

Seven healthy habits to take your body to the next level

By Fred Sassani
Special to the Pflag

Lots of people ask me how to quickly and easily get fit. While I know they are hoping for a simple answer, the reality is that getting and staying fit is a lifestyle, not a quick fix.

So what do fit people do in their "healthy lifestyle"? Take a peek with the following seven habits of highly fit people:

Habit No. 1: They don't buy junk

Fit people know that if they keep junk food in the house it will land on their waist sooner or later. So they don't buy any. Even buying junk food for your kids or spouse is not advised since you'll likely eat some of it eventually, and your loved ones shouldn't be eating that junk either. It's called junk for a reason.

Rid your home of chips, cookies, candy, baked goods, pre-packaged snacks and anything else that belongs in a vending machine. Replace the above with fresh fruit, veggies, nuts and

other healthy snacks.

Habit No. 2: They have priorities

Fit people make exercise a priority. Along with keeping a job, paying the bills and going to the doctor, exercise is an important part of their lives. What I've found is that fit people put exercise before leisure time. Sure, fit people enjoy leisure, but it is scheduled around their workout time.

Treat exercise time with the same importance that you would a business meeting or trip to the dentist.

Habit No. 3: They stop when full

Fit people stop eating when they feel full. Sound simple? It is, but how many times have you stuffed yourself simply to clear your plate? Or how many times have you eaten another piece of cake despite being stuffed?

The next time you feel full, take it as a sign to stop eating. Yes, even if your plate isn't empty.

Habit No. 4: They push themselves

Not only do fit people make

time to go to the gym, they challenge themselves during each workout. While it is easy to simply go through the motions while exercising, you're cheating your body out of great results when you don't push yourself. Exercise should make you sweat, make your muscles burn and leave you with a feeling of accomplishment.

Find ways to make each workout more challenging. For competitive people, the best way to push yourself is to exercise with a friend of similar strength. Another great way to challenge yourself is to set small attainable goals. These goals could be to push heavier weight, to sprint longer, or to do cardio at a higher intensity setting.

Habit No. 5: They don't eat and watch

Fit people know that eating in front of the T.V. is mindless eating. When your attention is on your entertainment and not on your food, then you'll be less tuned in to what and how much ends up in your mouth. Eating in

front of the T.V. is also very habit-forming. Ever notice how you crave munchies just as a reflex of sitting in front of the T.V.?

Eat before or after your entertainment and pay attention to what and how much goes into your mouth.

Habit No. 6: They drink water

Fit people drink lots of water. And not just in addition to other beverages, but instead of them. Water is their main drink, while other drinks are occasional treats. Calorie-filled drinks are one of the quickest ways to consume excess calories, which quickly turn into fat. Consider water your beverage of choice. Drink plenty of it each day and drink other beverages only a few times each week.

Habit No. 7: They are supported

Fit people don't leave their motivation to chance. They know that if their personal trainer, boot camp instructor or workout partner is waiting for them, then they are less likely to skip a workout. It is so easy to hit "snooze" or to talk

yourself out of the gym as soon as your behind hits the couch after work. Fit people take the option of skipping out of the equation.

I hope that these habits have inspired you to make a change for the fitter in your own life.

If you already do some of these habits, then congratulations – you are on your way to a better body. Make an effort to incorporate the rest of the habits to take your results to the next level.

If none, or very few, of these habits describe your lifestyle, then I've got good news – you now have seven effective new habits to start that will get you some awe-

some results. Don't try to tackle all seven at once – pick one or two to add each week and gradually work up to all seven.

As always, you are welcome to call or e-mail me with questions or to get started on your own customized fitness plan.

Fred Sassani is founder of Bodies By Design Personal Training Services, a nationally certified personal trainer and nutrition specialist in Pflugerville. For comments or questions you can reach Fred at getfit@trainerfred.com or visit his website to download a free fitness book at trainerfred.com.

Pinworms in children reported at local clinic

By Tonya Kerr
Special to the Pflag

I recently checked in with Dr. Robert A. Skjonsby at St. David's Urgent Care in Pflugerville.

Dr. Skjonsby said that he's seen several cases of pinworms in school-aged children over the past couple of weeks.

"Pinworms are the most common parasitic worm in the United States," said Dr. Skjonsby. "Last week, a child came into our clinic for something completely unrelated. When the patient's sibling used our restroom, we discovered worms in the stool."

Skjonsby said that children develop pinworms by ingesting the eggs, mainly when they put their fingers in their mouths. These parasites are easily spread, and can also be contracted from someone else who has the infection.

Pinworm symptoms include itching and/or irritation in the rectal area, especially at night; an occasional loss of appetite; difficulty sleeping; and worms in the stool. The duration of symptoms

varies depending on the severity of the infection and irritation.

"Most often, a dose of Vermox [an anti-worm medication to kill the parasites] is usually what we recommend," said Dr. Skjonsby. "We usually recommend the patient [and family] to take a dose of the Vermox, wash sheets, clothes, etc., and then take a second dose to ensure everything has been treated."

Skjonsby said pinworms are mostly found in school-aged children and preschoolers. As pinworms spread so easily, family members can be affected, too. Even after treatment, it will take some time for the medication to be fully absorbed and start to rid the body of the parasites.

"It is imperative to constantly wash your hands with hot water, especially before eating," said Skjonsby. "Keeping fingernails trimmed is also important, as the eggs can be transported underneath them. Once someone in the family has been diagnosed as having pinworms, it's imperative for the entire family and house to be treated and cleaned."

Baby Talk

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