

6 FRESH FITNESS IDEAS FOR SPRING

Walk it Off: As I have said before, **walking is an ideal workout** and is something that you can do anytime, anywhere, with very little cost or equipment. Now that nicer weather is here (or on its way), take in an outdoor stroll and admire some spring blooms. Not as nice outside as you'd like? Walk at the mall or shopping center and admire the new spring fashions!

Take a Hike: Hiking is another great spring activity and one you can enjoy with family or friends. Search online or pick up a trail guide for hiking locations near where you live. Pay attention to distances and difficulty levels to choose one that's right for you.

Set a Goal: Spring is also a great time to make getting ready for a summer or fall marathon, half marathon, or fun run part of your goal. For some people, having the deadline of such an event is a **great motivator** to keep moving toward their weight loss goal.

Join the Club: Many cities and towns have walking groups or clubs, so look around for such opportunities in your area. These 1, 2, and 5 k events are social and fun and can be a great way to meet like-minded **fitness buddies** to walk with at other times, as well.

Spruce Up the Yard: Get some exercise while getting your garden in shape for the new season. Tasks like raking leaves, mowing the grass, planting flowers, and hauling yard debris all add up to **calories burned!**

Go for a Spin: Biking is another fun fitness activity that goes well with nicer spring weather. So get your bike out, give it a tune up, and pedal your way to fitness.

Remember, if it has been a while since you've been active or if you have a serious medical condition to take into consideration, be sure to check in with your doctor before starting a new fitness routine or activity. It's better to gradually work up to a more active lifestyle than to overdo it and end up with an injury, discouraged, or worse.

At the same time, **don't let a lack of mobility stop you.** Aim to add five minutes of activity to your day at first, and then when that feels comfortable, add five more minutes. I've seen many of my patients go from almost complete immobility to regaining their independence, and you can too. There are even exercises you can do while sitting or lying in bed that can build strength and help you work your way from where you are now to where you want to be.

So go ahead – **spring forward** and let the new season become **your excuse to get active!**

Dr. Michael Kaplan

Founder and Chief Medical Officer