Move More in the New Year

By Heather Bremner Claverie

THE SIGNS encouraging people to exercise more in the new year are everywhere: Get stronger. Get fitter. Lose weight. But what about individuals with chronic illnesses receiving weekly or monthly treatments such as immune globulin (IG) infusions? Can these people safely join in those sweaty sessions? The quick answer is yes; even moderate amounts of exercise can soothe the body and mind.

Magical Medicine

It’s no secret that pumping iron, jogging or riding a bike can help tone tummies, trim waistlines and improve cardiovascular health. What’s more, studies show regular exercise can also reduce stress and depression and even diminish fatigue and anxiety. Research has even revealed exercise is as effective as antidepressant medication in treating depression. One study conducted by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health discovered just a 15-minute daily run or walk reduces the risk of major depression by 26 percent.

Reduce Anxiety and Stress

Since patients treated with IG have weakened immune systems, they are particularly vulnerable to stress and anxiety. Too much stress can cause a domino effect, leading to bouts of illness that can last for weeks or months. Thankfully, a little exercise can go a long way to counteract this scenario. It can be anything from a sweaty spin session to a walk around the block or a round of sun salutations in a local yoga class.

The other great benefit of exercise is it can be done anywhere at any time. Any sort of movement that gets the heart pumping and the muscles moving helps. And, these days, with access to online or on-demand exercise classes and home-based products such as the Peloton bike, there are a myriad of options available to all.

For those who don’t have the budget to join a gym or pay for Pilates classes, exercising doesn’t have to cost a cent. Taking a walk around the neighborhood or hiking through a local nature preserve is a free and effective way to reap the benefits of exercise. And, since subcutaneous IG therapy patients can receive infusions at home without supervision, home-based exercise is a great option.

Ward Off Weariness

Fatigue is an issue many IG patients wrestle with during and after treatments. So, something as simple as getting the blood and muscles moving can help infuse energy into anyone’s day. In addition, cramping and muscle aches can be alleviated with simple stretching routines. And, a yoga class can address an array of issues, too, since the practice helps center the mind, body and soul.

The Magical Pill

Humans are constantly searching for that magical pill, that cure-all elixir — something that can ward off fatigue, reduce anxiety and depression, increase life expectancy, melt those love handles and make us happier beings. Well, it seems we have already found it! 🏃

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Roll Out Tranquility

Designed by yogis, the long-lasting Manduka yoga mats are available in a rainbow of colors, styles and prices. Individuals who haven’t practiced many downward dogs can hop on a wallet-friendly beginner mat, while long-time yogis may opt for one of the Pro Series versions. The company also offers a special mat for hot yoga devotees. An online quiz will help people locate which mat is the best one for them. $37 and up; www.manduka.com/pages/collections-yoga-mats

A Vision of Fitness

Without leaving the comfort of home, less than two feet of wall space can be converted into a personal fitness studio. While it looks like a simple, elegant mirror, the Mirror serves as much more. It’s a cardio class, a yoga studio or a boxing ring. The Mirror can be easily installed in any room in the home. With more than 10,000 on-demand classes and more than 20 types of workouts ranging from kickboxing to yoga, there’s something for everyone. $1,495 or $42/month; www.mirror.com

Shopping Guide to Exercise Products and Accessories

Rein ’em In

Brooks sports bras help minimize bounce and discomfort, allowing women to enjoy high-impact sports from running to tennis. With features like odor-resistant material, lightweight perforated cups and adjustable straps, these bras give supportive shape while keeping everything in place. They’re also available in cup sizes up to E. $34 and up; www.titlenine.com/category/title-nine-brand-partners/brooks-sports-bras.do

Sweat in Style

Comfort, durability and performance are all essential when it comes to workout clothes, and with Lululemon’s full line of gear, it’s possible to hit all those targets. From high-rise yoga leggings to sweat-wicking running shorts, the Canadian-based athletic apparel company has something for every exercise enthusiast.

Shop lululemon.com

Sweat to Your Own Beat

The Peloton bike has become the ambassador of sorts for home exercise equipment, turning that image of the dust-covered bike into a relic. With on-demand classes, a slim profile and a price tag that rivals the cost at brick-and-mortar facilities, this smart bike delivers the convenience of a 24-hour gym. $2,245 or $58/month; www.onepeloton.com/bike

Pump Some Iron

The AmazonBasics Neoprene Dumbbell Set and Stand is ideal for resistance training. Available in a variety of sizes and colors, the set also includes a stand to neatly stack the weights. The neoprene coating allows for a secure grip, and the weights are made for both indoor and outdoor use. $28.49; www.amazon.com/AmazonBasics-20-Pound-Dumbbell-Lettering-Renewed/dp/Neoprene+Dumbbell+Set+and+Stand