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Wellness Matters

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Your Wellness Journey

Starting a Realistic Exercise Routine

Regular exercise is a great way to take care of your body. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that adults engage in moderate-intensity aerobic activity for at least 150 minutes each week and muscle-strengthening activities two times per week. The new year is a great time to begin a new exercise routine to boost your overall health status.

Many adults cite busy schedules as a reason regular exercise isn't feasible. However, getting enough exercise often comes down to prioritizing movement and getting creative with planning. Consider these tips to start a realistic routine:

Start sensibly. Begin with short sessions and increase the time and difficulty. If you overdo it, you may experience muscle soreness and quit.

Just 20 minutes of exercise a day could greatly improve your overall fitness. Try five-minute

workouts during the day to reach the 20-minutes-per-day goal. Simple exercises add up quickly:

- ✓ Park further away from work for a longer walk.
- ✓ Take the stairs when possible.
- ✓ Walk around during your break instead of sitting.
- ✓ Lift and hold your legs up for 30 seconds while sitting.
- ✓ Squeeze a stress ball.
- ✓ Stretch to get blood flowing and prevent muscle fatigue.



Choose a fun workout. Find an activity you enjoy—or are good at—and add it into your routine. You're more likely to stick with the workouts if you're having fun.

Move when your energy is the highest. You may see the best results when working out during your peak hours. Some people also like to work out in the morning before other things come up during the day.

Schedule workouts. Placing workouts on your calendar can help you commit to a routine. If you need to change the scheduled workout, reschedule it on your calendar immediately.

Stay motivated. Once you get started, you will want to stay motivated. Consider working out with a friend or personal trainer to help you stay accountable. Remember, you will not notice immediate physical changes to your body, but it won't be long before you look and feel better.

Before you start working out, visit your doctor for a checkup, particularly if you have health issues.

January is National Blood Donor Month

Winter is one of the most challenging times of the year to collect enough blood products and donations to meet patient needs. That's why National Blood Donor Month is celebrated every January.

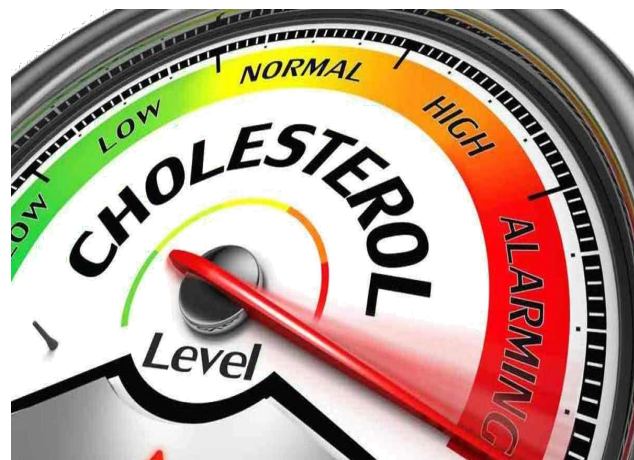
This year's national health observance comes as the nation's blood supply has dropped to concerning levels and could delay essential blood and platelet transfusions. Blood donors of all blood types—particularly type O blood—are needed to give blood or platelets to help meet daily hospital demands.

It's vital to have plenty of blood banked to meet the demand. Blood is needed for surgeries, traumatic injuries, cancer treatment, and chronic illnesses. On a daily basis, roughly 29,000 units of red blood cells, 5,000 units of platelets, and 6,500 units of plasma are required. Blood and platelets cannot be made synthetically, making voluntary donations necessary.

This month, resolve to be a blood donor and consider these health benefits of donating blood regularly:

- **Health problems detection:** Donated blood is tested to determine if any irregularities were found. You're also required to undergo a quick health screening before giving blood.
- **Reduced heart disease risks:** Donating can help eliminate any excess buildup of iron in the blood, lowering your risk for a heart attack.
- **Caloric burn:** The blood donation process can burn up to 650 calories.
- **Mental health boost:** Not only are there physical benefits of donating but volunteering to help others can release dopamine and help combat depression and increase your confidence.

Before you roll up your sleeve and commit to being a regular blood donor, check if you meet the American Red Cross [requirements](#) to donate blood safely.



Healthy & Nutritious

Do You Have High Cholesterol?

High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, the leading killer of men and women in the United States.

Many adults have blood cholesterol levels that are high or borderline high. However, screening can identify high cholesterol, so people can seek treatment to reduce risk of disease.

If you have high cholesterol:

- Talk to your doctor about a treatment plan to lower your cholesterol. This will include lifestyle changes and possibly medication.
- With your doctor's guidance, adopt healthier behaviors and habits to lower your risk of disease. These include achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, increasing physical activity, eating nutritiously, eliminating tobacco use, and lowering blood pressure.

Avoid high cholesterol by adopting healthy habits now, including eating well, exercising regularly, avoiding tobacco, and maintaining a healthy weight.