



SETTING AND ACHIEVING HEALTH GOALS

Hello everyone. This is Tyler, Helena, and Bill reporting from APC to give you some tips on how you can utilize our services and make the best out of your overall health this year!

Goal Setting



Setting a new year's resolution can be a daunting task. Committing to something for a whole year? How do we do that? Consider the goal that you have for yourself. What are the reasons behind why you want to achieve it? What competing behaviors are in the way? This is where we can consider intrinsic or extrinsic motivators for our goals (Dickson et al., 2023). Are we doing these things because we want to see change in ourselves, or is your family or friends pushing you to do these things? If you have a hard time exercising because you are content with your body the way it is, consider the other benefits of physical activity such as its effects on your mood or long-term health.

Pairing physical activity with a social component can also be very effective. There is ample evidence pointing towards attending an exercise class with a spouse to improve adherence (Osuka et al., 2017), or being in a community setting as opposed to doing it alone (Killingback et al., 2017). This can also help with accountability and pushing through some of the hard times you may encounter.

When setting a goal, it is often helpful to break it down into more manageable mini goals. These can be measurable things that can be achieved without a major overhaul in your life.



If your goal is to be more physically active, a first step could be simply to walk after dinner for 10-15 minutes, get up from the computer for 5 minutes every hour, or take the stairs instead of the elevator if possible. Even small amounts of exercise add up and provide benefits such as improved blood glucose and blood pressure control, decreased risk of heart disease, and improved mood! A 2020 study (An et al.) demonstrated that participants with high and moderate activity levels had significantly higher life satisfaction and happiness than those

with a low activity level.

Increasing your activity level can be simple. If you work 8 hours a day and take a 5-minute break to walk around every hour, this adds up to 40 minutes of movement per day, or 200 minutes per week!

Health Maintenance

A particular question has been running around in my head for years. When we buy a new car, we are instructed to change the oil every 5,000 km, rotate the tires, balance the wheels, check all the lights are



working properly and make sure there is enough washer fluid. We follow those instructions to the letter. We take care of the new car like gold.



However, when it comes to the wear and tear on our bodies, that is another story. For example; working in the garden, bend over and tweak something in the lower back. It's not that acute pain, but something we tolerate-chronic. The pain increases and we just adjust our bodies to make up for that lower back tweak. Now, that adjustment places stresses on other parts of the body-misalignment.

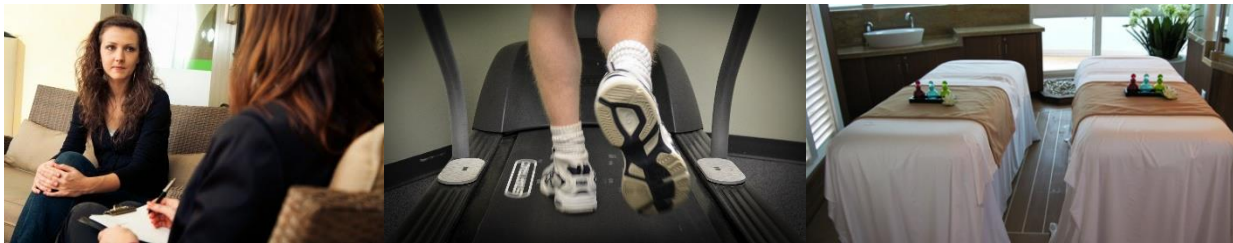
Regular massage is not going to cure the lower back issue, but it could help. Think of your body like that wonderful car you have. At a certain mileage, the body is going to need a little bit more care. Here at APC, we work as a team; working in conjunction to improve your health.

It is beneficial to have treatments on a regular basis –roughly every 2 months– depending on if there is a specific issue you are dealing with (such as MVA, pre/post operation, or general overall aches and pains). Benefits of regular massage: reduce muscle tension, increase joint mobility and flexibility, relaxation, manage high blood pressure, manage stress and anxiety, and improve sleep.

The same principles of regular treatments can be applied to maintaining mental health as well. It is often the attitude of the average person that they only really need to go to a counsellor if times are rough. There can also be benefits to discussing mental health on an ongoing basis even if you are feeling okay (Erekson et al., 2022). Think about it in the same way that having regular checkups with your doctor is beneficial. It is easier to go periodically to prevent anything from creeping up than waiting until things are bad and missing opportunities because you are in recovery.

To Wrap It All Up...

Setting smaller achievable goals is a great way to achieve your bigger goals, in a way that feels less daunting. Results are always more apparent when you work at something consistently, this can apply to both physical and mental health, so setting up a rhythm for yourself with these things is always beneficial. If you have a health goal you have been wanting to work towards but aren't quite sure where to start, consider booking an appointment with psychology, kinesiology, or massage as a first step to get some advice and get working towards your goal! If you have benefits for any of our services, figure out how you could space them out throughout the year to optimize their effectiveness.





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