

A Time to Get Fit

In order for a long-term exercise program to be effective your exercise program must be scheduled for success.

An exercise program must fit you and not the other way around. First, to be successful with any exercise program, you must truthfully answer some questions about yourself:

- What do you like to do and not do?
- How do you feel during different times of the day?

Examining a few questions will allow you to design or have an exercise program designed for you, which you will be able to stay with. If you are a night person you may have better exercise times at night, which helps you relieve stress from your job. If you are an early riser perhaps exercise in the morning will help you get a good start on your day. If you want to exercise with a friend you will have to find a time that is good for both of you. Exercising with a friend also helps motivate some people because they know somebody else is also depending on them to be there. The same goes for team sports, because your fellow teammates are counting on you to be there and to do your best.

One of the biggest challenges in today's fast paced go-go world is dealing with family issues. Your family may have feelings about when you exercise. You may have a spouse that does not want to have the alarm going off at 5:00 a.m. so that you can get up for an early morning jog. On the other hand your spouse may like to exercise with you, but can only do evening times. Your



Stay Healthy

**By Craig Butturff
M.S.P.T., M.B.A.**

children may need rides to and from different events. So it is important to schedule an exercise time that best fits your life style and allows for some flexibility. Also, you may need to sit down with your family and work out a schedule, prioritize, and explain to them how you also need their support too.

It is important to make sure that an exercise program is not scheduled right after eating a major meal. Exercising after eating can be very uncomfortable, as your body will concentrate your blood supply and its efforts on digestion rather than the muscles for exercise. However, if you have not eaten for several hours you may not have enough energy to complete your exercise program successfully. The average person should wait at least one hour after a meal to exercise. But, if you're hungry or running low on energy and need some-

thing, try eating a light snack like a little fruit or a protein bar prior to exercising and you will find a whole new level of energy.

If you miss a day, don't get down on yourself. You may not always be able to keep on schedule with a busy, active lifestyle. Most people cannot. There are too many interruptions and unexpected happenings that occur in the average person's day. A friend may drop by, a family member may visit, or you may be snowed in and be unable to travel safely. To become part of your routine, exercise needs to adapt to such changes. There needs to be freedom built into an exercise program that allows you to miss a day and possibly make it up at another time. One common way to make an exercise program adaptable is to schedule exercises for every other day. If you miss a day, just do the exercise the next day and there will still be no more than 2 days between the sessions.

Decide now on how your exercise strategy will increase your chance of long-term success. By selecting what is going to work for you, you have allowed yourself to make great strides toward a successful exercise program. If you have not been able to find time as yet to start an exercise program, then remember that exercise can increase the amount of time that you have in your lifetime.

Get educated, get health smart, and live longer and happier.