

Buddy up!

Something that seems very simple can be actually quite powerful. Research shows that the old “buddy system” is one of the very best predictors of success in staying with an exercise program. This is true for men and women of all ages and fitness levels, and for healthy people as well as those with a variety of chronic illnesses that are helped by physical activity. And although there are many useful “apps” for smart phones and computers that are referred to as exercise “companions”, we are talking about real human beings!

Find a buddy who will help you stick with your plans to be active. It may be a spouse or partner or a close friend, but it can also work with people you do not know as well. Make a commitment to your buddy or team, so that you are depending on each other to show up and follow through. There is proven value in being supportive of each other and checking in on progress, and even more value in actually doing an activity together.

Here are some places and ways to find buddies:

- **Work:** Find friends who want to exercise during breaks or before or after school. Look at the indoor and outdoor walking routes in your Step Ahead

Employee Resource Book or head for the fitness center. At one school, the office staff comes in early, closes the door and plays a walking DVD.

- **Family members or neighbors:** A buddy who lives with or near you can work out beautifully. Plan frequent walks or runs in the neighborhood, or ride together to the pool or gym. The family dog is a great exercise buddy too!
- **Gyms:** Join a class or talk with people who use the same equipment or do the same activity you do.
- **Events:** Check out the newspaper, local sporting goods store, and internet for walks, runs, swims, hikes and more. Your favorite charity probably has some kind of fundraiser based on physical activity!
- **Group or team:** Join a group that regularly participates in a sport you enjoy.
- **Class:** Take a class in something you’ve wanted to learn: Dancing, fencing, skating, martial arts?

Look for someone with similar goals, interests, and schedule to yours. Promise your buddies that you will encourage each other as you achieve your goals, and have fun!

Recipe of the Week: Turkey Joes

makes 6 sandwiches

adapted from American Institute for Cancer Research

1 Tbsp. olive or canola oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 small red or green pepper, seeded and chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
¾ pound ground turkey meat
1 can diced tomatoes
2 Tbsp. tomato paste
¼ cup barbecue sauce
6 whole wheat burger buns, toasted
6 thin onion slices for garnish
2 cups shredded lettuce for garnish

1. Heat oil in skillet or medium-high heat. Cook onion and pepper in oil till translucent (4 minutes.) Add garlic and cook till vegetables are soft (3 minutes.)
2. Add turkey meat and cook, breaking up with fork, till it loses its pink color (4 to 5 minutes.)
3. Add tomatoes, tomato paste and barbecue sauce. Simmer till thick. Stir occasionally. (15 minutes).
4. Divide mixture among 6 buns, serve with lettuce and onions.

Nutrition information:

Calories: 233 Fat: 3g Saturated Fat: 1g
Carbohydrate: 34g Dietary fiber: 6g Protein: 19g

Tip of the Week:

Microwave cooking may have some advantages in preserving nutrients, compared to other cooking methods. Microwaving uses less water than boiling, and foods cooked in water lose more nutrients than those cooked without. Microwave ovens also cook faster and typically use less heat than other cooking methods, so heat-sensitive vitamins such as vitamins B, C and folic acid are less likely to be destroyed.

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