



INCREASE

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YOUR FITNESS, REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISKS

It's New Year's Day, 2010. I'm on the internet surrounded by pop up ads for diet schemes, exercise equipment, and life insurance. As an aging guy in my 40's, the insurance ad caught my eye! Cheap rates for the 30 year old, but the rates roughly quadruple for a guy my age! It's obvious from this that with increased age, there's increased risk.

The thing you may not know is that countless studies have proven that we (EACH OF US!) have the capacity to decrease those risks significantly. Increased fitness and regular exercise can reduce ones risk of dying from many causes. Interestingly, those among us that are super fit enjoy up to a 60% reduced risk of all causes of death compared to others of the same age who are unfit. Put another way:

“The less fit you are, the greater your risk of dying at any age.”

Knowing this, my wife and I have always been somewhat active, previously working out locally at IQFIT a few times a week. About a year ago, after having taken time off due to injury, I sought out an alternative and bought a home workout program called P90X. It's one of those TV infomercial programs we all watch out of the corner of one eye wondering – does it really work? For 6 months it sat on a shelf, but for the last 6 months, we've used it nearly every day. We've been doing yoga, karate, lifting weights, walking, and stretching, along with eating less chocolate (my personal vice) and consuming virtually no drive thru food. I'll tell you, we've never felt stronger, and we've never had more endurance. I'm more flexible than ever, and those daily aches and pains I had begun to associate with just getting older are essentially gone.

Now, I'm not pushing P90X (it's a tough program and not for beginners), but as an urgent care Physician, I frequently see the undesirable results of living an unfit life. Anyone can become ill or sustain an injury, but there's a reason I rarely see truly fit non-smoking patients in our clinic for illness – it's because, as many studies have shown, and all of us know intuitively, living a fit, active life reduces your risk for all sorts of illness and disease.

As such, I encourage you all to ditch those old excuses. **YOU DO HAVE TIME, AND YOU CAN DO THIS!** As the P90X saying goes.... DECIDE - COMMIT – SUCCEED! It all begins with the decision. Simply decide to add 20-30 minutes of your favorite activity to your life at least 3x a week, decide to skip that fat-laden drive through “meal” and cook your own meal instead, and (most importantly)

“...decide to be proactive about your health,...

and you'll hugely reduce your chances for ever needing a Doc like me. In time you'll have dropped some pounds, gained some strength, but most importantly, you'll have added many quality years to your life, which will allow you to share countless more New Year's celebrations with your family and friends.