

Workout during Commercials!

The average hour-long TV show contains about 14 minutes of commercial advertising (TNS Media Intelligence, 2009). This equates to about half of the recommended daily accumulation of moderate intensity exercise to reduce your risk of chronic disease. The average commercial break, at 3 minutes and 16 seconds (de Moraes, 2008), provides a time-friendly opportunity to participate in five 3-minute bouts of physical activity to work towards being active for 30 minutes or more each day. Check out the exercises below and try them the next time you watch your favorite show.

1. Squats are an integral part of our everyday movement; however, the thought of doing squats with a big bar on our backs can be a little scary. This body-weight version is not only a great alternative to what we think of as the squat, but it is also prepares you to perform more difficult exercises.
 - a. Stand about 10 inches from the wall with your feet about shoulder width apart.
 - b. Raising your hands overhead and keeping your chest lifted, sit into your heels until your rear end touches the wall.
 - c. Squeeze your gluteal (butt) muscles to return to full standing position, keeping your arms raised.
 - d. To progress this exercise, perform 3 minutes of chair squats or wall sits.
 - e. **Key:** Perform this exercise with your weight in your heels and your chest lifted to keep your knees behind your toes.
2. Lower back strength is important to keeping good posture. Breaststroking, just like the swimming stroke, is a great way to build back strength.
 - a. Lay on a carpeted floor on your stomach with a paper plate under each hand.
 - b. Keeping your eyes on the floor, sweep the plates outward (like the breaststroke), and sweep them back through so that arms are back overhead.
 - c. **Key:** Concentrate on lengthening from head to toe as you lift.
3. Step switches are an easy way to work your gluteals while getting your heart rate up.
 - a. Step your right foot onto the first step of your home stairs.
 - b. Push off of your right foot and jump, replacing your right foot with your left foot on the step. Your right foot will now be on the floor.
 - c. Step down with your left foot.
 - d. Step back up with your right, and repeat the exercise for 90 seconds. Change your leading foot to the left foot for the second 90 seconds.

- e. To modify this exercise, perform a step up, stepping with the right foot and lifting the left knee. Return to the floor. Alternate leading legs for 3 minutes.
 - f. **Key:** Explode out of the top foot.
4. Pushups can help build chest and core strength, but, like the squat, can be unappealing. Use wall or incline pushups to build strength before trying a full pushup.
- a. Stand with your feet about 10 inches from the wall, and place your hands on the wall about shoulder width apart.
 - b. Slowly lower towards the wall, leading with your chest.
 - c. Exhale as you push back away from the wall.
 - d. Perform this exercise as an incline pushup using a coffee table, couch, or stool.
 - e. **Key:** Hold your core tight and draw your shoulders away from your ears.
5. Exercises that involve twisting can be very beneficial for the strength of our core. Try a backwards lunge with a twist to challenge your core.
- a. Grip a medicine ball, can of soup, jar of spaghetti sauce, or maybe even a cantaloupe in both hands, arms extended in front of your chest.
 - b. Step back into a half lunge or full lunge with your right foot. Make sure your left knee stays over your left ankle.
 - c. Twist your torso toward the left side, engaging your core and keeping your spine long. In other words, keep the chest lifted and imagine yourself growing taller as you twist.
 - d. Return to the start position and perform the exercise on the other side.
 - e. To modify this exercise, perform it without any equipment or keep your arms bent and the weighted object closer to your chest.
 - f. **Key:** Stay tall through your torso throughout the lunge and twist.

References:

de Moraes, L. (October 7, 2008) *Can the product pitches: Viewers like their stories.* Washington Post. Retrieved from www.washingtonpost.com.

Halvorson, R., & Sonnemaker, B. (2010). *Fast, furious, and functional: Three trends shaping today's fitness landscape.* IDEA Fitness Journal, 7(5), 36-41.

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