

Hit A Plateau? Read On

1. Just like any other hurdle in life, so comes the motivation to exercise. When you experience a problem at home or on the job, do you give up? Of course not! You move forward, move ahead and push past obstacles. Think of ways you've handled other situations in your life where you weren't motivated or where you were completely discouraged from moving ahead and apply those skills in your quest toward better health. Perhaps you asked for help from a friend or coworker, or found a way to do it on your own. The same philosophy applies when you are working toward anything, including losing weight. Keep yourself accountable, continue to strive toward your goals, and ask for help from a friend, coworker or exercise professional if necessary.

2. Add variety to your workouts. Does your exercise routine consist of walking the same distance at the same speed and you've been doing it for months now? Change it up! Increase your distance, change your pace or add intervals to your routine. Doing the same activity over and over day after day and month after month is better than doing nothing, but you will probably hit a plateau as your body adjusts and conforms to your lack of variety. Walking faster, adding other exercises or increasing your distance will help you move past your plateau.

3. Stay committed to your goals. Just like any other area of your life where you should identify and even write down your goals, the same remains true for your weight loss goals. If you would like to lose 20 pounds, define a time line and how you will accomplish the goal with specific and measurable outcomes. If you need to lose 50 pounds, it may seem impossible to achieve unless you set smaller goals with coinciding outcomes. Your goal should be attainable such as 'losing 5 lbs by next month' or a 'dropping dress size by March' so that you won't be discouraged by losing an entire 50 lbs which will take much longer to achieve.

4. For people with a large amount of weight to lose and no exercise routine or plan in place, it may be easier to try to fit exercise in throughout the day as opposed to setting aside a full 30 minutes to exercise. This may be accomplished by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking further away from the entrance, taking the long route to go see your coworkers or make copies during the day, moving around while watching TV, or riding your bike or walking instead of driving to work if possible.

Don't give up on your weight loss efforts, but change the method that you are using to reach them instead. Modify the type of activity that you are doing, how long you do it for or the intensity of your sessions and you should start seeing some results (especially combined with a proper diet). The benefits of exercise far outweigh some of the inconveniences you may experience when trying to lose the weight: Lower blood pressure, decreased cholesterol, decreased risk of diabetes, heart disease and other health conditions. These are all very valid reasons for you to continue to exercise and eat the right foods.

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