

Habit Formation and Health Benefits of Regular Exercise Among Physically Inactive Populations in the Context of National Fitness Promotion

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Abstract

Physical inactivity is a common health-related behavior and is often linked with long periods of sitting, irregular exercise, and a clear gap between exercise intention and actual participation. For physically inactive populations, the main difficulty is not only starting exercise but maintaining it long enough to form a stable habit. This paper discusses the main barriers to regular exercise, including weak motivation, high perceived cost, unrealistic exercise goals, and the lack of stable exercise cues and supportive environments. It then examines how regular exercise habits can be developed through low-threshold participation, suitable activity choices, fixed daily routines, positive feedback, and repeated behavior. The paper also discusses the health benefits of regular exercise, including improvements in physical fitness, metabolic health, sleep, emotional well-being, and daily functional capacity. Greater attention should be given to long-term adherence rather than short-term exercise volume. Exercise plans need to match individual ability, daily schedules, and physical condition so that physical activity can become a stable part of everyday life.

Keywords: physical inactivity, regular exercise, exercise habits, physical activity, health benefits, exercise adherence

1. Introduction

Physical inactivity has become a common health-related behavior in daily life. Many people spend long hours sitting at work, during study, while commuting, or during leisure time. Their total amount of physical activity is often too low to meet basic health needs. Some people understand that exercise is good for health, but this knowledge does not always lead to regular participation. Exercise may begin after a health warning, a change in body weight, or a temporary rise in motivation, yet it is often

stopped after a short period.

This gap between exercise awareness and actual behavior is important. Knowing the benefits of exercise is not the same as maintaining an exercise routine. People may plan to exercise several times a week but fail to follow the plan because of work pressure, fatigue, lack of interest, or an inconvenient exercise environment. Some may exercise only when they have enough free time. Others may begin with an exercise plan that is too demanding and lose motivation when the expected results do not

appear quickly. In these cases, exercise remains an occasional activity instead of becoming part of everyday life.

The formation of an exercise habit requires more than repeated participation for a short period. A stable habit usually depends on regular time arrangements, suitable exercise intensity, positive physical experience, and clear behavioral cues. Exercise is more likely to continue when it can be fitted into an existing daily routine. Walking after dinner, jogging at a fixed time, cycling for short trips, or taking part in regular community exercise can reduce the need to make a new decision each time. Repeated practice in a relatively stable situation can make exercise easier to maintain.

The health value of exercise is also closely related to continuity. One or two exercise sessions may produce short-term changes in mood or physical condition, but many health benefits depend on repeated participation over a longer period. Regular exercise can support cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength, weight control, metabolic health, sleep quality, and emotional well-being. These effects are more meaningful when exercise becomes a stable behavior rather than a temporary response to health concerns.

For physically inactive populations, the key issue is not simply how to increase exercise volume in a short time. It is more useful to consider how people can move from low activity to regular participation and how this process can be maintained without creating excessive pressure. Exercise type, frequency, intensity, personal preference, time availability, social support, and perceived health benefits all influence this process.

This paper focuses on the formation of regular exercise habits among physically inactive populations and the health benefits linked to long-term participation. It examines the main behavioral features of physical inactivity, the reasons why exercise habits are difficult to establish, the process through which repeated exercise can become more stable, and the physical and psychological benefits that may follow. It also discusses practical ways to support long-term exercise participation while taking differences in individual ability, daily schedule, and exercise experience into account.

2. Physical Inactivity and Its Main Behavioral Characteristics

2.1 Low Frequency and Irregular Exercise

Participation

A common feature of physically inactive populations is low exercise frequency. Some people take part in exercise only when they have enough free time or when they feel a temporary need to improve their health. Their participation is often occasional rather than planned. A person may exercise several times in one week and then stop for a long period. This pattern makes it difficult to build a stable rhythm of physical activity.

Irregular exercise is also closely related to the lack of a fixed schedule. Exercise may be placed after work, on weekends, or during short periods of free time, but these arrangements can easily change. When work, study, family duties, or social activities take priority, exercise is often the activity that is removed from the schedule. It does not have a fixed place in daily life.

Short-term participation is also common. Some people begin exercise with clear goals, such as losing weight, improving fitness, or reducing physical discomfort. They may follow an exercise plan for several days or weeks, but participation often declines when the initial interest becomes weaker. In this situation, exercise is treated as a temporary task rather than a regular part of daily behavior.

2.2 Preference for Sedentary Daily Routines

Physical inactivity is often linked to daily routines that require little movement. Long periods of sitting can occur during work, study, transport, and leisure. Many daily tasks can now be completed without much physical effort. This reduces the number of natural opportunities for walking, standing, or other forms of movement.

Sedentary choices are often easier than active choices. Taking a vehicle for a short trip may feel more convenient than walking. Using an elevator may require less effort than taking the stairs. Free time may also be spent watching videos, using social media, or playing games instead of taking part in physical activity. These choices are small, but they can take up a large part of the day when they are repeated.

A sedentary routine can gradually become normal. People may not see themselves as inactive because they are busy throughout the day, yet being busy does not always mean being physically active. Work pressure and a full schedule may exist together with very low levels of movement. This makes physical inactivity less

visible in everyday life.

2.3 The Gap Between Exercise Intention and Exercise Action

Many physically inactive people understand that exercise is useful for health. They may know that regular activity can improve fitness, control body weight, support sleep, and reduce health risks. This knowledge can create an intention to exercise, but intention does not always lead to repeated action.

A person may decide to start exercising after feeling tired, gaining weight, or receiving health advice. The decision can be strong at the beginning, but regular participation requires repeated choices over time. Missing one exercise session may not seem important. When this happens often, the original plan can gradually disappear from daily life.

Health awareness alone is also not enough to create a stable exercise pattern. People may agree that exercise is necessary while still choosing rest or other activities when they feel tired. They may buy exercise equipment, join a gym, or make a detailed plan without using these resources for long. The intention exists, but the behavior remains weak.

Short-term motivation can produce a quick start, but it does not always support long-term participation. Motivation may rise before a holiday, after seeing changes in body weight, or after hearing health advice. When the immediate reason becomes less important, exercise frequency may fall again. Regular exercise requires the intention to be connected with repeated behavior in daily situations, not only with a temporary desire to improve health.

3. Why Regular Exercise Habits Are Difficult to Form

3.1 Weak and Unstable Exercise Motivation

Many physically inactive people begin exercise because they want to lose weight, change their appearance, or respond to a recent health concern. These reasons can be strong enough to start exercise, but they are not always strong enough to support long-term participation. When the expected change does not appear quickly, motivation often becomes weaker.

Weight loss is a common example. A person may expect to see clear results after only a few weeks of exercise. If body weight changes slowly, the person may feel that the effort has little value. This can reduce the willingness to continue. The

same problem can occur when exercise is used mainly to prepare for a short-term goal, such as improving appearance before a holiday or responding to a temporary health warning. Once the immediate goal becomes less important, exercise may stop.

Enjoyment also affects whether exercise can continue. Some people choose an activity because they believe it is effective, not because they like it. Running, gym training, or other forms of exercise may then feel like a task that must be completed. If the activity brings little pleasure or personal satisfaction, participation depends heavily on self-control. This makes regular exercise harder to maintain.

Exercise is more likely to continue when people can connect it with something they value in daily life. Feeling more energetic, sleeping better, meeting friends, reducing stress, or enjoying outdoor activity can give exercise a more direct meaning. Without this personal connection, motivation may remain weak and easily affected by changes in mood, schedule, or short-term results.

3.2 High Perceived Cost of Exercise Participation

Regular exercise requires time and energy. For people who already have a full daily schedule, exercise can easily be seen as an extra burden. Work, study, family duties, commuting, and social activities may take most of the available time. Even when a person has free time, exercise may still compete with rest and entertainment.

Fatigue is another barrier. After a long day, many people prefer activities that require less physical effort. Sitting, watching videos, using a phone, or resting at home may feel more attractive than changing clothes and going out to exercise. The physical effort of exercise can also create resistance, especially for people who have not been active for a long time.

The preparation needed for exercise can increase this sense of cost. Going to a gym may require travel time, membership fees, special clothing, or a fixed schedule. Outdoor exercise can also be affected by weather, location, and access to suitable space. When too many conditions must be met before exercise can begin, participation becomes easier to postpone.

Exercise can become difficult to maintain when it is treated as a separate task that must be added to an already crowded day. If every session requires a new decision about when, where, and how to

exercise, the person must repeatedly use time and mental effort to make the activity happen.

3.3 Exercise Goals that Are Difficult to Maintain

Unrealistic goals can make exercise harder to continue. Some beginners set high targets because they want fast results. They may plan to exercise every day, run long distances, or complete intense workouts even though their previous activity level has been low. These plans may be possible for a short period, but they are often difficult to maintain.

High exercise intensity can also produce strong fatigue, muscle soreness, or discomfort. For people with little exercise experience, these feelings may be interpreted as signs that exercise is too difficult. This can increase fear or dislike of physical activity. Missing several planned sessions may then create a sense of failure.

A strong focus on immediate results can make this problem worse. Improvements in body composition, endurance, strength, or metabolic health often take time. If people judge exercise only by visible changes in weight or appearance, they may overlook smaller benefits such as better sleep, improved mood, or greater energy. The effort may then seem larger than the reward.

Rigid goals can also reduce flexibility. A person who plans to run five kilometers may decide not to exercise at all if there is not enough time for the full session. A shorter walk or a lighter workout may still be useful, but it can be seen as a failure to complete the plan. This all-or-nothing approach makes it easier for one missed session to become a longer break.

3.4 Lack of Stable Exercise Cues and Supportive Environments

Exercise habits are easier to build when the behavior occurs in a stable situation. Many physically inactive people do not have a fixed exercise time, place, or routine. Exercise is often arranged only when free time appears. Since the timing changes from day to day, there is no clear cue that reminds the person to act.

A stable cue can be simple. Exercise may begin after work, after dinner, before a shower, or at the same time on certain days of the week. When exercise is linked with an existing routine, less thought is needed to decide when to start. Without this connection, each exercise session depends more heavily on memory and motivation.

Social support can also affect regular

participation. Exercising alone requires more personal effort, especially when motivation is low. Friends, family members, exercise partners, or community groups can provide companionship and make participation more enjoyable. They can also create a sense of commitment. When this support is missing, stopping exercise has fewer social consequences.

The physical environment matters as well. Nearby walking routes, parks, sports facilities, and safe public spaces can make exercise easier to start. Long travel distance, crowded facilities, poor access, or inconvenient opening times can reduce participation. When exercise fits poorly with the places and routines of daily life, it remains easy to delay or cancel.

4. The Formation of Regular Exercise Habits among Physically Inactive Populations

4.1 From External Motivation to Internal Exercise Motivation

Many people begin exercise because of external pressure. They may want to lose weight, improve appearance, respond to medical advice, or meet the expectations of family members. These reasons can help people start, but they often lose their effect after the first period of exercise. If participation depends mainly on pressure, exercise may stop once the pressure becomes weaker.

A more stable pattern requires some form of internal motivation. People are more likely to continue when they can find personal value in the activity itself. This value does not need to come from strong enjoyment at the beginning. It may come from feeling more relaxed after exercise, noticing better sleep, having more energy, or enjoying time outdoors. These direct experiences can make exercise feel useful in daily life.

The choice of activity also matters. Physically inactive people may not respond well to exercise plans that are based only on fitness standards. Running is not suitable for everyone. Some people may prefer walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, simple strength training, or group exercise. Giving people more choice can reduce resistance and improve the chance that they will find an activity that fits their interests and physical condition.

A sense of ability is also important. If a person feels that every exercise session is too difficult, motivation is likely to fall. Small improvements can make a difference. Walking for a longer time

without feeling tired, completing a simple workout, or keeping a routine for several weeks can increase confidence. Exercise becomes easier to continue when people feel that they are capable of doing it well enough.

4.2 Starting with Low-Threshold Exercise Participation

For people who have been inactive for a long period, a difficult exercise plan can create unnecessary pressure. A more practical starting point is to lower the entry barrier. The activity should be simple enough to begin without much preparation and light enough to avoid strong discomfort.

Walking is a useful example because it requires little equipment and can be added to daily life. Short jogging sessions, cycling, home-based fitness exercises, and simple bodyweight training can also be used. The main purpose at this stage is not to achieve high exercise intensity. It is to increase the number of times that exercise actually happens.

Short exercise sessions can be more effective for habit building than demanding plans that are difficult to repeat. A person who starts with twenty minutes of walking three times a week may find it easier to continue than someone who plans an hour of intense training every day. Regular completion creates a sense of progress and reduces the chance of early withdrawal.

Exercise load can increase after the routine becomes more stable. Duration can become longer, intensity can rise, and more types of activity can be added. This process gives the body time to adjust and also reduces psychological pressure. Continuity should come before performance for people who are trying to move away from long-term inactivity.

4.3 Connecting Exercise with Fixed Daily Situations

Exercise is easier to repeat when it is linked with a clear time or daily event. Without a fixed situation, people need to decide again and again when to exercise. These repeated decisions can become a barrier, especially when they are tired or busy.

A simple routine can reduce this problem. A person may walk for thirty minutes after dinner, cycle to work on certain days, exercise during a lunch break, or complete a short workout after returning home. The exact time is less important than keeping the situation relatively stable.

Daily routines already contain many possible

exercise cues. Commuting can include walking or cycling. Work breaks can include short periods of movement. Evening leisure time can include a walk instead of continuous sitting. Weekends can include a regular outdoor activity. These arrangements allow exercise to use time that already exists rather than requiring a completely separate schedule.

Environmental cues can also support repetition. Keeping exercise shoes near the door, preparing workout clothes in advance, placing simple equipment where it is easy to see, or setting a fixed reminder can make the next action more obvious. These small cues reduce the need to rely on memory and temporary motivation.

4.4 Strengthening Positive Feedback from Exercise

People are more likely to repeat an activity when they can feel some benefit from it. For new exercisers, these benefits are not always changes in weight or appearance. Many useful changes appear earlier and are easier to notice.

Better sleep, a more stable mood, less stiffness, improved energy, and a sense of relaxation can all provide positive feedback. Paying attention to these changes can help people understand that exercise is already producing value even when visible physical changes remain limited.

Short-term goals can make this feedback clearer. A goal such as completing three walks in one week is easier to control than a goal such as losing a fixed amount of weight. The first goal focuses on behavior. The second depends on many factors outside the exercise session itself. Behavior-based goals can give people more frequent experiences of success.

Simple records can also help. A calendar, exercise log, step count, or training app can show whether the person has maintained the routine. The record does not need to be detailed. Its main value is to make progress visible. Seeing a series of completed sessions can strengthen the desire to continue.

Positive feedback is especially useful during the early stage of habit formation. The health effects of regular exercise often take time to become clear. Small improvements in daily feelings can provide enough reason to keep the routine while longer-term benefits are still developing.

4.5 From Repeated Exercise Behavior to Stable Habit

A regular exercise habit is built through repeated action in similar situations. Repetition allows the behavior to become more familiar. The person

spends less time thinking about whether to exercise and more often follows the established routine.

At the beginning, exercise usually requires conscious effort. The person may need to make a plan, set a reminder, prepare clothes, or persuade themselves to begin. After repeated practice, these steps can become easier. The same time, place, and activity begin to create a clear pattern.

Missing one session does not mean that the habit has failed. Long-term stability depends more on returning to the routine than on perfect completion. Illness, work pressure, travel, bad weather, and family duties can interrupt exercise. A flexible habit allows the person to use a shorter session, a lighter activity, or a different time instead of stopping completely.

The meaning of exercise can also change during this process. At the beginning, it may be treated as a health task that requires effort. After regular repetition, it can become part of normal daily life. A person may begin to feel that the day is incomplete without a walk, a run, or another form of activity. At this stage, exercise depends less on temporary motivation because the behavior already has a stable place in the daily routine.

5. Health Benefits Generated by Regular Exercise Habits

5.1 Improvement in Physical Fitness and Functional Capacity

Regular exercise can improve basic physical fitness in a gradual way. For people who were previously inactive, even moderate exercise can bring clear changes after it is maintained for a period of time. Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, and other aerobic activities can improve the ability of the heart and lungs to support physical work. Daily activities such as climbing stairs, walking for a longer distance, or carrying light objects may become easier.

Muscular strength and endurance can also improve through repeated exercise. Strength training, bodyweight exercise, and some forms of aerobic activity can help the muscles work more efficiently. This is important because low activity levels are often linked with reduced strength and poor physical function. Regular exercise gives the body repeated physical stimulation and helps maintain the ability to perform common movements.

These changes are especially meaningful for

people who have been inactive for a long time. The value of exercise is not limited to better sports performance. Improved fitness can reduce fatigue during daily tasks and make people more willing to move. When movement becomes easier, active behavior may also become more common in daily life.

5.2 Reduction of Health Risks Related to Physical Inactivity

Physical inactivity is often linked with weight gain and poor metabolic health. Regular exercise can increase daily energy use and support weight management. Exercise alone does not always lead to large changes in body weight, but it can help control body fat and reduce the risk of continued weight gain when it is maintained over time.

Regular physical activity can also improve the way the body uses glucose and fat. These changes are related to better metabolic control. People who exercise regularly may improve insulin sensitivity, blood pressure, and blood lipid levels. The size of these changes differs between individuals, but stable participation is more likely to produce lasting effects than short periods of intensive exercise.

Another benefit is the reduction of long periods of inactivity. A person who develops a regular exercise habit may also begin to sit less during the day. Walking during breaks, choosing active transport, or adding short periods of movement can reduce total sedentary time. This matters because the health effects of prolonged sitting cannot always be fully addressed by one exercise session if the rest of the day remains inactive.

The health value of regular exercise is linked not only to the intensity of each session but also to the frequency of participation. Moderate activity completed week after week can create a more stable health effect than occasional high-intensity exercise followed by long periods of inactivity.

5.3 Benefits for Psychological and Emotional Health

Regular exercise can also support psychological health. Physical activity provides a break from work, study, family duties, and other daily pressures. During exercise, attention can move away from repeated worries and toward physical movement, breathing, or the surrounding environment. This can help reduce feelings of stress.

Mood may also improve after exercise. Some people feel more relaxed, calm, or energetic after

physical activity. When these experiences occur repeatedly, exercise can become a useful way to manage emotional pressure. This is especially helpful when the activity is chosen according to personal preference rather than treated as a task that must be completed.

Sleep is another area that may benefit from regular exercise. People who maintain suitable levels of physical activity may find it easier to fall asleep or experience better sleep quality. Better sleep can then support daytime energy and improve the willingness to stay active. Exercise and sleep can influence each other through this repeated pattern.

These psychological benefits can support habit maintenance as well. When people feel that exercise helps them manage stress, improve mood, or sleep better, the activity gains value beyond weight control or appearance. This makes continued participation more meaningful in daily life.

5.4 Long-Term Health Value of Stable Exercise Participation

Many health effects of exercise depend on long-term repetition. A single exercise session may improve mood or produce short-term physical changes, but stable participation allows these effects to build over time. Cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular function, metabolic health, and movement ability all require continued use and repeated physical stimulation.

Long-term exercise can also help maintain physical function across different stages of life. Strength, endurance, balance, and mobility often decline when physical activity remains low for long periods. Regular exercise can slow this decline and help people keep a higher level of independence in daily activities.

Stable exercise participation may also change the general pattern of daily behavior. A person who exercises regularly may become more willing to walk, use stairs, join outdoor activities, or spend less leisure time sitting. Exercise then becomes connected with a wider active lifestyle instead of remaining an isolated activity completed only at fixed times.

The long-term value of exercise is closely related to consistency. Very demanding exercise completed for a short period may produce quick changes, but these changes can disappear when participation stops. A moderate routine that can be maintained for months or years is more likely

to support lasting health benefits.

6. Promoting the Long-Term Maintenance of Regular Exercise

6.1 Making Exercise Goals More Realistic and Sustainable

Exercise habits are easier to maintain when the goals match the person's actual ability and daily schedule. For physically inactive people, goals that are too difficult can create pressure and make exercise feel like a burden. A plan should leave enough room for work, study, family duties, rest, and unexpected changes.

Exercise frequency and duration do not need to be high at the beginning. A person may start with several short sessions each week and increase the amount only when the routine becomes stable. This makes it easier to keep exercise in daily life. It also reduces the risk of strong fatigue or discomfort.

Goals should focus more on regular participation than on quick results. Completing three exercise sessions in one week is easier to control than losing a certain amount of weight in the same period. Weight, body shape, and physical fitness can change slowly. If people use these outcomes as the only measure of success, they may feel disappointed even when they have exercised regularly.

Exercise plans also need some flexibility. A person may not always have enough time for the full session. A shorter walk, a lighter workout, or a change of exercise type can still help maintain the routine. It is often better to adjust the plan than to stop completely.

6.2 Creating More Accessible Exercise Conditions

Exercise is easier to maintain when it can be done close to where people live, work, or study. Long travel time and complicated preparation can reduce the chance of regular participation. Nearby parks, walking routes, sports grounds, fitness spaces, and community facilities can lower this barrier.

Daily environments can also provide more chances for movement. Walking part of the way to work, using stairs, taking active breaks, or exercising in nearby open spaces can increase physical activity without requiring a separate trip. These forms of movement are useful for people who find it difficult to set aside a long period for exercise.

Convenience is important because exercise must

compete with many other daily activities. If physical activity requires too much time, money, equipment, or planning, people may return to more convenient sedentary choices. Simple and low-cost exercise options can make regular participation easier.

Exercise conditions should also support different levels of physical ability. A person who has been inactive for a long time may need lower-intensity options and more space for gradual adjustment. Easy access to suitable activities can reduce fear and make continued participation more realistic.

6.3 Strengthening Social Support for Exercise

Exercise does not always need to be an individual activity. Social support can make regular participation easier, especially when motivation becomes weak. Family members, friends, colleagues, or exercise partners can provide companionship and make the activity more enjoyable.

Exercising with others can also create a stronger sense of commitment. A planned walk, group class, weekend ride, or regular sports activity is harder to cancel when other people are involved. The social connection gives the activity another reason to continue.

Family support can be especially useful when exercise time competes with household duties. Shared activities such as walking, cycling, or simple outdoor exercise allow physical activity to become part of family life. This can reduce the feeling that exercise takes time away from other responsibilities.

Community-based activities can provide similar support. Group walking, public fitness sessions, running clubs, and other low-threshold activities can give people a regular time and place for exercise. They can also help people who have little exercise experience feel less isolated during the early stages of participation.

6.4 Using Digital Tools Without Creating Dependence

Digital tools can support exercise maintenance when they are used in a simple way. Step counters, exercise records, reminders, and fitness apps can help people see how often they exercise and whether the routine is being maintained.

A reminder can be useful when exercise has not yet become fully automatic. A step count can show whether daily movement is too low. A weekly activity record can make repeated participation visible. These forms of feedback can

help people notice progress that may not appear clearly in body weight or appearance.

Digital tools can also provide basic exercise guidance. Short home workouts, walking plans, or simple activity suggestions can reduce the difficulty of deciding what to do. This is useful for people who do not have much exercise experience or who prefer to exercise without going to a gym.

Too much attention to numbers can create another problem. People may become concerned about step counts, calorie estimates, exercise streaks, or daily targets. Missing a target may then create frustration and reduce enjoyment. The purpose of these tools should be to support regular activity, not to make every exercise session depend on data.

Exercise can continue even when a device is not available or a target is not reached. A stable habit should gradually depend more on the person's own routine, physical feelings, and understanding of health than on constant digital reminders.

7. Boundaries and Practical Considerations in Exercise Habit Promotion

Exercise habit promotion should not use the same standard for all physically inactive people. Age, physical condition, work pattern, previous exercise experience, and daily schedule can all affect how a person responds to exercise. A young adult with some sports experience may be able to increase exercise load more quickly. An older adult or a person who has been inactive for many years may need a slower starting point. People who work long hours may also need a different exercise plan from those who have more flexible time.

This difference means that regular exercise should not be defined by one fixed model. Some people may prefer walking, while others may be more willing to cycle, swim, do strength training, or take part in group exercise. The useful form of exercise is the one that can be performed safely and repeated over time. A plan that looks effective on paper may still fail if it does not fit the person's daily life.

Exercise frequency and intensity also need to be balanced with recovery. More exercise is not always better. People who have been inactive for a long time may feel strong fatigue when they begin to exercise. If the exercise load is too high, they may experience muscle soreness, poor

recovery, or loss of interest. These reactions can make the new routine difficult to continue.

A gradual increase in exercise load is more suitable for most inactive people. The body needs time to adapt to repeated movement. Exercise duration, intensity, and frequency can increase after the person becomes more comfortable with the current level. Rest days are also part of the exercise process. They help the body recover and reduce the chance of excessive fatigue.

Injury prevention is another important issue. Some people try to make up for long periods of inactivity by exercising too much in a short time. Sudden increases in running distance, training frequency, or exercise intensity can place too much stress on muscles and joints. Poor technique and unsuitable equipment can add to this risk. A safer plan should match current fitness rather than past ability or expected future results.

Pain and normal exercise discomfort should also be treated differently. Mild muscle soreness after exercise can occur, especially in beginners. Sharp pain, repeated joint pain, dizziness, or other unusual symptoms should not be ignored. Continuing to exercise through these signs may turn a small problem into a longer interruption.

Long-term adherence should be given more attention than short-term exercise volume. A person who completes moderate exercise for many months may gain more stable health benefits than someone who follows an intense plan for only a few weeks. This is especially important for physically inactive people because their main task is to move from irregular activity to a sustainable routine.

Shorter exercise sessions can still have value when time or energy is limited. Missing one planned session should not be treated as failure. The more important issue is whether the person returns to the routine. A sustainable exercise habit needs enough flexibility to remain part of daily life during busy periods, changes in schedule, or temporary reductions in physical condition.

8. Conclusion

For physically inactive populations, the main challenge is not simply to begin exercising but to keep exercising long enough for the behavior to become stable. Short-term motivation can encourage people to start, but regular participation depends more on whether exercise

can fit into daily life. Suitable exercise goals, low entry barriers, fixed routines, positive feedback, and supportive environments all affect this process.

The health value of exercise also depends on continuity. Regular physical activity can improve physical fitness, metabolic health, sleep, mood, and daily functional ability. These benefits are more likely to remain when exercise becomes part of a normal routine rather than a short-term response to weight, appearance, or health concerns.

Exercise promotion for inactive people should give more attention to sustainability. High-intensity plans and strict targets may produce quick changes, but they are not suitable for everyone. A moderate routine that can be repeated for a long period is often more useful. Exercise habits also need enough flexibility to adapt to changes in work, family duties, physical condition, and available time.

Helping people move from occasional exercise to stable participation requires a shift in focus from short-term exercise volume to long-term behavior. The key is to make exercise easier to begin, easier to repeat, and easier to maintain. When regular physical activity becomes part of everyday life, its health benefits are more likely to accumulate over time.

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