GENTLE EXERCISE – STARTING OVER

**Consult with your physician before starting any exercise program*

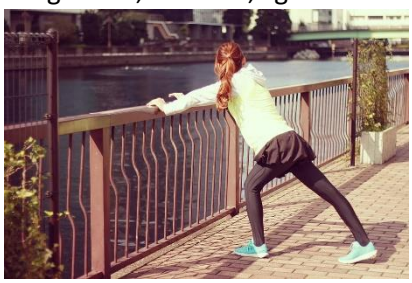
It is very easy to find workouts on the internet, especially the popular HIIT (high intensity interval workout). There are many reasons why this type of exercise may not the best choice for you:

- You have been sedentary for more than 2 weeks
- You have a joint issue and your shoulders, knees, or back do not operate like they used to
- You are overweight
- You have some other health issue like asthma, high blood pressure, or are recovering from surgery etc.

Remember those transformation reality TV shows have personal trainers, physicians and nutritionists supervising participants every step of the way. What can you do if you are just a person who has gotten terribly out of shape? If your physician has in fact suggested that it is time to take better care of yourself and tells you to exercise – where do you start?

1. Start with professional advice. Invest in your heath and hire a personal trainer to get you started. Did you know we can assist you over the phone, skype, zoom, facetime or email? This is our area of expertise. Too often people just "google" and do an on-line video that is not appropriate for their situation and end up frustrated or injured. You can also ask us questions, most times we have heard them before and can offer solutions. We are not "celebrity" trainers; we help real people reach their goals in a safe, appropriate, professional manner.

2. Help yourself. Educate yourself from professional websites. When searching for videos use the word "beginner", "senior", "gentle" and look at the credentials of the person who posted the video.



BASIC TIPS FOR BEGINNERS OR FOR STARTING OVER

1. You must warm up. Jumping jacks are not a warm up for most people, yet we see them as the first exercise on many videos. Controlled, gentle movements that slowly increase your core temperature and heart rate like; walking on the spot, alternating arm circles to the back, and alternating low leg lifts (hamstring curls) to the rear. ***tip - many "warmup" exercise videos are the perfect **workout** for beginners*

2. Baby steps. How long has it been since you were fit? Start small and ease in to your exercise program. Modify activities so they do not hurt you. Set achievable goals for the first week. Some suggestions might be: move 20 minutes a day, take 2 stretch breaks a day, practise balance exercises, eat breakfast, or drink a glass of water between meals. Rome wasn't built in a day!

3. Think about the basic components of exercise and make sure you incorporate activity from each:
   - **Cardiovascular** – walking, dancing, cycling, rowing
   - **Muscular Strength and Endurance** – squats, lunges, pushups, lifting
   - **Flexibility and Balance** – yoga, stretching, physio exercises
   - **Mindfulness or Relaxation** – Yoga, meditation, listening to music, breathing exercises

Sample Beginner or Starting over workout to follow

STABILITY BEFORE MOBILITY

After viewing over 50 exercise videos, in a 2-week time period I noticed there were few options offered for beginners, or those starting over. Even when entering, "Beginner Exercise" in the search box I still saw very complicated, compound exercises offered without modifications for knees, back, shoulders or limited flexibility. Most exercises can be modified, and a person must always be **stable** in the basic position before adding movement or resistance. Before you can execute a walking lunge with dumbbell bicep curls you need to perfectly perform a stationary lunge. Let's go back to basics and look at the progressions that will allow success while you grow stronger safely. *Remember – yah gotta walk before you can run!*

Lunges

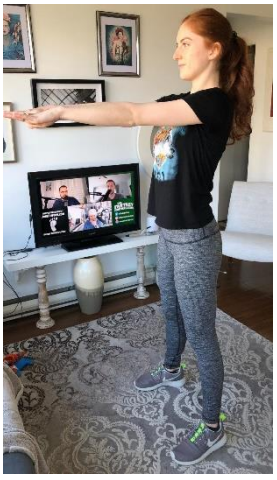
1. **Stationary Lunge** (sometimes called a split squat) Once you can execute this exercise without wobbling or tipping over you can move to #2. Pay close attention to your posture and core engagement before dropping the knee towards the ground. Stay in that spot and raise back up, keep your feet where they are and repeat 10 to 15 times. Switch legs. Play with your stance to find something comfortable. ***TIP** - from a standing position step one leg BACK to find the right distance. i.e. one leg is not directly behind the other. The most common corrections required are due to not keeping the body upright and knee shooting forward past the toe.

2. **Alternating Lunges** – stepping back. Generally, when people step back behind their body, they have an easier time keeping their knees pointing forward and back behind their toes. Keep a slow, steady tempo.
3. **Forward Walking Lunges –** Your lunge needs to be solid before you add travel. To begin, think of the exercise with a pause between parts; a step forward, pause, a lunge down and up, pause then step forward with the other leg. When you feel in control of the movement, omit the pause.

Squats

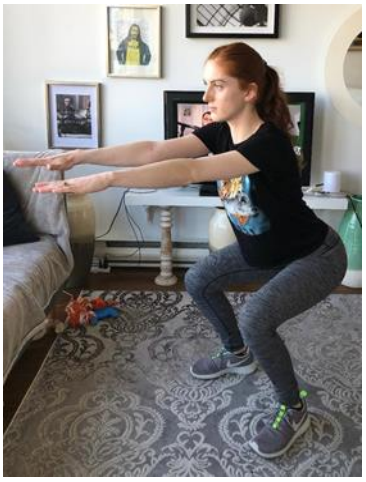
The same principles we used for lunges can now be applied to squats. Master a regular, narrow foot squat before adding resitance with weights or bands. You can add jumps, upperbody movements, and even different foot placements to add intensity and variety to your squat. The foundation of all of these "cool" exercises is the basic squat. Remember stability before mobility.

1. **Sit on a chair and stand up without using your hands. Make sure the chair is firm and sturdy.**
2. **Narrow leg squat, feet Hip/shoulder width apart**
3. **Wide leg Squat**
4. **Squat with resistance**



← Starting position

Place your feet wherever you are most comfortable. Exhale on the way up. Sit back on your heels like you are going to sit on a chair. Perform slow and controlled.



BEGINNER OR STARTING OVER WORKOUT

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Warm-up for 5 to 10 minutes

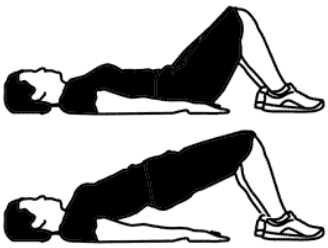
Literally you should feel "warm" with a slightly elevated heart rate before performing exercises. Walking on the spot or walking around helps warm up the lower body and alternating arm circles backwards helps the shoulders and upper body. A gentle twist side to side warms up the middle part of your body.

Circuit – a circuit is a great way to get back in shape because it is easy to monitor success. Start your first exercise session by running through these exercises once. Aim for 10 to 15 repetitions. Add more circuits to increase difficulty when you are ready. Three times through followed by a stretch would be a good goal in 4 weeks.

1. Stand on one leg as long as you can up to 30 seconds each leg
2. Squats
3. Wall Pushups or pushups from knees
4. Stationary lunge (change legs and repeat)
5. Bent over row
6. Plank from knees for as long as possible up to 1 minute
7. Bridge first stationary for 30 seconds, advance to up and down repetitions
8. Bird-Dog – hold the position up to 30 seconds. Switch sides.

Bird-Dog is a great core exercise. Engage your core (tighten abdominal muscles) and breathe normally. Head in line with spine.

Push-ups from knees. Exhale as you push up and inhale on the wat down. Feet can be up or down on the floor, whichever is more comfortable. Use a mat or a folded towel under knees.



Glute Bridge. Relax neck and shoulders. Raise hips up without arching the back.

Plank can have feet up or down. Keep neck in a neutral, comfortable position and keep breathing