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**Healthy lifestyle increases energy, reduces heat effect**

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• Leader & Times

Summer weather means more people are making their way outdoors, and for those looking to use the summer to get more in shape, there are many opportunities to do just that.

“Most of the time in the summer, it’s going to be too hot to be outside, and when you’re outside, if you’re more athletically fit, it’ll seem less hot,” Rapid Fit Health Club Owner Peter Wiebe said. “The reason I know that is when I worked on my farm three or four years ago, I was about 45 pounds heavier, and when I decided to start working out and lose weight, I dropped about 45 pounds, and I remember that next summer thinking it didn’t seem quite as hot, so I felt I had a lot more energy and was overall able to do more.”

“Summer is not a time where you think you shouldn’t work out because fitness is something that needs to be maintained throughout the whole year,” Fracas Fitness Owner Junior Mendez added. “If you’re looking to better your health and make yourself more physically fit ... everyone wants the summer body, obviously, but summer, I would say, is the perfect time since it’s not cold outside. It’s a great temperature and great weather to get your sweat on and maintain yourself.”

Both Wiebe and Mendez said there are several ways people can get a new fitness routine started.

“One of the things I’ve started doing as a personal trainer is heart rate training. We recently started selling these Bluetooth heart rate straps, and they connect to your phone and puts everything on the screen. So as they’re working out, they see their heart rate is elevating and see what zone they’re in – for example, if you’re trying to lose weight, you’d be in your fat-burning zone and depending which scale you go by, that’s 50 to 60 percent of your max heart rate, and that’s the way you’ll burn the most amount of fat calories. That’s where I’m seeing success because everyone wants that instant gratification, and when you see that on the screen how many calories you’ve burned, how much time you spent in that zone, and all that gives that motivation to keep going because they see it takes just a little more to keep everything up. People are also seeing so many other benefits, like more energy when they do activities, which is part of our job.”

“Have a trainer or someone with you, because if you start by yourself, that doesn’t get you very far,” Mendez added. “But if you have someone with you to keep you accountable, that’s going to help you a lot more and take you a longer way and help you stay consistent. And if it’s not a trainer, per se, make sure it’s a friend or family member who will help you along.”

And for those who are unable to get a gym membership, for whatever reason, both Mendez and Wiebe said there are several ways to get started, including online fitness videos.

“People can start simple, they can start simple by going for a walk, going for a bike ride, if they would rather do that than go to the gym,” Wiebe said. “A lot of people don’t want to go to the gym because they don’t want everyone to see them, which is understandable, it’s an insecurity we all have before we realize no one’s really watching, they’re focusing on their own. So start with walking about 20 minutes a day and go from there, and if you want to see if you’re actually doing anything with that walking, pick up one of those heart monitors and it will track how long you walked, how many calories you burned, all that. When you start seeing that, you’ll want to keep going and eventually, you may even want to begin jogging at least a little bit.”

“My encouragement would be to stay consistent. Once you start, don’t stop because fitness is not like you can do a week of exercise and then take the rest of the month off,” Mendez added. “That’s just really wasting your time, and if you’re really serious about improving your health and serious about getting in shape, just keep on it week after week nonstop. The first two or three weeks will be kind of hard as far as establishing the habit, but if you keep at it, it gets easier and you actually end up wanting to do more intensive workouts and that helps all by itself. We have a bunch of programs going on right now that are in demand, and if anyone wants to know about any of that, they can just call me and talk to me about it. We’d love to have you here, so come on out.”

Both Wiebe and Mendez also said to not be intimidated.

“Don’t be intimidated or scared to try any of our programs. If you’re new, I’m willing to pull you aside and work with you to progress little by little,” Mendez said. “If your goal is to lose about 50 pounds or maybe gain some muscle tone, we’re a very universal and scaleable gym here for any age or fitness level. Health is for anyone, there’s really no limitations.”