

How Baby Boomers Get Fit

by Joy Powell,

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(NAPSA)—A new generation is getting involved with gyms and fitness programs in record numbers—the baby boomer generation. The 78 million Americans who make up this generation are savvier and better versed in fitness than any other aging generation seen before as exercise has been more ingrained in their culture and daily routines.

Healthways and the SilverSneakers® Fitness Program recognize that baby boomers' reasons and motivations for getting fit are as varied as their workout interests. From tennis and yoga to hiking and dance, exercise offers many benefits for older adults, including reducing and minimizing the signs, symptoms and risk factors for chronic diseases and conditions like arthritis, obesity and diabetes. Additionally, exercise can help fight depression and improve energy, balance and strength.

SilverSneakers, the nation's leading exercise program designed exclusively for older adults, knows there is no one-size-fits-all solution for anyone, and trying to fit exercise into a busy schedule can be hard.

SilverSneakers offers these workout tips for baby boomers to ensure they enjoy and stick with their workout routine.

Exercise with a friend. Healthways research has shown that 80 percent of baby boomers prefer to exercise with friends or a group they feel comfortable with. This gives people motivation and accountability while making the activity more enjoyable.

Select an exercise that you enjoy. Not surprisingly, you're much more likely to stick to activities you enjoy and that fit into



Exercising with others can make getting fit fun and encourage you to keep at it.

your schedule. Think back to activities you did when you were younger and try different types of exercise to find what works best for you. SilverSneakers offers a variety of classes to suit each person's needs.

Do a mix of cardio and strength training. Don't just focus on one or the other; do a mix of both to increase strength, endurance and flexibility.

Healthways is incorporating baby boomers' needs and wants into its menu of fitness programs with the new FLEX program. FLEX is a community-oriented program consisting of instructor-led fitness activities at churches, community centers and parks. Classes are designed to create a sense of community beyond the gym, with flexible and fun options that keep participants engaged and active.

For more information, to see if you are eligible for SilverSneakers and FLEX, and to find a class in your area, visit www.SilverSneakers.com.

• *Joy Powell is president of the Fitness Market for Healthways. She oversees a variety of fitness programs, including the award-winning SilverSneakers® Fitness Program, the nation's leading exercise program designed specifically for older adults.*