

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Simple Ways To Get In Shape

(NAPSA)—If you've been having trouble working out ways to get in shape, doctors offer this tip: Take baby steps. Experts say small, incremental steps are the best way to get into a fitness program or to begin changing your lifestyle.

This gradual, simple approach has worked for people across the country and even for world-class athletes. Dr. Michael LeRoux, who has applied an incremental, proactive fitness approach when working with Olympic athletes, offers these tips to help people get in shape and stay in shape. The tips utilize a principle he calls "MELT," or "Minimal Effort, Long Term."

1) Step away from your car. When parking your car, try to find a spot that's some distance away from your destination. The extra few minutes of walking to and from your car each day can add up quickly.

2) Cart it in a basket. When shopping for groceries, use a hand-basket (rather than a cart) and only fill it with the essentials. This will help you think twice about what you really need, and carrying the basket around the store is a great miniworkout.

3) Blow it off. Begin by taking a few deep breaths, then forcefully blow a piece of paper from one side of your desk to the other and then off the desk. Repeat two times a day. This diaphragmatic breathing builds up heat in the



**Fitness Fact—Small, simple lifestyle changes can help you get in shape.**

body and forces you to contract your abdomen.

4) Belly in before you begin. Every time you are about to change from a seated position to a standing position, take a moment to inhale and tighten your stomach muscles. It's like doing a sit-up every time you stand up.

5) Bunny hunting. Add a little strength training to your house-cleaning routine. Go hunting for dust bunnies by bending down low and dusting under things, or standing on your toes to dust on top of things. Also, move your furniture when you vacuum.

For more information on the MELT program or Dr. LeRoux, visit [www.drleroux.com](http://www.drleroux.com).