

ACSM **FIT** SOCIETY PAGESupported by  **Liberty Mutual.**
INSURANCE**THEME: OVERHAULING FITNESS:
BREAKING PLATEAUS****Breaking Bad
Habits**

by Greg Chertok, M.Ed.

We think “habit” and may immediately conjure the image of an unhealthy or unpleasant activity. Fortunately, this isn’t always true. Many people have repeated certain positive behaviors with consistency—kissing your child before bed, going out for a 6:00AM run before work, greeting your coworkers with a warm smile in the morning, checking twice that you’ve locked the door before leaving. Some habits do not need to be broken. This article is dedicated to breaking those that do.

Moving forward, let’s replace the generic use of the term behavior with a commonly cited bad habit: adopting the “fast food lifestyle,” or the frequent consumption of unhealthy, quickly-prepared foods coupled with minimal physical activity. Let’s also create a fictitious character (Frank) to help paint a picture of the typical circumstances behind this habit.

Frank’s alarm rings; it’s 6:30AM, giving him just enough time to shower, dress, and leave for work. In the interest of time, Frank stops at a local fast food drive-through for a breakfast sandwich and coffee. He arrives at the office at 8:00AM, where much of the day involves sitting in front of his computer, hunched before the keyboard. Frank takes no rest during the workday, save for his 30-minute lunch break when he walks down the street to the pizzeria for two slices and a soda. The work day ends close to 6:00PM. Frank is tired and has some neck pain, most likely a combination of straining his head toward the computer screen and work-related stress. As the thought of preparing a meal is too much to bear, Frank drives to his favorite neighborhood spot for a large chicken parmigiana hero with fries and another soda. He returns home and sets himself in front of the TV, eventually visiting the kitchen for a pre-bedtime snack at 10:00PM.

*(continued on page 2)***INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- 1 | Letter from the Editor
- 1 | Breaking Bad Habits
- 2 | Q&A with ACSM
- 3 | Measuring Results from Exercise – How Do You Know It’s Working?

- 4 | Exercise Basics
- 4 | Training Outside of the Box
- 5 | Three Tips to Help You Stay on the Healthy Exercise Wagon
- 6 | The Athlete’s Kitchen

**Letter from the Editor**

by Dixie L. Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM

Welcome to the July 2013 edition of the **ACSM Fit Society Page, supported by Liberty Mutual.** Everyone occasionally gets “stuck in a rut” with fitness and health. Whether you are ready to become more active and are not sure how to break your bad habits, have successfully made improvements but are having trouble reaching your final goals, or simply need to change up your routine to improve your overall health, this issue of our newsletter will give you useful information.

In this issue, you will read about some common barriers individuals face in health and fitness and offer strategies to overcome them. The information and tips contained here provide advice for overcoming challenges in leading an active lifestyle.

After you have read this information that ACSM experts have prepared for you, please feel free to share it with friends and family. As always, we are hopeful that the information we share will be useful in helping people live healthy and active lives.

Dixie L. Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM
Editor, ACSM Fit Society Page
Email: dixielee@utk.edu

To subscribe to the ACSM Fit Society Page, please send an email to publicinfo@acsm.org.



A habit forms when a set of behaviors has been repeated so routinely that it is performed without conscious thought. Any action with which we have such frequent practice will eventually become ingrained into the neural pathways of our brain so that it ultimately becomes a “part” of us. Consider the relationship some people have developed with cigarette smoking, nail biting, or TV watching after work. If you’ve become accustomed to a certain behavioral pattern, your brain’s actual structure begins to change to reflect this. Frighteningly, some behaviors become so imprinted within us that we have little, if any, awareness of actually initiating the activity.

Breaking Bad Habits (continued from page 1)

Thankfully—and this is true of most any habit—no excuse is insurmountable. While it may not seem so to the individual with the habit, each of Frank's perceived barriers—no interest, no energy, no time, no knowledge of healthier alternatives, poor self-esteem—can be knocked down with the right ingredients, particularly the motivation for change itself. Assuming Frank has even the slightest desire to adopt a healthier lifestyle, below are some guidelines he may follow for long-term change.

Get Support

Frank must consider the power of group dynamics. When attempting to make life changes, the social support from doing so in a group setting can be beneficial. Even if the support is short-lived and light, it can have a lasting effect. Remarkably, the support need not come from a close friend, or a trainer, or even a human being. Recent findings demonstrate that automated telephone reminders can be just as

effective for initiating exercise in sedentary adults as actual human contact. However, continuous human support is still more effective. Frank, then, may wish to share his goal with health-minded friends and family. He may ask certain co-workers to discourage him from making poor lunch decisions, decide to accompany his neighbor to Saturday morning spin class, or join healthy colleagues on their trips for meals. Asking for help can be a challenge, but the payoff is worth the risk.

Get Organized

The goals we set for ourselves guide our actions. Setting a goal to complete a certain task will keep us attending to the cues necessary to achieve it. Frank may wish to set a daily goal, for instance, to take two laps around his office every hour. The laps will give him some exercise, an excuse to hydrate at the water fountain (and not with sugary drinks), and the opportunity to be social with co-workers. Other healthy, realistic goals Frank may identify include:

- Choosing a lunch destination with healthy food choices that requires walking several blocks farther
- Buying one piece of fruit to eat during the day
- Dedicating several two-minute de-stressing sessions at the office of gentle neck stretching and deep breathing

Get Rewarded

Many material-incentive health and wellness programs—even the ones whose intervention is successful—have a poor sustainability record. Not everyone gets motivated by the allure of financial gain, and those who do seem not to remain motivated for long. Material rewards like cash or gifts are considered extrinsic rewards, and adherence to exercise and other lifestyle changes improves when motivation is largely intrinsic in nature. Rather than strictly rewarding himself with “stuff,” Frank may wish to also identify and create a vivid mental image of the benefits
(continued on page 7)

ACSM Fit Society® Page Editorial Board:

Dixie L. Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM, Editor
University of Tennessee

Thomas S. Altena, Ed.D.

Southwest Missouri State University

Katherine A. Beals, Ph.D., R.D., FACSM
University of Utah

Greg Chertok, M.Ed.

The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Center

Dawn Coe, Ph.D.

University of Tennessee

Kate A. Heelan, Ph.D., FACSM

University of Nebraska-Kearney

Cherilyn Hultquist, Ph.D.

Kennesaw State University

Gerald J. Jerome, Ph.D.

Towson University

Anthony C. Luke, M.D., M.P.H., FACSM

University of California, San Francisco

Lynn Millar, Ph.D., FACSM

Winston-Salem State University



ACSM is the world's largest association devoted to sports medicine and exercise science. ACSM advances and integrates scientific research to provide educational and practical applications of exercise science and sports medicine. Visit www.acsm.org.



Permission to reprint material from this publication is granted by ACSM contingent upon manuscripts being reprinted in total without alteration and on proper credit given to ACSM by citing *ACSM Fit Society*, Page, issue and page number, e.g., “Reprinted with permission of the American College of Sports Medicine, *ACSM Fit Society*, Page, July 2013, p. 3.”

Q&A

by Anthony Luke, M.D., FACSM

Q: I like working out but I don't have much time. I want to see progression and feel like I'm working out hard. What would be the best for me?

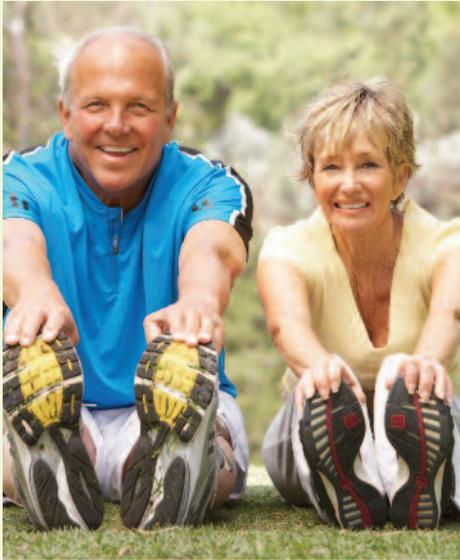
A: Exercise goals are always individual. It sounds like you don't mind doing a hard workout the long clinic results. Interesting studies have been looking at “High-intensity interval training (HIIT).” This type of program as described nicely in an article by Shirayev and Barclay in a review article in *The Australian Family Physician*, available online. They describe HIIT as involving “repeatedly exercising at a high intensity for 30 seconds to several minutes, separated by 1-5 minutes of recovery (either no or low intensity exercise).” Examples would be short sprints while running, rowing, swimming or cycling. People find that they are more compliant and are seeing cardiovascular and metabolic results. This exercise approach can be helpful for both healthy and at-risk populations. Studies show that this can help cardiovascular patients recover from procedures. In a few weeks of training, performance measures have been shown to surpass traditional training practice in athlete populations in various sports. If you do have a medical condition, which may affect your ability to exercise at high intensity, it may be best to consult your physician or a qualified exercise specialist.

Q: Ultramarathon runners are a fascinating group. Is there something special about them or can anyone do it?

A: Ultramarathon running is running any distance longer than a traditional marathon, which is 26.2 miles or 42.195 km. There are now 50-mile and 100-mile races, on the trails as well as the Sahara desert! Men presently participate more than women, and it appeals to older athletes. Interestingly, ultramarathoners typically achieve their best times when they are in their fourth decade. Men typically run their fastest times between 30 and 49 years old, while women run fastest between 30 and 54 years old. They typically run slower, conserving energy and being efficient, seeing that going 100 miles will take most of the day and night to complete. Most ultramarathon runners are used to running shorter distances and running longer becomes a new challenge. Managing food and fluid becomes extremely important during long races. Expected changes during an ultramarathon include weight loss, decreased electrolytes, stresses to the kidneys and heart, and fatigue issues. Injuries commonly involve the muscles and joints or the skin, rather than the cardiovascular system. Fortunately, these athletes are committed runners, and participants should be well prepared and experienced. So if you're looking to really push the limit, take a look at ultramarathon running.

Measuring Results from Exercise – How Do You Know It’s Working?

by Clinton A. Brawner, MS, ACSM-RCEP, FACSM



Two important components to fitness are aerobic endurance and muscular strength/endurance. Laboratory-based tests are available to evaluate these and have been used in research studies to measure the body’s response to various types of exercise training programs. Although these assessments can provide useful information, they are neither appropriate for all individuals nor necessary to document improvements in fitness. The purpose of this article is to review easy ways that individuals can track their own progress or recognize changes in response to having increased their physical activity.

Priority #1- Sticking With It

According to the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, adults should participate in at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity physical activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both types. In addition, adults should also perform exercises to enhance muscular strength at least 2 days per week. Unfortunately, only about 25% of adults meet these goals; 50% engage in physical activity irregularly; and

25% of adults do not engage in any physical activity. In addition, fewer than 50% of individuals who start an exercise program are actively participating six months afterward.

With these facts in mind, tracking your exercise habits (*i.e.*, exercise adherence) is critically important. Establishing a short-term exercise goal, then tracking the frequency that this goal is reached by recording exercise sessions in a diary, is an important first step. Depending on your level of health and fitness, you may need to begin with less than the recommended amount of exercise, but you can gradually increase as your stamina improves.

Measureable changes in fitness are typically not evident until at least six weeks of regular participation in a new exercise program. However, you can gradually increase the amount of exercise you do as your body adapts to being regularly active. Celebrate the successes you achieve in increasing your activity levels. Keep in mind that the exercise amounts listed previously are MINIMUM amounts. Research has shown that additional benefits can be gained when a person exercises above the minimum levels.

Aerobic Fitness

Aerobic fitness is the ability of the body to transport oxygen-rich blood and use it in producing the energy needed by exercising muscles. Activities like walking, cycling and swimming performed for at least 10 minutes at a moderate-to-vigorous intensity will help to improve aerobic fitness. With improvements in aerobic fitness come a number of measureable physiologic changes. After a period of training, the average person will notice that his/her heart rate will be lower during quiet rest and at a given exercise pace, such as walking at three miles per hour. In addition, this pace will feel easier (lower level of perceived exertion). “Fitness tests” available on some exercise equipment are based on heart rate and exercise pace. The lower level of perceived exertion and lower heart rate at a given exercise pace represent improvements in aerobic fitness. Gradually increasing exercise intensity will allow the body to adapt to the exercise routine and see continued improvements in fitness.

Muscular Strength

Similar to aerobic fitness, using an exercise diary and documenting effort (perceived exertion) can be useful ways to monitor improvements in muscular fitness. As you get stronger, you will be able to complete more repetitions with a given resistance (weight). In order to gain additional improvements in muscular fitness, the

resistance, number of repetitions, and/or number of sets will need to be increased. It should be noted that initial improvements in strength when you begin a resistance training program are highly related to the way nerves and muscles communicate, so you may not see much change in muscle size or definition at the beginning. It is common to go through periods of time when you don’t experience additional strength gains. When this happens it suggests that it might be a good time to modify your program. Just as with tracking your aerobic exercise routine, it is important to track your resistance exercise. This will allow you to document strength gains and plateaus.

Realistic Expectations

Realistic expectations are important to long-term exercise adherence. Many people start an exercise program as a weight loss strategy; however, it is difficult to lose weight through exercise alone. The body needs a caloric deficit of 3,500 calories to achieve one pound of fat loss. This equates to hours of exercise. In contrast, a bagel with cream cheese can contain more than 400 kilocalories. With this in mind, significant weight loss due to regular exercise may not be a realistic short-term goal. Thus, it is important to set goals related to diet as well as exercise if weight loss is desired. Keep in mind that regular physical activity provides health benefits even if weight loss goals are not achieved. Additionally, many studies have demonstrated that those who exercise regularly are better able to keep off weight once it is lost.

Improvements in fitness are associated with an improved ability to perform activities of daily living, such as climbing stairs and house/yard work, especially among individuals with low fitness levels. Individuals who exercise regularly often report improved energy, cognition and sleep. Regular physical activity can also improve risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and HDL (“good”) cholesterol. However, these improvements typically take at least eight weeks of regular physical activity. In addition, although measureable and meaningful improvements in these risk factors can be achieved with regular physical activity, these changes may not replace the need for medications to manage these risk factors.

Summary

There are many potential benefits to be gained from increased physical activity. Since the biggest challenge for many is getting started and sticking with it,

(continued on page 4)

Measuring Results (continued from page 3)

establishing short-term adherence goals and monitoring participation through an exercise diary should be a priority. Following several weeks of regular participation, physiologic changes, such as improved energy, greater strength and a lower heart rate at rest, begin to become apparent. Finally, realistic expectations are important to continued adherence and optimal health.

THEME: OVERHAULING FITNESS: BREAKING PLATEAUS

Exercise Basics

by ACSM Certification Department



There is no question that regular physical activity is one of the best things you can do to keep your body healthy and strong. In fact, a large body of research confirms that performing moderate-intensity physical activity on a regular basis can help you live longer and reduce health problems. In fact, people who exercise can avoid many common health issues, including obesity and high blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Exercise also strengthens the muscles and bones, which can reduce your risk of osteoporosis as you grow older, and may even lower the risk of many diseases, including diabetes, stroke, heart disease and some cancers. Regular physical activity improves sleep, increases energy, lowers stress levels and helps you maintain your independence. As a healthy adult, the key for you to maximize the benefits of exercise is to find activities you really enjoy and to follow a well-designed program that you can stick with over the long term.

Getting Started

- Talk with your health care practitioner before starting an exercise program and ask for specific programming recommendations.

- The goals of your program should be to improve cardiovascular fitness, increase muscle strength and endurance and improve range of motion.
- If you are new to exercise, choose low-impact activities such as walking, cycling or water exercises, which involve large muscles groups and can be done continuously. Fitness classes geared toward beginners also are a good choice. If you've been fairly active until now, however, you can choose from a wide range of activities, including running, swimming, boot camp classes and sports like tennis or basketball. The key is to find something you love so you'll stick with it over time.
- If your fitness level is low, start with shorter sessions (10 to 15 minutes) and gradually build up to at least 30 minutes on most, if not all, days of the week. If you are trying to lose weight, try to increase the amount of time you exercise to 60 minutes per day—research suggests this may help you shed unwanted pounds.
- Perform some type of strength training and whole-body range-of-motion exercises two to three days per week. This could include circuit training, high-intensity interval training, traditional strength training and even yoga.
- End each session with stretching exercises for the whole body. Consider taking a yoga or tai chi class for both flexibility and mind-body benefits.
- Closely monitor your intensity level and stay within your recommended target heart rate zone. Take frequent breaks during activity if needed.
- Wear well-fitting, activity-appropriate shoes and comfortable clothing, and don't forget to drink fluids before, during and after your activity to avoid becoming dehydrated.

Exercise Cautions

- If your fitness level is low to begin with, start slowly and gradually increase the length and intensity of your workouts.
- Stop exercising immediately if you experience any pain or shortness of breath. Contact your physician if you experience chest pain, labored breathing or extreme fatigue.
- Your exercise program should be modified to maximize the benefits while minimizing your risk of injury. Consider contacting a certified fitness professional who can work with you to establish realistic goals and design a safe and effective program that addresses your specific needs.

THEME: OVERHAULING FITNESS: BREAKING PLATEAUS

Training Outside of the Box

by Cherilyn Hultquist, Ph.D.



One of the best ways to break a fitness plateau is to try something new. Many people find themselves in a very comfortable but sometimes monotonous exercise routine. The first step is to recognize that it's time for change. If you are seeing no progress toward your goals and you feel no physical or mental challenge, then it's probably time to train outside of the box. In the gym this can be as simple as making an effort to increase the amount of weight you are lifting, adding more speed or additional incline to the treadmill, or trying a new class. For those who prefer outdoor exercise, changing the walking route or seeking more challenging topography may do the trick. While small changes are easy to make, the reality is that it may be time to do a complete fitness overhaul. Strategies that can help you reenergize your routine are to train for a local fitness event, identify a weakness and work to make it a strength, or take up a new skill or sport.

Every community will have some opportunity for a competitive event such as a foot race or a triathlon. These events will vary in length and difficulty, making some level of challenge available to most people. For foot races, nearly all ages and abilities can find an event with options such as a

(continued on page 5)

Outside of the Box (continued from page 4)

charity walk, 5k or 10k runs, and for those who want to dedicate a significant amount of time to running, there are the half and full marathons. Triathlons also vary in length from a sprint which is approximately a half-mile swim, 12-mile bike ride and 3.1-mile run to an ultra which includes a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride, and a full marathon (26.2 miles), and there are distances in between.

While it may seem daunting to take on a competitive event, there are many ways to approach the training. Whether you use a website or smartphone app to set up your training calendar or join a training group, there are many resources available to help you get started. To safely train for these events you should contact your local running and triathlon clubs for information on how to get started.

Another strategy is to identify a weakness and decide to make it a personal strength. We tend to gravitate toward activities that we can do well or easily and avoid things that are uncomfortable or require new skills. To gauge where you are, start by ranking different components of fitness such as cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and even balance, power and agility, from best to worst. Whatever ranked the lowest is the component you will focus on. Health and fitness goals should also be considered since some training regimens can be quite intense and require a specific skill set.

Considering personal goals and weak areas, some simple strategies are to add time or increase intensity for cardiorespiratory exercise, engage in more or different types of resistance training, or add a beginner yoga class for better flexibility and strength. Even changing the mode of exercise can be effective. If you always walk, try a bike; if you use free weights and machines, try bands and stability balls. However, for those looking for a complete fitness overhaul, the changes need to be significant. There are endless approaches to improving fitness and some readily available methods that can challenge a monotonous routine include high-intensity, bootcamp-type training, sport-specific training such as speed, agility, and plyometrics, or group classes that focus on dance and choreography such as Latin influence or hip-hop. What these all have in common is the ability to improve multiple aspects of overall fitness by challenging the cardiorespiratory and neuromuscular systems at the same time.

Another way to change things up is to try something completely new. If you always exercise in a gym, take it outside for a hike or to walk the dog. If you tend to stick with traditional exercise, try taking up a new activity such as tennis, swimming or an adult league like softball or soccer. If you have kids, actively play with them at the park or even with active gaming. If you exercise alone, invite a friend along—you can push each other to work harder. If you have found that your workout partner is holding you back, then it may be time to take a few workouts alone. Regardless of your situation or what your preferences, there are many ways to change a routine that is no longer producing the desired results.

Maintaining or improving fitness is a moving target for everyone. Things that were effective in the past may not work in the present. Becoming bored or feeling burned out could lead a person into alternative sedentary behaviors which could lead to a number of adverse health issues over the years. The goal is to stay challenged, interested and healthy. Engaging in a variety of activities that address multiple components of fitness will help avoid plateaus and keep the results coming.

THEME: OVERHAULING FITNESS: BREAKING PLATEAUS

Three Tips to Help You Stay on the Healthy Exercise Wagon

by Neal Pire, MA, CSCS, FACSM



The health benefits of regular exercise are widely accepted and recognized by both those who are regularly active, and those who, unfortunately, spend as much time off the wagon as they do on it. Those of us with careers in commercial fitness know that even the most motivated “New Year’s Resolution” member who joins a health club on January 2 rarely sticks with their

fitness program through Valentine’s Day. This is an example of common challenges that present themselves when developing new healthy behaviors. Even those of us who have long histories of regular exercise are often challenged along the way with plateaus in physical improvement or a general loss of motivation. Once we accept hitting such a plateau, there are strategies that can help us stay the course, even when we hit the occasional bump on the road.

Variety is the Spice of Life

Boredom will kill any enjoyment to be had from any form of physical activity. Some people like doing the same thing day-in and day-out—thus “knowing what to expect” and feeling confident and empowered in their ability to perform the same regular program. Others, however, get bored quickly and need a change to stick with a regular fitness regimen. A change of venue can help: if you typically run indoors on a treadmill, take it outside for a change, and enjoy new scenery at a local park while performing your regular run. If you are a gym “loner,” try a group exercise class, where the sheer energy of the group environment and group support can provide you a new lease on your “exercise life.” Other easy to manipulate changes include switching modalities, for example from weight machines to free weights, or from exercise bike to stair climber. Even if you keep with the same mode of exercise, you can adjust your FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) Formula parameters to get a whole different feel—and effect—from your exercise routine. Switching from steady-state to interval exercise by changing the intensity or time (duration) of a particular exercise can make it brand new and help you break through a plateau to a whole new fitness level.

Don’t Guess – Track, Track, Track... and then Tweak

The National Weight Control Registry has found that keeping a food journal is the one strategy used by the majority of successful dieters. Other studies conclude the number of food records kept per week as the best predictor of weight loss, and the use of workout logs to be an effective motivational and educational tool to optimize time and effort in the gym. In fact the simple habit of logging what you do and how much you do it, along with loads, reps, sets, etc. will help get you wrapped up in the process and provide a better awareness and understanding of how your body responds to your exercise program. Setting goals is a great tactic to get you on the right path. Tracking your progress will keep you on it.

(continued on page 6)

Buddy-up!

Find a workout partner. During our teen years peer pressure sometimes challenged us to stray from our desired paths. Now, use it as a tool to help you stay on the right path. Pairing up with a workout partner can be the smartest thing you can do to assure your accountability and ultimate consistency. When the day comes that you don't feel like working out, your partner will keep you on schedule and make sure you make it to the gym. On days when your partner wants to stray, you keep your partner on the right path. In addition, your partner can also spot or assist in cheering you on during your workout, and that might just push you a little harder and little longer, thus pushing your training stimulus up higher, burning more calories, and/or forcing greater training adaptation. The bottom line: you'll be more consistent and perhaps get more out of each workout.

THE ATHLETE'S KITCHEN

Why Can't I Simply Lose a Few Pounds? Dieting Myths and Gender Differences

by Nancy Clark, MS, RD



Despite their apparent leanness, too many active people are discontent with their body fat. All too often, I hear seemingly lean athletes express extreme frustration with their inability to lose undesired bumps and bulges:

Am I the only runner who has ever gained weight when training for a marathon?

Why does my husband lose weight when he starts going to the gym and I don't?

For all the exercise I do, I should be pencil-thin. Why can't I simply lose a few pounds?

Clearly, weight loss is not simple and often includes debunking a few myths. Perhaps this article will offer some insights that will lead to success with your weight-loss efforts.

Myth: You must exercise in order to lose body fat.

To lose body fat, you must create a calorie deficit. You can create that deficit by

- 1) exercising, which improves your overall health and fitness, or
- 2) eating fewer calories.

Even injured athletes can lose fat, despite a lack of exercise. The complaint "I gained weight when I was injured because I couldn't exercise" could more correctly be stated "I gained weight because I mindlessly ate more calories than I burned."

Adding on exercise does not equate to losing body fat. In a 16-week study, untrained women (ages 18 to 34) built up to 40 minutes of hard aerobic exercise or weight lifting three days a week. They were told to not change their diet, and they saw no changes in body fatness even though they were exercising regularly. Creating a calorie deficit by eating less food may be more effective than simply adding on exercise to try to lose weight. Certainly paying attention to 'calories in' and 'calories out' is important when managing weight.

Athletes who complain they "eat like a bird" but fail to lose body fat may have an inaccurate view of their food intake. A survey of female marathoners indicated the fatter runners under-reported their food intake more than the leaner ones. Keeping a detailed food diary may assist athletes with developing a realistic understanding of their food consumption.

Myth: If you train for a marathon or triathlon, surely your body fat will melt away.

Wishful thinking. If you are an endurance athlete who complains, "For all the exercise I do, I should be pencil-thin," take a look at your 24-hour energy expenditure. Do you put most of your energy into exercising, but then tend to be quite sedentary the rest of the day as you recover from your tough workouts? Male endurance athletes who reported a seemingly low calorie intake did less spontaneous activity than their peers in the non-exercise parts of their day. You need to find ways to build activity in throughout the day, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevators, no matter how much you train. Again, you should eat

according to your whole day's activity level, not according to how hard you trained that day.

Myth: The more you exercise, the more fat you will lose.

Sometimes exercise can increase hunger or make athletes feel entitled to eat more. Unfortunately, rewarding yourself with a 600-calorie cinnamon roll can erase in a few minutes the calorie deficit you generated during your workout.

The effects of exercise on weight loss are complex and can be unclear. The entire 24-hour calorie balance is important. We know among people (ages 56-78) who participated in a vigorous walking program, their daily energy needs remained about the same despite adding an hour of exercise. How could that be? The participants napped more and were 62% less active the rest of their day. Be sure to pay attention to your whole day's activity level. One hour of exercise does not compensate for a sedentary lifestyle.

Myth: Couples who exercise together, lose fat together.

Unfortunately this is not always true. In a 16-month study looking at exercise for weight loss, the men lost 11.5 pounds and the women maintained weight, even though they did the same amount of exercise. In another study, men who did an 18-month marathon training program reported eating about 500 more calories per day and lost about five pounds of fat. The women reported eating only 60 more calories, despite having added on 50 miles per week of running. They lost only two pounds.

What's going on here? One issue may be overall body weight. If the husband weighs more and both go on a run together, his extra weight will cause him to burn more calories during the same workout. Differences in overall body composition and how that changes with weight loss may also be key. Obesity researchers at NY's Columbia University suggest a pound of weight loss in men equates to a deficit of about 2,500 calories, while women need a 3,500-calorie deficit. No wonder women have a tougher time losing weight than do men!

The bottom line

If you are exercising to lose weight, I encourage you to separate exercise and weight. Yes, you should exercise for health, fitness, stress relief, and most importantly, for enjoyment. (After all, the E in exercise stands for enjoyment!) If you exercise

(continued on page 7)

Breaking Bad Habits (continued from page 2)

that will come with greater health, including how it will impact his family, his mood and his energy levels, along with the positive feelings that accompany reaching his goals. It is important to focus on the rewards that come naturally from making healthy life choices.

Get Prepared

One of the greatest challenges to breaking any habit is placing awareness on the trigger cues leading to the behavior. When the trigger cues are removed, the desire for the behavior can diminish. For instance, Frank may wish to take an alternate route home so he doesn't pass his favorite restaurant or, more ambitiously, adjust his television package to avoid the temptation of late-night programming and ensure an earlier bedtime. Frank might examine his day to determine when he can build in walking to replace some of his sedentary time. As these new behaviors are repeated, they will slowly become ingrained and replace his bad-habit behaviors.



Get Real

A common deterrent to breaking bad habits is impatience: if Frank expects dramatic results after mere weeks, or days, of small lifestyle changes, no doubt he will feel discouraged. Real change may take up to several months. Frank might benefit from keeping a daily diary to document his successes and challenges. Writing down goals, daily achievements, and even setbacks can help a person stay focused on the intended behavior change. Armed with realistic expectations of the difficulties surrounding breaking an old habit and forming a new one, Frank may be better able to stay committed to his goals and enjoy the rewards that come along the journey.

The Athlete's Kitchen (continued from page 6)

primarily to burn off calories, exercise will become punishment for having excess body fat. You'll eventually quit exercising—and that's a bad idea.

Instead of focusing on exercise as the key to fat loss, pay more attention to your calorie intake. Knocking off just 100 calories a day from your evening snacks can theoretically result in 10 pounds a year of fat loss. One less cookie a day seems simpler than hours of sweating, right?



IMAGINE
what you could do with your special savings on auto insurance.

Stretch your fitness dollars, spring for the latest Smartphone, or pay down your student loans...whatever moves you most.



As a member of ACSM, you could **save up to \$427.96*** on your auto insurance with Liberty Mutual. You could also enjoy valuable discounts tailored to the way you live today and save even more by insuring your home as well.

CONTACT US TODAY TO START SAVING		
CALL	1-800-524-9400	Client # 114664
CLICK	www.LibertyMutual.com/acsm	
COME IN	to your local office	



This organization receives financial support for allowing Liberty Mutual to offer this auto and home insurance program.
* Discounts are available where state laws and regulations allow, and may vary by state. To the extent permitted by law, applicants are individually underwritten; not all applicants may qualify. Figure reflects average national savings for customers who switched to Liberty Mutual's group auto and home program. Based on data collected between 1/1/2012 and 6/30/2012. Individual premiums and savings will vary. Coverage provided and underwritten by Liberty Mutual Insurance and its affiliates, 175 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA. © 2013 Liberty Mutual Insurance.