

HEALTH

This Heart Month, Pledge to Help Your Heart with These 3 Fitness

NewsUSA

(NU) - It's Heart Month and a good time to have a little heart-to-heart with yourself about the health of your ticker. Heart disease is one of the deadliest diseases in the nation, but the good news is that with a little loving care -- and exercise -- you can help prevent it. Exercise helps to strengthen your heart muscle, manage your weight, lower bad cholesterol, raise good cholesterol, and control high blood pressure. These benefits of exercise reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke. Now is a great time to kickstart your plan to prevent heart disease by following these exercise tips.

1. Don't wait. Find a way to exercise safely now. With many gyms closed or restricted due to COVID-19, a lot of people have either sidelined their exercise programs, or have transitioned to outdoor options like walking, jogging, or biking. If you're ready to fire up your exercise regimen without freezing outside, then join millions of other Americans by participating in free online workouts that will engage and inspire you to exercise. Growing numbers of participants nationwide claim that streaming workouts have been a "lifesaver." They provide a daily regimen, a sense of community and accomplishment, as well as real health improvement benefits.

2. Search for classes tailored to your goals, fitness level, and health status. There are countless numbers of streaming workouts available to meet most every need. Research shows that aerobics and resistance training are best to prevent heart disease or improve heart health. But it is important to do more than one or two types of exercise. Adding variety will benefit your fitness even more, according to Jaynie Bjornaraa, PhD., MPH, PT and Associate Vice President of Digital Fitness Solutions with American Specialty Health Fitness. "Exercises for flexibility and balance, such as yoga, tai chi, and dance, can improve your ability to do other types of exercise," says Bjornaraa. "In addition, they're fun and great for stress relief, and the mix of exercises can reduce risk of injury."

Ready to begin? First, make sure you know your heart risk factors so you can find an exercise



Anyone can participate in the free Silver&Fit® online exercise classes at www.facebook.com/SilverandFit.

program that's right for you. If you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, or other health issues, make a pledge to call your doctor to discuss your heart health goals and what types and level of exercise might be safest for you.

3. Select online classes and instructors that motivate you. Data shows that 50 percent of sedentary people who start a new exercise program drop out after 6 months. An instructor who inspires and motivates you is key to your success. Top motivating factors include enthusiasm and encouragement, a "real" personality, and challenging exercises. Finding a class time that suits your schedule also increases your chances of sticking with a program. Explore options like those offered through the Silver&Fit® program, which premieres 54 free, public Facebook Live and YouTube exercise classes per week, catered to older adults. These half-hour classes include cardio, strength/bodyweight, yoga, dance, tai chi, mixed formats, and flexibility and balance, all available at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. The classes premiere Monday through Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. PT. You can even check out their roster of elite instructors on their website at www.SilverandFit.com.

"Anyone can participate in the free Silver&Fit senior exercise classes on Facebook and YouTube, and what better time than Heart Month to get started?" adds Dr. Bjornaraa.

Silver&Fit class participant Ethel George says, "Great workout! Thank you Silver&Fit for keeping us safe, healthy, and sane during these tough times."

To view the workouts, visit www.facebook.com/SilverandFit or www.youtube.com/SilverandFit.