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Include fitness in vacation plans

Summer is almost here and it's time to take the family on vacation, but it's not time to take a break from your fitness program. Vacations are a good time to involve the whole family in an active way of life. Have each member of the family plan an event in which everyone participates. While workouts may not be the same on vacation, there are numerous opportu-

nities to maintain a fitness routine - outdoors. The first opportunity for starting your vacation fitness plan is while you're traveling to your destination, whether it be by plane, train, car, or bus. Take every opportunity to get up and walk. Do some easy stretching movements (such as neck rolls, shoulder shrugs, and ankle circles) in you

seat or the aisle to prevent your muscles from becoming stiff and sore. When traveling by car, stop frequently. The whole family can participate in a mini-workout. Light calisthenics (jogging in place, jumping jacks and knee lifts) will get the circulation going. Or take a brisk walk around a rest stop or a town that you are passing through.

It may be impractical to try to maintain your normal exercise routine on vacation. Jogging in a strange place, the unavailability of a pool or your bicycle, no place to take an exercise class, and the lack of time can contribute to the disruption of your normal schedule. Here are some suggestions to assist you in planning an enjoyable vacation:

- Bring along a cassette player and your favorite aerobic music. You can put on your favorite tape and continue your exercise routine. Or you might want to take it to the pool and try the routine in the water.

- Walking for fitness can be incorporated into busy days, and the whole family can participate. It requires only comfortable shoes and clothing.

Many places have beautiful trails and some cities have walking tours through historic districts.

- There is probably no need to tell golf enthusiasts to take advantage of the courses along the way. Chances are the vacation has been planned around those courses, rather than the other way around.

- Cycling individually or as a family is also a possibility. Many vacation places rent bicycles of all types.

Take this opportunity to go trail riding. Take the family and pack a snack or picnic lunch to enjoy along the way, or try riding a tandem bike.

- Day hikes are an enjoyable way to see the parks and forests that many states offer. Be sure to have sturdy shoes (that you have worn previously) and take along a pack to carry water and a snack.

Many parks offer a variety of trails of varying difficulty. Start with an easy trail and then try one that is more challenging.

- Remember that the environment you encounter on vacation may be very different from what you are used to. Exercising at a high altitude is very different from sea level, and temperature and humidity may also affect your physical abilities. Start slowly.

Be sure to take clothing that is appropriate for the area you are visiting. It may be hot and humid at home but cool and windy in the mountains you are visiting.

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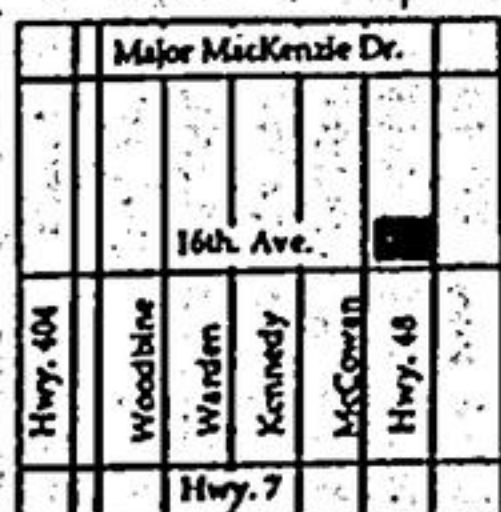
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