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SCREEN-FREE CONNECTIONS

All In: Team Sports and Exercise Classes

With so many distractions vying for our attention these days, it can be easy to push physical activity to the bottom of our to-do list. That is why keeping your exercise routines fun and engaging is critical if you want to maximize the health benefits.

While only about 1 in 4 adults engage in team sports, research suggests that those who do are likely to be more committed and show up more [consistently](#)¹. Other findings have shown there are [cognitive](#)² benefits associated with team sports, including better communication skills and higher self-esteem.

Positive energy is [contagious](#)³, and group exercise can offer a boost of motivation to help you stay on track with your fitness goals. Always remember to check with your doctor before dramatically changing or increasing the intensity of your physical activity routine.



If your exercise routine needs a makeover, consider these team sports:

Cycling

Find a local cycling group and make some new friends while exploring your community.

Tennis

Dust off your racquet and invite a friend to join you for a game or two of tennis.

Bowling

Join a bowling league, where you can participate rain or shine.

Not into competitive sports? Try a group fitness class:

Yoga

Group exercise classes, like yoga, allow you to be part of a group while focusing on your individual goals.

Zumba

Adding an element of dance can help spruce up your fitness routine.

Community Events

Sign up for a 5k or another fitness-related community event. Even if you do not consider yourself a runner, apps like C25K[®] (couch to 5k) can help you work your way up to running gradually—and you can always walk the course if you need to.



1. <https://www.nbcnews.com/better/health/why-you-should-work-out-crowd-ncna798936>

2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30113260>

3. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/high-octane-women/201210/emotions-are-contagious-choose-your-company-wisely>



Fun in the Sun, without the Sunburn

The sun plays a vital role in our health by promoting the growth of nutrient-rich plants that support strong immune function, regulating hormones that impact [sleep quality](#)⁴, and facilitating the synthesise of vitamin D.

Despite these benefits, prolonged exposure to ultraviolet radiation is the [leading cause](#)⁵ of skin cancer, and damage can occur with or without a visible [sunburn](#)⁶. That is why taking proper precautions when you plan to spend time outdoors is critical.

Before you have fun in the sun, remember these easy tips:

Apply Sunscreen

While some health experts recommend modest sun exposure to support sufficient vitamin D synthesis, if you plan to be in the sun for more than [10 to 15 minutes](#)⁷, choose a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least [30](#)⁸. Be sure to reapply at least every two hours.

Bring a Hat

Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and neck from the sun's harmful rays. Not only does it help prevent skin damage, but it also offers additional protection for your eyes.

Avoid Mid-day Sun

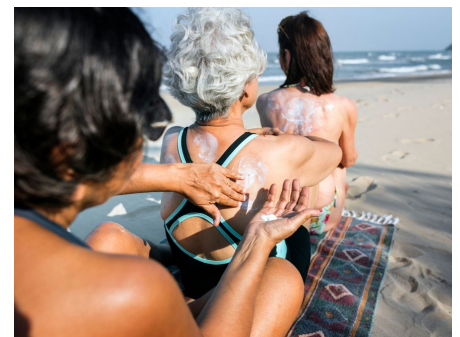
The sun's rays are most intense between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM, so limiting mid-day sun exposure can help minimize sun-related damage.

Wear Long Sleeves

Long-sleeved shirts with built-in SPF protection act as a shield against UV radiation. This type of clothing can be particularly useful when reapplying sunscreen is not possible or practical.

Spend Time in the Shade

Seeking out shady areas is another easy strategy to limit sun exposure. Take advantage of natural shade structures, like trees and shrubs, or bring along an umbrella or tent.



4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2290997/>
5. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/10985-sun-exposure--skin-cancer>
6. <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/be-safe-in-sun/sun-damage.html>
7. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/time-for-more-vitamin-d>
8. <https://www.cancer.org/latest-news/stay-sun-safe-this-summer.html>



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Four Weeks to Smartphone Freedom

These days, we rely on smartphones to take care of many day-to-day tasks and responsibilities, such as paying bills, scheduling appointments, and tracking personal and professional goals. According to a 2015 study conducted by the Pew Research Group, 46% of smartphone users say they cannot live without them.

Similarly, recent studies suggest that digital addictions are becoming more prevalent, and this has some health experts concerned. In September of 2018 “gaming disorder” became an official diagnosis as a mental health disorder, and the term *nomophobia*⁹ is now being used by some researchers to describe the fear associated

with not having access to mobile devices. If you have ever felt the surge of emotion that comes with seeing a low battery notification, or the rush of anxiety you feel when you misplace your phone or device, you have likely experienced this.

As concerns grow about the potential downside of technology use, more and more people are proactively choosing to consciously unplug from their devices. Digital sabbaticals, detoxes, and retreats are gaining popularity as the health benefits of face-to-face connections become more apparent. These periodic breaks offer us a chance to nurture our real-life relationships.

Do you have an unhealthy relationship with your smartphone? Here are a few tips to gradually untether yourself:

Week 1: Turn off notifications

If you are particularly active on social media, this one might be tough at first. Those who use social media regularly check for updates frequently throughout the day. By turning off notifications and only checking in at select times—morning and evening, for example—you can spend more quality time with those you care about.

Week 2: Turn off data

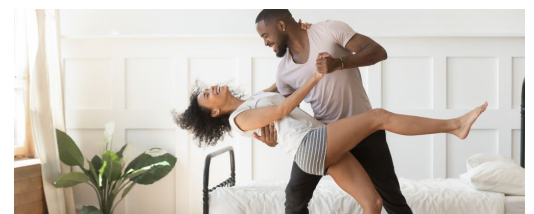
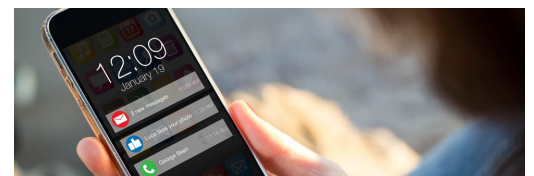
Choose specific periods of time to turn off data completely. This prevents distracting emails and notifications from coming in before you are ready to address them.

Week 3: Designate phone-free areas

Establish specific phone-free areas in your home or office, such as the dining room table, meeting rooms, or the bedroom. This encourages more focused conversation and helps strengthen relationships within your network.

Week 4: Schedule a phone-free day

If you have reservations about going an entire day without your phone because others may not be able to reach you in the event of an emergency, designate someone to serve as your point of contact, and make arrangements for them to be able to reach you in-person if necessary.



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Honey Sriracha Slow Cooker Chicken

INGREDIENTS

- 5 chicken breasts, 4 oz. each
- 1/2 cup tamari (or coconut aminos or soy sauce)
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup sriracha
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rub the chicken breasts with 2 tablespoons of minced garlic. Place chicken breasts on the bottom of a slow cooker.
2. Set slow cooker to high heat and cook for 2.5-3 hours or until the chicken is fully cooked and easily shredded.
3. Drain liquid from cooked chicken. Then, shred chicken with 2 forks.
4. Make sauce by mixing together tamari, honey, and sriracha. Pour on top of shredded chicken and mix.
5. Serve with brown rice and steamed broccoli.

Total Time (Cook and Prep):

190 minutes

Servings: 6



NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

Calories: 204

Fat: 2

Carbohydrates: 27

Sugar: 25

Sodium: 1078

Fiber: 0

Protein: 20

Source:

Navigate Wellbeing Solutions Recipe Library
courtesy of fitfoodiefinds.com

