

Chapter 1

Maximizing Ten Minutes for Life

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Are you ready? Ready to get set, make goals, and devise a plan of action? What is it that you personally want to achieve in the next 30 days and beyond? Taking ten minutes a day for yourself can be the most productive time you ever spend. In this chapter, I share some top timesaving tips. I also help you target your trouble spots — don't worry, everybody's got them. And I address health and safety issues; it's important to respect your medical limitations. Discover the rejuvenating benefits of connecting your mind and body — a motivating factor to be jazzed about. Making activity and a healthy diet a part of your everyday life can be very rewarding. Take it to the max.

Getting an Overview of the Basics

Deciding to make a positive lifestyle change is a very important first step. Here is a basic overview of what's needed to meet your ten minute tone-up health and fitness goals.

Creating your ten minute interactive workout

Ten minute tone-ups is an exciting, fun, personal, and user-friendly program. You can create it however you like, so it works for your individual needs and schedule (see Chapter 2 for more on scheduling ten minute 30-day workouts).

Whether you choose to work on one body part or several, it's all at your fingertips. You can flip to a specific chapter that targets what you want to work on, or use moves from several chapters mixed up.



Doing an entire body part chapter can take much longer than ten minutes, so pace yourself accordingly. Select four or five moves to stay within the ten minute time framework, though of course if you have more time, go for it.



Another interactive option is to take advantage of the prepackaged fast-fitness menus I include in Chapter 17. Have fun mixing them up for variety. From these menus, order the body part that works for you. Include stretching and cardio moves to totally speed up your results (see Chapters 4 and 20 for more on these important workout elements).

Creating a 20-minute or longer plan

I'm so convinced that you can succeed at and will enjoy doing your ten minute tone-ups, I invite you to challenge yourself even more. Why not create a 20-minute or more plan? The health benefits of longer workouts are enormous, plus they really speed up your results. If you are going to use the old "I don't have time" excuse, try this tip: Keep doing your ten minute tone-ups daily, but pick out a day or two in which you attempt a more extensive workout. Gradually increase how often you do a 20-minute or more plan, and your body will adapt. Don't stress about how to do this — check out the prepackaged full-course fitness menus in Chapter 18. Another option is to do more than one ten minute tone-up session in a day. Studies show that doing short sessions more than once a day can be substantially beneficial.



I have a client who recently lost 50 pounds in one year. He expressed to me that since he discovered how good he feels being in shape by doing longer exercise increments, he's never wanted to go back to his old habits. On days when he lacks motivation, his desire to look and feel great wins out.

Giving it your best stretch

Some people never stretch, other than at the seventh inning of a baseball game. Reaching for peanuts and Crackerjacks requires some flexibility, but hardly enough to satisfy your stretching needs. If you strike out stretching from your ten minute tone-ups routine, you lose. Stretching helps your body work more efficiently and speeds up results right off the bat. Stretching also increases your flexibility and helps to keep you injury free — a winning combo. Then there are the rejuvenating effects. For an entire array of stretches, slide into Chapter 4.

Including a cardio workout

To totally maximize your **ten minute tone-ups**, of course, you'll want to include a cardiovascular workout, which means aerobic exercise. A cardio workout can speed up fat loss while helping your muscles to work more efficiently as you tone up. Jog over to Chapter 20 for the scoop on aerobic exercise, selecting a cardio workout, and the importance of finding your target heart rate and monitoring your pulse.



Always include a cardio or aerobic warm-up before your ten minute tone-ups to get the circulation going and help avoid injury.

Targeting Your Trouble Spots

I am always a trumpeter for overall general health and fitness. However, with a 30-day target date, it's certainly okay to hone in on specific trouble spots. Heck, everybody has one or more problem areas. Decide what part or parts you want to tone up? Your legs, thighs? Just don't say wings.

Replacing fat with firm muscles

Unfortunately, you cannot spot reduce. For example, doing hundreds of crunches simply will not make your stomach magically disappear. Sorry! When you lose weight, it comes off your entire body. This does not mean you should dis crunches. Sit up and take notice: Doing crunches, like doing any of the ten minute tone-ups in this book, firms and tones underlying muscles while burning overall body fat. That's good news. To replace fat with firm muscles, do the following.



- ✓ **Burn fat:** Including an aerobic activity in your routine burns fat and accelerates your toned-up results (see Chapter 20 for adding a cardio workout).
- ✓ **Do your ten minute tone-ups:** Be sure to do your personalized tone-ups (see Chapters 17 and 18 for a fun selection of fast- and full-course fitness menus).
- ✓ **Eat a balanced diet:** Escalate your results with a balanced diet (check out Chapter 19).



Are ten minutes enough?

Are ten minutes of exercising enough to get any benefit? In a word — yes! In fact, many experts believe that if done properly, a short workout achieves better results than a longer workout done poorly. For each of the exercises in this book, I carefully explain how to get ready, how to do the move, and how to explore other options so you are sure to meet your level of difficulty. Each exercise is illustrated with photos. With a 30-day target date, though, it is critical that you stick to your plan if you expect results.



Using good technique makes a ten minute tone-up better than a sloppy half-hour workout. However, squeezing in 20 minutes or more of exercise with good technique is extremely beneficial. When done correctly you can burn more calories and speed up the rate at which results are noticed.

Addressing Medical, Health, and Safety Issues

When starting a fitness program, it's important to take stock of your general wellness. Addressing medical, health, and safety concerns ensures that you end up doing the appropriate program at the level of difficulty that is best for you. The following is established wisdom.

Checking in with your doctor

It's always a good idea to see your physician before starting any exercise program, and getting one before starting your ten minute tone-ups makes sense for your safety and general health. Besides, getting an annual physical should be part of your preventive medicine plan. The doctor can determine if you are at risk for cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal problems, or if you have other health issues. He or she can sort through possible symptoms of heart problems, orthopedic aches, pregnancy, and so forth. All of this information helps you to take responsibility of your own body so that you can accommodate any medical limitations.



When consulting with your physician, take along a copy of your ten minute tone-ups plan. She can use it to advise you of what is appropriate or not for you, should you have any limitations. Your doctor will probably offer encouragement to you on your fitness journey.

Knowing your medical limitations

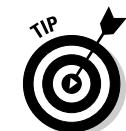


For safety reasons, always be aware of your medical limitations. It's important to respect any current injuries or health problems. For example, let's say your goal is to sculpt your shoulders and arms for an upcoming pool party. Under normal circumstances that would be a reasonable goal. However, if you recently injured your shoulder swinging a bat at a weekend warrior baseball game, this could be cause for medical concern. Trying to sculpt your arms after such an injury may not be appropriate because shoulder movement would be involved. You'd be better off seeing a physician. Depending on the extent of the injury, you might be able to adapt your goals to include a cardio workout and lower-body and core tone-ups rather than arm and shoulder exercises. Respect any injury or medical problem you have. Nobody knows your body like you do.

Preventing back problems

Primary care physicians see people with back problems back to back. Lower-back problems are the second-leading cause for doctor's office visits after colds. Approximately 80 percent of adults end up with lower-back pain. That figure is astounding when you consider that many of those problems can be prevented.

Most back problems are caused by weak muscles surrounding the spine. With weak postural muscles, any chance for correct body mechanics goes kaput. And it certainly doesn't help if you slouch all the time. Did you just sit up or stand up straight when I said that? Good. Following are some great suggestions to prevent back problems:



- ✓ **Strengthening your core:** Strengthening your core muscles (lower back and abs) creates stability for your back and entire body. (I've packed Part IV of this book with core moves.)
- ✓ **Do resistance training:** Doing weight training, such as that provided in ten minute tone-ups, helps maintain bone density.
- ✓ **Maintain appropriate weight:** It's common for overweight people to develop back problems. Try to maintain an appropriate weight. See Chapter 2 for testing body-fat composition and how to create goals after fitness testing.
- ✓ **Do stretching moves:** Stretching can help prevent back problems. Muscles to stretch include hamstrings, hip flexors, back, abs, and chest. Bet you didn't realize so many muscles affected your back! (See Chapter 4 for several back-saving stretches.)

Posture pointers

Proper posture can make all the difference in the world to your total look and health. Unfortunately, it's way too easy to cave into that very unflattering position I call "poor posture slump." You know — the one that occurs when you sit in front of the TV, drive, or even stand. The shoulders droop, and your spine collapses into a rounded bend. Poor posture can also ruin the results of your ten minute tone-ups by working the wrong muscles or, worse yet, causing injury. It's time to straighten up!



Posture is how all your body parts work together, whether you are sitting, standing, exercising, or doing anything else. To achieve good posture, your feet should be planted on the floor parallel to each other. Put your chest out and bring your shoulders slightly back but relaxed. Hold your abs in tight and keep your butt tucked under. Here are some helpful posture pointers:



- ✓ **Elongate the spine:** Pretend you are a marionette and a tight rope is pulling at you from above and below.
- ✓ **Keep your chin parallel to the floor:** This can help make the look of a double chin disappear.
- ✓ **Distribute your weight evenly:** Pointing your toes forward rather than outward helps maintain stability.
- ✓ **Hold your head up:** Holding your head up as if to lengthen your neck can make your neck appear longer, and you look taller.

Making Activity and a Healthy Diet Part of Everyday Life

Life is so much more enjoyable when you feel your best. Being active and eating right can bridge the gap between merely existing and really living. Use this opportunity to take your ten minute tone-ups to the max. Forget fitness and diet fads — choose to be active and eat healthy.

Forgetting fitness myths

There are so many myths out there that should be squashed. I'll list a few. Stamp them out immediately.



- ✓ **Spot-reduction myth:** You *cannot* spot reduce no matter what the false ads say. You *can* tone up and lose overall body fat (see "Targeting Your Trouble Spots" earlier in this chapter).

- ✓ **Light weights bulking myth:** Somehow over the years people, especially women, became afraid of lifting light weights for fear of bulking up too much. This is false. Unless you take steroids and do extensive power lifting, you cannot bulk up like that. Most people do not have the genetics for such extreme pump-up action (see Chapter 2 for more on muscle fiber makeup). If you are doing only one or two sets with light weights, you should not notice a huge increase in muscle size, yet you can tone up, burn calories and build stronger bones and muscles.
- ✓ **Exercise weakens the heart myth:** This one really amazes me. Exercise does not weaken the heart. It can help to make it stronger.
- ✓ **Toning up does not help you reduce weight myth:** Toning up actually helps to increase your metabolism. And a faster metabolism means faster weight loss.

Forgetting fad diets

Fad diets are so prevalent in our culture that it can be difficult to differentiate between what is sound information and what isn't. In fact, fad diet pseudo facts are reported on the news as if they were the gospel truth. It's okay to be aware of new diet information, but choose a healthy diet based on facts that are proven to be good for you. For example, eating only cabbage may help you lose weight, but you shortchange yourself of many necessary nutrients. See "Choosing a healthy diet" later in this chapter and Chapter 19.

Boosting your current activity level

Boosting your current activity level can certainly speed up your tone-up results, but it also has long-term benefits that warrant your attention. In 1996, the Surgeon General's report proclaimed that regular physical activity performed on most days of the week reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of illness and death in the United States. What does that mean to you? You can have fun, be active, and stay healthy at the same time. Here's how:

- ✓ **Create a daily activity log:** Start keeping track of all physical activities when you do them. Jot them down in a notebook, computer, or whatever works for you. Include everything from washing the car to playing with the kids.
- ✓ **Select new and fun activities:** Think of ways you can incorporate new activities into your life. Be creative! For example, I come from a big family with lots of brother and sisters. We often do group fun stuff such as laser tag, miniature golf, and even bowling. We laugh, have fun, and are active.



- ✓ **Evaluate your log:** Once a week review your log. See if you find any patterns, such as sluggish Mondays or no physical activity ever in the evenings. Commit to adding more activity and chart your progress.

Choosing a healthy diet

In the old days, nobody thought about diets. They ate till they filled up, enjoyed the pleasure, and then loosened a belt notch to leave room for dessert. Nowadays, people still eat too much, but more often than not a fight persists within the mind. Demons duke it out for our attention. Words such as *calories*, *fat*, and *carbs* constantly leave one confused and filled with guilt. You can be rescued from this tumultuous torture and still enjoy many palatable pleasures. Choosing a healthy diet can be both satisfying and good for you at the same time. Discover how you can make friends with healthy food choices. Devour the information in Chapter 19.

Discovering a Mental and Physical Plan



This may in fact be one of the most make-it-or-break-it components of the ten minute tone-ups. Discovering a mental and physical plan can make the difference between winning results or just another futile attempt to tone-up. Many body builders and personal trainers believe that the mind is responsible for at least 40 percent of their success. Others believe that percentage is even higher. Most fitness programs fail because they leave out the power of the mind over body. Imagine how much better your body can respond if you mentally focus as you tone-up. Empower yourself! See Chapter 2 for more.