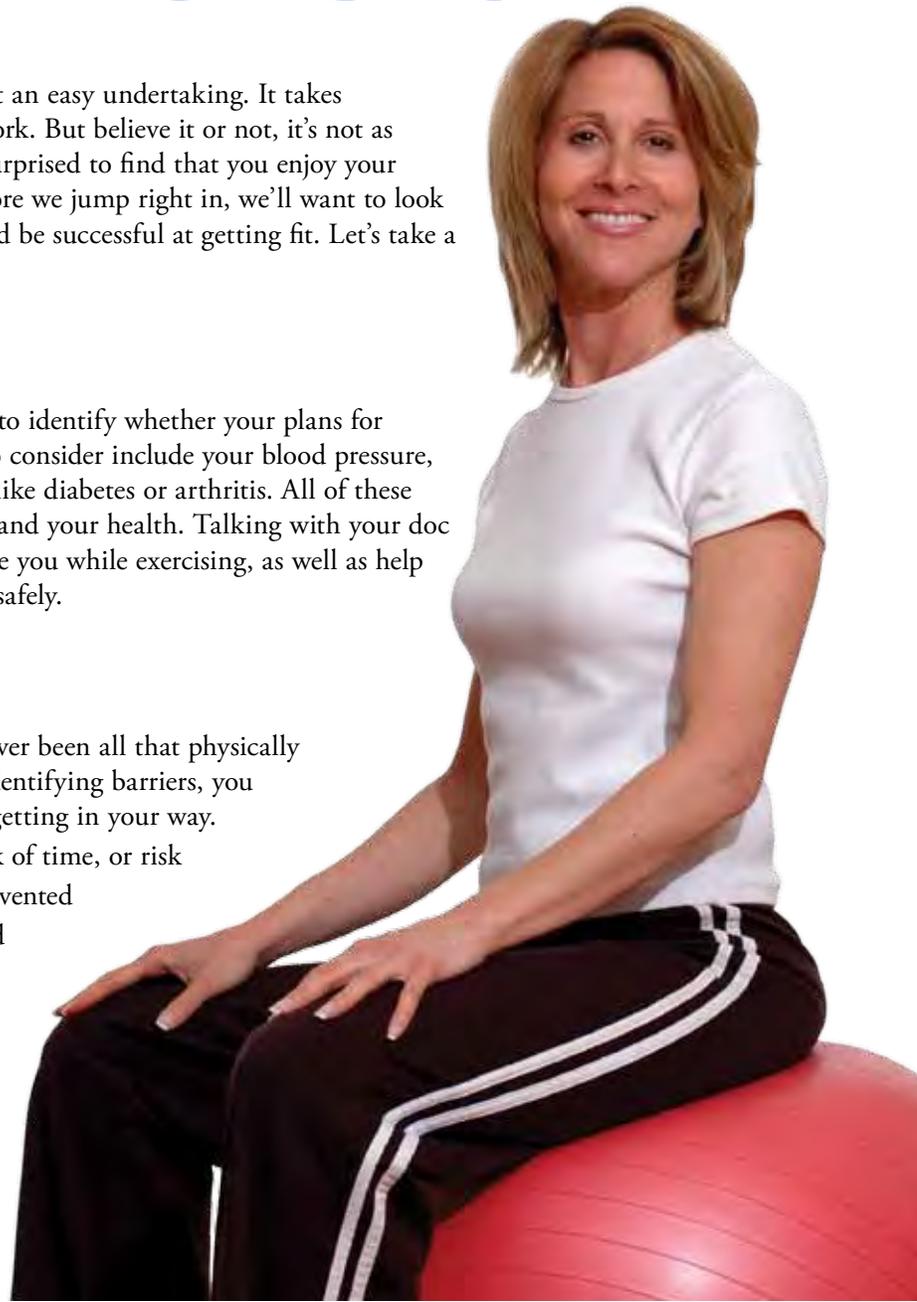
It's important to talk with your health care provider to identify whether your plans for physical activity are safe and right for you. Factors to consider include your blood pressure, past health problems, and current health conditions like diabetes or arthritis. All of these factors can have an impact on your exercise routine, and your health. Talking with your doc can help you identify issues that could harm or injure you while exercising, as well as help you put together a plan to work around those issues safely.



#### Identify Your Barriers

Beginning an exercise routine, especially if you've never been all that physically active, may seem a little frightening at first. So, by identifying barriers, you can confront them head on and prevent them from getting in your way. Common barriers include a fear of discomfort, a lack of time, or risk of injury. Begin by examining what barriers have prevented you from being physically active in the past, and find ways to address them. Ask questions like, "Do I really not have time to exercise, or am I just not making time for exercise?"

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(continued from previous page)



### Choose Your Weapon

Identify what you're going to do to get physically active. Are you going to join a gym, start by walking, take on a new sport, or sign up for an aerobics or other fitness class? Start by taking an inventory of the things you like to do or maybe the things you're good at. If you're of the mindset that you only run when being chased, choosing an activity like jogging probably isn't going to help you get and stay active. You'll also want to give some consideration to any special equipment or clothing you may need for the activity of your choice. The proper gear may not only make your activity more enjoyable, but also, in some cases, help protect you from injury or discomfort.



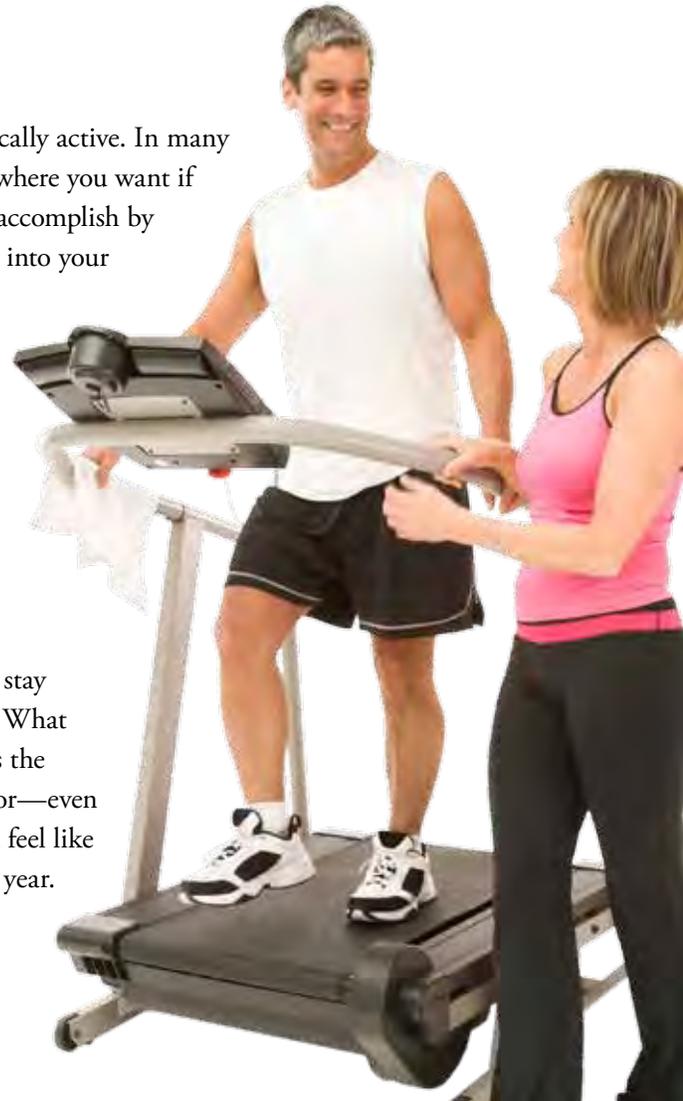
### Set Your Goals

Goals are actually one of the most important parts of your plan to get physically active. In many ways, they provide the roadmap for your success. Basically, you can't get to where you want if you don't know where you're going. Begin by identifying what you want to accomplish by getting active. Maybe you want to lose 33 pounds, or maybe you want to fit into your favorite swimming suit by summer. Write down your goals and make them public. Doing so can help keep you motivated as you set out on your journey. Also, try setting mini goals that lead towards your main goal. If you want to lose 30 pounds in 4 months, set a goal of losing 8 pounds per month. And lastly, reward yourself each time you accomplish one of your goals—especially the big ones.



### Get Motivated

Motivation will be a key factor in your success towards getting fit. Because exercising—at least at first—can be a little uncomfortable, it can be hard to stay motivated. Always keep in mind why you started exercising to begin with. What goals did you set? Keep in mind the benefits of your exercise program versus the consequences of giving up. Also, try to find someone who will support you or—even better—exercise with you. Having someone to keep you on track when you feel like loafing may just make the difference between success and starting over next year.



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