

## Enjoy Summer Fitness – Be Smart

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Summer is the season for us to take our exercise routines out of the gym and to the park, tennis court, golf course, bike trail, and the pool. Many of us have been indoors working a job with little or no physical activity for 6-7 months. Now we expect to place this extra strain on our bodies of outdoor activities with little to no transition time. You should adhere to the following ground rules before you hit the ground running. See your doctor before beginning any exercise routine, especially if you have been inactive for 6 months or more, or are over 50 years of age and do not exercise on a regular basis. You need to ease into outdoor activities physically as well as acclimate the body to the heat and humidity. It is very important to replenish fluids we lose more frequently from the heat and sun outdoors. Avoid direct sunlight and/or excessive heat along with exercising outdoors when the heat index reaches 90 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Exposure to high heat and humidity can result in heat cramps, exhaustion, or at its extreme heat stroke. If you feel faint, nauseous, or disoriented at any time, consult your doctor immediately. Try to workout in the morning or late afternoon and evening if possible. If you are active in the middle of the day take more breaks and be sure to wear sunscreen when in the intense sunshine. Drink plenty of water before you begin your activity, and always have a water bottle filled with cool water or your favorite sports drink with you to drink during it also. Bear in mind that you can roughly estimate your water losses during exercise by monitoring your weight. If you weigh 150 pounds before a hot-weather workout and 147 pounds afterward, you can figure that you've lost three pounds - 48 ounces - of sweat. Try to take in at least this amount - and preferably more - as soon as possible after exercise, and don't forget to include a bit of sodium. Find an activity you enjoy whether it's biking, walking, jogging, golf, or tennis to name a few. Other tips include, avoid exercising in areas near congested traffic areas or busy streets, and begin your workout or activity with a five-minute warm-up session and some light stretching. Be sure to cool down and stretch after your activity to allow the body to avoid soreness and recover sooner for the next workout. Listen to your body and be smart this summer while exercising outdoors.