

so fit

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Getting Fit in 2012

Kicking off 2012 with a fresh look at your health and weight, it is never to late to get in shape!

By Dr. Raj

As an orthopedic surgeon, I see dozens of patients, old and young, who have spent years eating poorly and neglecting exercise, and it is now affecting their general health, knees, hips, back, and overall joints. Obesity rates in the US are some of the highest in the world, and are still climbing today in adults, and even in children. Being overweight, or obese, will increase your risk of orthopedic complaints such as osteoarthritis, bursitis, tendonitis, and can lead to various surgeries as well. In my opinion, billions of dollars are being wasted on these health issues, when there are simple solutions and small lifestyle changes that can be made to get you back on track to being healthy, and get you back in shape. With 2012 right around the corner, my tips below will guide you to getting yourself on the road to your best life this year.

- ▶ **Eat well**, meaning make sure to get super foods into your daily diet: yogurt, eggs, nuts, beans, salmon, berries, broccoli, and fruits and vegetables are a must!
- ▶ **Drink at least eight**, 8 oz glasses of water a day. You can spice it up by adding a slice of lemon or lime – especially if you like a little flavor. Water makes your metabolism burn calories 3% faster, plus if you are dehydrated, you might feel hungry and/or thirsty, quench those reactions with a big glass of water.
- ▶ **Sleep is key** to resting your mind and your body. I find a lot of my patients do not get enough sleep, and it is essential to rest your body to be rejuvenated and energized for what tomorrow might bring. I recommend 7-8 hours a night.
- ▶ **At work, opt to take the stairs** over taking the escalator, or elevator. Just keep in mind not to overdo it, start out small and work your way up.
- ▶ **Go to see an orthopedist** before doing any sports or strenuous

workouts (that you might be planning on picking up in the New Year) so your joints and strength conditioning can be evaluated. You can work together to come up with a work out plan that will be the most effective, and will help strengthen your joints.

- ▶▶ **Walk to work.** It may seem like a foreign concept, but if you live a few blocks from your office, walking, or even riding a bike, is a great way to burn some calories and boost your energy and metabolism.
- ▶▶ **Stretch.** It is the most powerful part of your exercise program – it will help avoid getting injured while doing any kind of physical activity, and it is important to stretch before and after workouts. I also recommend stretching first thing in the morning when you wake up; it will help boost your energy throughout the day.
- ▶▶ **Weigh yourself daily** to understand your body response to weight shift. The scale can be scary, but if you can do this, you will be encouraged when you start seeing a difference, or know when you need to step it up with your workouts and diet.
- ▶▶ **Don't eat late at night.** There should be a four hour window between sleep and your final meal. ■



Dr. Raj is a Double Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon who been featured on Fox News, Spike TV, The Doctor's and numerous other media. Dr. Raj and his team at Beverly Hills Orthopedic Institute pride themselves in offering the latest surgical and non-surgical techniques for all orthopedic issues. He has been named as one of "Americas Top Orthopedists for 2007, 2009 and 2010", been featured on the "Best of LA", Top Doc America 2011 and has received numerous other accolades and awards. Contact Dr. Raj at www.drhipandknee.com