

1 PRINCIPLE 1

Get Moving!

“Get moving!” Every speaking engagement, every TV appearance, and every personal training session that I do includes these two words. I hope that if I say it enough, people will really take it to heart and begin to energize their lives. You can make it your family’s mantra too. Over the past couple of decades, Americans by the millions have stopped moving. This is especially true of our kids, whose computers, video games, cartoons, cell phones, and pagers have taken the place of backyard dodgeball and running around the neighborhood.

It’s not enough just to eat healthy foods. You must also participate in regular physical activities. One cannot be done without the other; they are both vital components of a successful fitness program. At times, my clients try to do one without the other—but it always shows up in their progress reports. Whenever the weight isn’t coming off, they admit that they either slowed down on their activity or ate too many foods that were high in saturated fat or refined sugars.

Without activity, what happens to your body is not pretty—the musculoskeletal structure that you had when you were young ages right before your eyes. Movement keeps your heart, your muscles, your bones, and your joints functioning at optimum levels. That’s why you and your family need to make movement and activity part of your daily lives.

Can you give me 20 minutes of activity per day? Or should I say, “Can you give *you* 20 minutes per day?” Feeling good is a gift you can give to yourself—and it all begins with my favorite two words: *get moving*.

This may require a shift in the way you approach each day. You have to start by adopting a proper attitude about being active. Fitness will be part of your daily life, like making the coffee, brushing your teeth, or picking up the morning newspaper. You will look in every nook and cranny of your day for opportunities to squeeze in activity, because you know how good it will make you feel. I urge you to try this new attitude on for size. Throughout this book, you'll find dozens and dozens of suggestions for incorporating activity into your daily patterns. Hopefully, you'll then make your move—literally.

As we create your family's activity program together, I'm going to show you how to channel your efforts into four fundamental types of exercise. By following the plan and combining these four types of exercise, you will lose weight and gain health.

Cardiovascular exercise. Vigorous aerobic activity is essential for a healthy heart and healthy lungs. Like any other muscles in your body, your heart and lungs get stronger with use. Activities such as walking, biking, running, and swimming require your heart and lungs to work harder to support the effort. Have you ever heard the term “muscle atrophy”? This is a condition in which unused muscles wither away. Don't let this happen to your heart and lungs. In Week 1, I'll show you how to keep them pumping!

Lean muscle building. As calorie-burning tissue, muscle is the enemy of fat. The more muscle you have, the more energy (calories) it requires to stay alive. Best of all, muscle burns

calories both when you are exerting yourself and when you are not—even when you're sleeping! When you exert your muscles, they go searching for energy sources, and one way they get energy is by gobbling up fat cells.



SENA SAYS:

Activity increases the body's metabolic rate to help it become a calorie-burning furnace!

Strength training is a double whammy against fat: You burn calories through the actual exercise, and your muscles burn calories as they increase in density. You don't have to be a professional bodybuilder to benefit from strength training. In Week 2, I'll show everyone in your family how to build healthy, lean muscle.

Core strengthening. Expand your thinking beyond “great-looking abs.” Svelte abs will come as a result of healthy eating habits and exercising your abdominal muscles, oblique muscles, and the lumbar region of your core. By strengthening these three muscle groups, you

will also help protect your spinal structure and strengthen your lower back. Core strengthening can reduce back pain as well as give you the firm, toned waistline that you have always wanted. In Week 3, I will show you a host of exercises that will strengthen your core.

Flexibility and stretching. Remaining flexible reduces your chance of injury, and it also keeps you from losing your range of motion as you get older. You want your muscles, tendons, and ligaments to be resilient, not tight and brittle. This will make all of your activities easier and more enjoyable. In Week 4, I will show you how to stretch all of your muscle groups to keep you limber and graceful.

Each of the first 4 weeks of my 6-week program will show you and your family how to focus on one of the four fundamental areas of exercise. In the last 2 weeks, I'll show you ways to integrate each of the exercise types into your weekly fitness plan. In addition, I'll provide you with weekly fun family activities that get you all moving together.

Remaining active is the key to a healthy lifestyle—and a vibrant, happy, dynamic, and positive life. This book will help you get your family moving in a very healthy direction!