

# 5 Tips for Better Fitness

by Deborah Myers

The body you live in wants to move. A regular exercise program can help you move with greater ease and feel more comfortable, but first you must commit to exercise. Get your mind and your body on the same page by adopting the following five healthy habits for better fitness.

**1. Manage your mindset.** There are many good reasons to have a regular exercise program—stronger heart and lungs; better muscle tone strength, coordination, and flexibility; and weight management. Despite the benefits, some of us still have to talk ourselves into getting exercise regularly.

To get your attitude and your energy level in synch, it helps to be mindful and adopt an upbeat outlook. Spend time each day being kind to yourself and grateful for what you have and what you can do. Show yourself love, rather than criticism. With a positive mindset, you will be more likely to make time to exercise, because you're worth it.

Here's a simple self-help acupressure pose you can practice to help adjust your mindset. Give yourself a hug by crossing your arms and gently touching the opposite upper arm with your fingertips. Hold that pose while you slowly breathe in and out a few times. This opens up your breath and creates space for holding a good attitude and being kind to yourself.

**2. Improve endurance.** Exercising is easier to do when we set—and attain—goals, whether it's increased strength, weight loss, or muscle tone. To achieve your goal, practice stick-to-itiveness to gain endurance. Then, as you experience improved performance, pause and take time to recognize your accomplishments.

To feel good in your body and ramp up your fitness, correct posture makes all the difference. Try this energy tip to improve your posture and increase your endurance. Place your fingertips on your ischial tuberosity, more commonly known as the "sit bones." Try it! This acupressure pose automatically supports your lumbar curve and increases your vitality. Do this before and during your exercise, especially when you want to make sure you're in good posture for exercise such as running, hiking, biking, using the treadmill or elliptical machines, or when you're doing yoga or Pilates.

**3. Avoid injury.** Oftentimes, we start a fitness routine with enthusiasm, but soon suffer a setback from aches and pains. We sure don't want to injure ourselves when we're on the path to improving health, strength and fitness. Even a minimal muscle pull can cause you to have to slow down your exercise routine, or maybe even bring it to a halt.

You can take steps to avoid injury and avert any setback. Incorporate this acupressure pose into your regular workout to set yourself up for success. Sit on your left hand and place your right hand on your left shoulder. Hold for several good breaths and then switch sides. These two poses will help your spinal column elongate, release muscle tightness and soreness, and increase flexibility. They are my go-to poses while working in the garden.

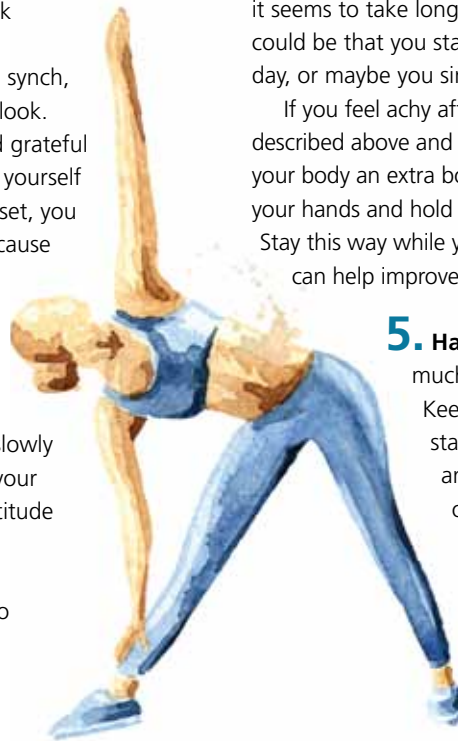
**4. Shorten recovery time.** Have you ever noticed that sometimes it seems to take longer time to recover after an exercise workout? It could be that you started out tired. Maybe you did too much in one day, or maybe you simply moved in the wrong direction.

If you feel achy after exercise, do the self-help acupressure poses described above and you will find that you recover faster. And to give your body an extra boost, add in this fifth pose: Sitting upright, cross your hands and hold the opposite inner thigh just above your knees. Stay this way while you breathe into the pose. Practicing this regularly can help improve your overall energy and shorten recovery.

**5. Have more fun!** Optimum fitness will happen so much easier if you're enjoying what you're doing. Keeping a positive attitude, practicing open breath, staying in good posture, increasing your flexibility, and recognizing your accomplishments each step of the way—these are essential for a body that moves better.

The true key to optimum fitness is having fun. Choose exercise that you like to do, whether it's dancing, walking, or mountain biking. Put a smile on your face, no matter what the activity, and you'll find that whatever you do is more fun.

By the way, you have just learned the first few steps of the Daily Clean Your House Flow, a nine-step self-help acupressure routine that creates a foundation of energy flow and balance that can help your body be stronger, healthier, and more vital. Enjoy pain-free fitness and move with ease by building regular exercise into every day!



Deborah Myers is a certified acupressurist and Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner. She offers private sessions, group classes, and workplace wellness workshops to improve health and relieve stress. She has also created an animated video of a self-help acupressure flow for kids to use at home and in schools. You can contact her at (707) 546-5692 or Deborah@deborahmyerswellness.com. Check out her programs at www.deborahmyerswellness.com.

