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Benefit



3 Expert Tips to
Manage Your
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Annual Meeting
Proxy & Feedback

Wellness *REVIEW*

2024

Get Active Together Social Support Can Help Keep You Moving

(NIH-News In Health)

Physical activity has many benefits. Walking, running, biking, swimming, lifting weights, playing sports, and moving more can add years to your life. Physical activity can improve your health, mood, and energy levels. But sometimes, the inspiration to get moving may be lacking. That's when friends, family, and other social connections can help.

Research has shown that connecting with others, called social support, can help us get active and make

changes to improve our health. Other people can help us start, continue, or increase how much we move. They can also help us make physical activity a habit.

"We still have a lot to learn about the different effects that social support can provide. But it's long been recognized that people who have greater social support tend to be more physically active," says Dr. Elise Rice, an NIH expert in behavioral and social science. "There are many different types of social support."





Social support doesn't only include people you already know. It can include groups that help get you moving, like walking or hiking clubs. It can also mean going to exercise classes, whether in person or online. There are even social media communities that provide social support for exercise.

Social support can help people of all ages and abilities get more physical activity, even those with chronic (long-lasting) health problems.

The More the Merrier

Social support can make physical activity more fun and inviting. And being active is an important goal for just about everyone.

Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of serious health conditions. These include heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. Activity can boost brain health, improve sleep, and more.

Yet most American adults do not get the recommended amounts of physical activity. That's at least two and a half hours of moderate activity, such as brisk walking, each week. Muscle-strengthening activities, like lifting weights, are also recommended at least twice a week.

Getting in that much activity might seem challenging. "But really, any amount of physical

activity is better than none," says Dr. Laurie Friedman Donze, a clinical psychologist at NIH who oversees heart health research programs. "Even short bursts of activity throughout the day can be helpful, like 5 or 10 minutes at a time."

There are many ways that friends and others can help you get and stay active. "Companionship is part of it," Donze explains. "Being active with someone can make physical activity more enjoyable. It can provide encouragement that keeps you going. And research has found that social support can increase self-efficacy, which is the feeling that you can do something and be successful."

Finding physical activity you enjoy is often key to success, Donze says, "Because if you don't enjoy it, it'll be hard to make it into a daily or weekly habit."

Plan Together

Making a plan with someone and sticking to it can be especially helpful. Agree to meet at certain times to get active together. Or agree to check in with each other regularly at specific times. You can share successes and struggles.

"If you make a plan to be active with a friend or family member, you're more likely to keep that commitment. You'll meet with them as promised," Donze says. "It helps keep you accountable."

Research shows that interacting with others can also help you to set and meet goals. People can help each other be physically active even if they're not exercising together. "They can share information about important resources, like good exercise classes or nice places to walk or hike," Donze says.

And it can help if you make it fun. One NIH-supported study found that a game-based approach helped people get active after hospital discharge. Study participants wore a step-tracking device. They

received game points and positive feedback for meeting step goals. Each also chose a supportive partner, like a friend or family member, to help keep them accountable. The partners received email updates on participants' progress. They also provided encouragement.

By the end of 12 weeks, people who had higher social engagement had a significant increase in daily steps. A follow-up study is underway to see if an online coach can boost activity even more.

Overcoming Obstacles

"Certain groups of people have specific barriers that can keep them from getting active," Rice explains.

"For instance, older adults who've had a major health event like a heart attack may have anxiety or concerns about being physically active. Yet activity is so important for their health and recovery."

Some researchers have been studying how mindful practices, like tai chi, can help people with chronic conditions get active. Tai chi is an ancient mind-body practice. It involves certain postures and gentle movements. It often emphasizes breathing patterns, mental focus, and relaxation.

A team led by Dr. Gloria Y. Yeh at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center developed and tested different tai chi programs and classes. Their goal was to encourage physical activity in people with heart or lung diseases.

The team learned that people with serious health conditions often have worries that keep them from getting active. "They may avoid going to the gym because they feel embarrassed that they're not able to do what other people can do," Yeh says. "Or they may get short of breath very quickly, which can cause fear and anxiety."

But Yeh and others found that being part of a group can have a positive impact. "There's something powerful about the shared experience. They see others who have a similar medical issue who are now able to exercise. It sets an example: If they can do it, I can do that too," Yeh explains. "The mindful

movement classes are really about taking things in small steps, doing what you can to foster the self-confidence to do more."

There are plenty of ways that social connections can help us get moving. But it's also true that social ties are important in their own right. "

Social support in and of itself is really important and essential to health and well-being," Rice says.

Get Moving With Others

- **Build your network.** Find a group for people with shared interests, like a walking, hiking, dancing, or biking club.
- **Make a shared routine.** Commit to a walking schedule with a neighbor, family member, or friend.
- **Be accountable.** Share your physical activity goals with people you trust. Ask for their support.
- **Take a class.** Try a yoga, tai chi, or fitness class with a friend. You can even take a virtual class online with a friend in another town.
- **Join a team.** Look for local softball, soccer, or other sports teams.
- **Family activity.** Join your kids for a bike ride or throw a ball around before starting on homework or chores.
- **Get dancing.** Go to a local dance, take dance classes, or dance with family at home.
- **Move more at work.** Join worksite wellness and walking groups.

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3 Expert Tips to Manage Your Puppy's Dental Health

(BPT) - Every new puppy owner has a camera roll full of pictures, but don't let that sweet puppy smile fool you - good dental health requires a plan.

By the age of three years, most dogs will have some sort of periodontal disease, according to the American Animal Hospital Association. When left untreated, periodontal disease can cause pain, infection, inflammation and other health problems for your best friend.

It's important to ensure you have the necessary tools to keep your puppy happy and healthy. Don't know where to start? Check out these three expert tips from veterinarian and puppy expert Dr. Callie Harris.



Establish a brushing schedule early on

Just like you, your dog needs their teeth brushed. Since they can't do it on their own, it's up to you to brush for them.

"Brushing your puppy's teeth early on not only keeps them healthy but also supports a strong bond between pet and pet parent," says Harris.

It's important to establish teeth brushing as part of your puppy's routine early on. Using flavored dog toothpaste (never human toothpaste!) and a soft-bristled toothbrush or a finger brush can help ease the process.

You may not be able to do a full toothbrushing session at first, but you can start by brushing your puppy's teeth for a few seconds every day and work them up to a full session. Beginning a toothbrushing routine may also help reduce stress for potential future teeth cleanings at the vet. Remember to praise and reward them during and after brushing.



Offer chew toys or tasty dental chews

Around the time you take your puppy home - usually 12-16 weeks - they'll be teething. As they lose their baby teeth and their adult teeth come in, they'll follow their instincts to chew. While this instinct keeps their teeth clean, it could lead to your dog chewing on household items.

You can get ahead of negative chewing behavior by offering your puppy chew toys that are appropriate in size and don't pose a choking hazard. Rubber dog toys with ridges or nubs are a great option for your pup, as they help remove plaque during chewing.

Dental chews are another great way to invest in your puppy's oral health while providing a tasty treat. When choosing a chew for your four-legged friend, consider an option like Purina DentaLife Puppy Teething Chews.

"DentaLife Puppy Teething Chews can help establish a healthy dental routine by supporting a puppy's natural drive to chew and their mental engagement," said Harris. "The chews safely redirect chewing behavior during peak teething age, around 3+ months old, when puppies' adult teeth emerge."

DentaLife Puppy Teething Chews are a great tool for puppy parents to support their new pet through the teething stage and build up healthy dental habits. Designed and formulated by Purina animal care experts, they also contain DHA, EPA and calcium to support your puppy's developing brain, teeth and bones.



Schedule professional dental cleaning

As your puppy grows and develops, it's important to explore when your pup should get their first professional dental cleaning, as recommendations vary across breeds. During a cleaning, your vet can examine your pup's teeth and gums for disease and remove hardened tartar. They'll also be able to help you address any issues they find so you can keep your best friend happy and healthy for years to come.

Remember, establishing good dental habits as a puppy can set them up for dental success down the road. Using these three expert tips, you'll be well on your way to keeping your puppy's smile healthy and bright.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Alliance of Gig Workers will be held at 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, MO 63131, on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. (CST) for election of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting and any adjournment thereof.

The above notice is given pursuant to the By-Laws of the Association.

PROXY **Alliance of Gig Workers** **August 21, 2024 Annual Meeting of Members** **THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF** **ALLIANCE OF GIG WORKERS**

The undersigned member of Alliance of Gig Workers does hereby constitute and appoint the President of Alliance of Gig Workers, the true and lawful attorney(s) of the undersigned with full power of substitution, to appear and act as the proxy or proxies of the undersigned at the Annual Meeting of the Members of Alliance of Gig Workers and at any and all adjournments thereof, and to vote for and in the name, place and stead of the undersigned, as fully as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, as set forth below:

1. FOR [], or to [] WITHHOLD AUTHORITY to vote for, the following nominees for Board of Directors:
Ryan Kerner, Scott Warman, and Tim Twellman
2. In their discretion, the proxies are authorized to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting.

This proxy, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner directed by the undersigned member. If no direction is made, this proxy will be voted for the election of directors and officers.

DATED: _____, 2024

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Please date and sign and return promptly to 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, MO 63131 whether or not you expect to attend this meeting. The Proxy is revocable and will not affect your right to vote in person in the event that you attend the meeting.

St. Louis, Missouri
July 15, 2024
Date



alliance of gig workers

The Alliance of Gig Workers is a non-profit organization serving the goals and needs of small businesses, the self-employed, independent contractors, and entrepreneurs from across the nation. Since its inception Alliance of Gig Workers has been dedicated to providing benefits and resources to help its members with professional, lifestyle and health-related benefits, as well as advocacy opportunities so they can have a voice on issues that may impact their success. Despite changes to the economy and the health care landscape that have made an uncertain future, Alliance of Gig Workers is focused on assisting its members in any way possible and growing into a leader for the independent business person.

At Alliance of Gig Workers we seek out quality benefits, services and resources to help members succeed by reducing costs and taking control of both their personal and financial health. With the group buying power of an Association Alliance of Gig Workers members receive discounts on business, health and even consumer products and services. As well we strive to provide our members with valuable information relevant to your life. Alliance of Gig Workers shares information on business, finance, wellness, lifestyle, nutrition, philanthropy and more through our newsletters, website and emails. Articles in this newsletter are meant to be informative, enlightening, and helpful to you. While all information contained herein is meant to be completely factual, it is always subject to change. Articles are not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.

Benefits may not be available in each membership level. For more information, or to upgrade your membership, contact Membership Services Office, Alliance of Gig Workers, 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, MO 63131 or (800) 992-8044.

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