



Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

McArthur recommends eating fruit over drinking juice, and reading labels to check for hydrogenated oil, sodium and sugar levels. Below, none of Oryana's chips contain oils associated with trans fat.

Schaub knows firsthand how difficult it can feel to fit in exercise. With another job as a real estate professional to juggle, Schaub says she felt limited in finding time to work out. But she learned to get over the widely-held notion that you must exercise for an hour at a time.

"All you need is 20 minutes," she said. Don't set your expectations too high, said Schaub. "Be sensible. Don't try to lose 10 pounds in one week. Do something that is realistic. I feel like so many people set goals that are not realistic for their lifestyle."

Ideally, says Weckstein, exercise should involve aerobic conditioning for 35 to 45 minutes three days a week; strength training for at least 20 to 30 minutes two days a week and stretching for 10 to

15 minutes following each activity.

The longer you exercise, the more it becomes a habit and something that is part of your life, like showering or brushing your teeth, experts say. Feeling good, not to mention looking good, help too, of course.

Teaming up with friends and encouraging one another to keep at it is another way to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

That's played a huge role in Blodgett's success and that of her co-workers.

"I think we all try, and as you fail you get discouraged. But everybody felt like we were in the same boat. We all knew we were on the same path," she said.

Heather Johnson Durocher is a local freelance writer.



Increasing your energy

Six steps that can raise energy and help reduce tension:

Move your body

Moderate exercise increases energy and improves mood. Although your workout might make you a little tired, you'll soon have an energy resurgence.

Know when to recharge

Our energy is low right after waking, in the late afternoon and just before bed. Avoid eating during those periods. Take a brisk 10-minute walk instead.

Socialize

Social contact raises spirits. So the next time you feel your energy sagging, make a date with friends.

Know thyself

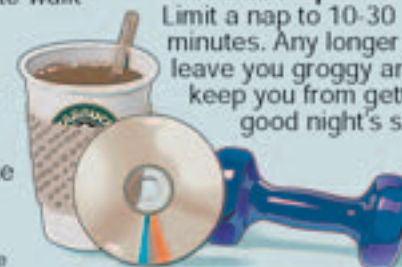
Find out what effects caffeine and exercise have on you. Once you understand your individual responses, you can learn to overcome your impulses.

Listen to music

Music is second only to exercise in raising energy and reducing tension.

Take a catnap

Limit a nap to 10-30 minutes. Any longer will leave you groggy and keep you from getting a good night's sleep.



SOURCE: Shape magazine

Beginner fitness tips

A healthy lifestyle can be yours. Wendy Weckstein, a Traverse City physical therapist and wellness consultant, gives these exercise tips:

■ Choose an exercise program you enjoy. This may require some soul-searching, she said. Ask yourself:

"Am I going to like this Pilates class?" or "Am I going to like going outside jogging?" or "Do I want to work out at my home or in a health club?"

■ Diversify. If you have two to three options for aerobic conditioning, you're more likely to avoid burn out. Make sure these are activities you enjoy and could see yourself doing for a long time.

■ Exercise with a friend. "This is huge," she said. "It makes your exercise so much more enjoyable and it goes by much quicker."

■ Don't overwhelm yourself by initially trying to incorporate exercise every day. Start with a couple days and build up to more frequency and intensity. "You need to come up with a time-efficient program for you that you can actually see yourself doing for the rest of your life."

■ Remain consistent.

"After a period of time, it often becomes just part of your life," she said.

She uses tooth brushing to illustrate this point. "We don't even consider not brushing our teeth. And we don't say, 'OK, I've brushed my teeth for five years, I guess I can stop now.'"

"Exercise needs to be put into your schedule as something that has to be done on a regular basis, like a shower everyday," she said.

■ Plan ahead. "Exercise is not just going to happen."

Write out the days you plan to exercise or at the very least have a mental plan each day of what you're going to do the following day.

