

Experts: Do the walk

Even moderate exercise has key health benefits

BY DAVID OLSON
david.olson@newsday.com

When Marilyn Hornsby leaves her job as a telephone sales representative for a medical supplies company in Melville, she has no desire to exercise.

"I want to get home," she said. "After a day at work, I'm out."

But Hornsby, 62, of East Meadow, has found a way to fit exercise into her busy day. She eats at her desk and spends most or all of her hourlong lunch break walking nearby.

"The walk is very good for me," she said. "I sit all day at my desk and need this exercise." She said her doctor recommends walking for her bad back.

Many Americans say they don't have time to exercise, but research shows that even short bursts of physical activity help. Any period of exercise counts toward the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' physical activity recommendations that adults do at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity. Moderate activity includes "anything that gets your heart beating faster," the guidelines say.

Guidelines changed

Previously, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' guidelines said exercise should be in sessions of at least 10 minutes. Revised guidelines released in November eliminated that requirement.

There are many ways to



Ven Chitt, 49, of Hicksville, left, and Rama Boorgadda of Hauppauge, 35, walk down Duryea Road in Melville on March 20.

squeeze a few minutes of exercise here and there into the workday or into time after work or school, said Catherine Tuppo, program coordinator at Stony Brook Medicine's Bariatric and Metabolic Weight Loss Center in Centereach.

For example, if you drive to work, park your car farther away than you usually do, she

said. "Then act like you're late for work and you have to get to the door to work quickly," Tuppo said. That's because walking briskly is more beneficial than walking slowly.

As the weather gets warmer, many people have more motivation to exercise, said Adam Gonzalez, an assistant professor of health professions at

Hofstra University and an expert in exercise physiology.

"People exercise more if they're enjoying it," he said. "For most people, it's more enjoyable to exercise outside instead of being on the treadmill or staring at the wall inside a gym."

When Hornsby was walking with a workmate on a recent 50-degree early afternoon,

there were only a few others walking down a 1,500-foot section of Duryea Road in Melville that is popular with workers from nearby office buildings because it dead-ends and has no intersections.

"If it's a nice spring day, 70 degrees, you'll see a lot more people out," said Hornsby's walking partner, Jim Lopes, 45,

“For most people, it’s more enjoyable to exercise outside instead of being on the treadmill or staring at the wall inside a gym.”

— Adam Gonzalez, an assistant professor of health professions at Hofstra University

of life

EXERCISE TIPS

No time to go to the gym? Experts have suggestions for fitting in exercise throughout your work and home life.

- Park farther away from work and walk the extra distance.
- Take multiple short walks during the work day.
- Use a hand mower to mow the lawn.
- Garden and vacuum at a more vigorous pace.
- Walk to talk with a co-worker in person rather than use the phone or email.
- Take the long way to get to the restroom.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.

SOURCES: Genna Hymowitz and Catherine Tuppo, Stony Brook Medicine's Bariatric and Metabolic Weight Loss Center

of West Babylon.

Michael Walsh, 68, of Islandia, was on a 20-minute walk on Duryea just before Hornsby and Lopes arrived.

"Today I'm getting a short walk in," said Walsh, who works at a nearby software company. "Usually, I like to get 30 to 45 minutes in, but I have a lot of stuff to do today."

Walsh said walking on his lunch break allows him to spend more time at home with his wife than if he were going to the gym after work every day. And, he said, "When I walk, I don't have as many problems with my weight."

Multiple benefits

Weight loss and control is one of many benefits of exercise, Gonzalez said. Physical activity also reduces anxiety and depression, can lead to better sleep, can improve cognition and prevents disease, he said.

Nearly \$117 billion in annual health care costs and 10 percent of premature deaths are attributed to insufficient physical activity, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The key is to find an exercise regimen that is realistic, Gonzalez said. "The biggest predictor of success with exercise is adherence, if you stick to the program," he said.

That's one reason bursts of exercise throughout the day may be a good option for some. Three minutes of walking six times a day adds up to 18 minutes a day, he said.

"The higher intensity the better," he said. "But most people are not going to want to get up from their desk and go for a five-minute run and get sweaty."

Devices that track the number of steps you take can be a motivating tool because "if you look down in the middle of day and you're down on steps, it's that trigger that you need to get up and take a walk."

Fitness classes, which sometimes last only 30 or 45 minutes, are another option, because exercising with a group "holds people accountable," he said.

Most Americans need more motivation to get off their chairs and sofas.

A June 2018 report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that only 22.9 percent of Americans — and 18.9 percent of New Yorkers — ages 18-64 get the federally recommended amount of exercise, which, in addition to the minimum 150 minutes of weekly moderate aerobic exercise, includes at least two days a week of muscle-strengthening activities.

Perceived time constraints are a big reason for that, said Dr. Genna Hymowitz, director of bariatric psychology at the Stony Brook weight loss center.

"It is the hope that by understanding the new research that suggests that any amount of activity is better than not being active, that more individuals will start to move a little bit more," she said.

Library asks for weighty tax hike

BY DENISE M. BONILLA
denise.bonilla@newsday.com

The Wyandanch Public Library is proposing a tax increase of nearly 39% in its 2019-20 budget, more than triple the highest increases being sought by any library on Long Island.

The 38.7% tax hike would amount to a \$272 increase for an average home assessed at \$3,500, pushing annual library taxes from \$702 to \$974, according to library director Edwin Maxwell.

The increase is the highest among the more than three dozen libraries across Long Island that are having budget votes on April 2. The increases range from less than 1% to about 7%. The majority of these libraries are in Suffolk County.

Wyandanch library board president Ghenya Grant said the nearly \$2.8 million budget is necessary in order to provide needed services. She said the library's reserve fund has dropped considerably after past years of not raising taxes and that the library is working to create a "tween" area in the library, make needed building repairs, boost STEM-related programming and update its collections.

"We try to be as frugal as we can be but we don't want that to be at the expense of what the community deserves," she said.

Grant declined to provide Newsday with a line-item budget and instead pointed to the outline distributed to residents and "typically used" by other libraries.

According to the outline, the largest portion of the budget increase is for salaries, which under the proposed budget would rise from \$1.1 million to \$1.4 million. Maxwell said there are plans to hire five full-time workers and make another five current part-timers into full-time employees. He said there are currently about 30 employees overall.

Grant said the library, which according to the 2010 census serves about 11,700 residents, has been operating with a "shoestring" staff and that employees have been working overtime.

"We have to be in compliance with Civil Service [law] so we have to get to the point where we have sufficient staff," she said.

Grant said another large component of the proposed budget is more than \$150,000 in retirement benefits. The cost was paid for by the school district, she said, but the district passed it on to the library this year. The school district has projected a possible \$2.3 million budget deficit for the current year and is facing "significant" fiscal stress, according to the state comptroller's office.

Last year, library taxes increased about \$60 on the average assessed house. Former board trustee Stephanie Williams questioned the amount the library is proposing now.

"It's much too high, and I don't think the community can afford it," she said.

Resident Jarod Morris said the library needs to better account for its employees. Morris cited a 2014 state comptroller audit that found the library board did not provide oversight adequate to prevent "fraud, waste and abuse." The audit also criticized then-board president Nancy Holliday for changing time clock records 109 times for her nephew and library custodian Kwaisi McCorvey, sometimes creating entries for days when he did not clock in or out. Holliday, who remains a trustee, denied any improper actions and the board promised better fiscal oversight.

After the audit, library trustees stated they had since implemented a policy to guard against nepotism. On Wednesday, Grant said there's "no law against" nepotism as long as employees are qualified and abide by the rules. She said she doesn't have knowledge of "any type of no-show jobs or anything like that."

"Me as the leader of the library would never go along with that," she said. "All staff are expected to work their hours, they're expected to be accountable for the time that they're on the clock."

The budget vote will take place from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the library.

Newsday

Long Island Office
235 Pinelawn Rd., Melville, NY
11747-4250

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CORRECTION

Student teams participating in the Water Quality Challenge, a new STEM competition created by the Long Island Regional Planning Council, will present their projects to a panel of experts in spring 2020. A story on the schools page of Sunday's LI Life, which is printed in advance, gave an incorrect time frame for the presentation. More information about the contest is at lrpc.org. Letters of interest from teams are due by April 10.

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1492 King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain issued an edict expelling Jews from Spanish soil, except those willing to convert to Christianity.
1976 The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that Karen Ann Quinlan, a young woman in a persistent vegetative state, could be disconnected from her respirator. (Quinlan, who remained unconscious, died in 1985.)
1991 The Warsaw Pact was formally dissolved.
1995 Mexican-American singer Selena Quintanilla-Perez, 23, was shot to death in Corpus Christi, Texas, by the founder of her fan club, Yolanda Saldívar, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.
2005 Terri Schiavo, 41, died at a hospice in Pinellas Park, Florida, 13 days after her feeding tube was removed in a wrenching right-to-die court fight.