



# TRY AN ORAL APPLIANCE, LOSE 10 POUNDS?

## *How Your Teeth and Weight Loss Connect*

If you're struggling to lose weight and have resolved to drop a few pounds in 2023, my team and I could be the secret weapon that makes it happen! Many people don't realize it, but there's a significant connection between your oral health and how much you weigh.

Airway issues, in particular, can mess with your ability to slim down. In this letter, I've included two problems you might be dealing with and explained their dental solutions.

- 1. The Problem: You're too tired to go to the gym and exercise regularly, or you exercise and eat right but still have stubborn belly fat.** If this sounds like you, you might have sleep apnea or another airway problem waking you up in the middle of the night. These microarousals often happen so quickly that we don't even remember them in the morning. But our bodies remember, and our energy levels go down! These microarousals also stress out your system. Your body releases all kinds of stress hormones in response, including cortisol — which builds belly fat.

**The Dental Solution: An oral appliance can move your jaw forward and open your airway** When your airway is open, you can breathe and sleep more easily. The difference is amazing! I experienced it myself when I was in dental school. My energy level was good, but I only slept a few hours a night and took naps all the time.

Then, during my residency at Tufts, I monitored my sleep for one of my classes — and found a problem with microarousals. I started wearing a dental appliance to fix my airway, and my need for naps disappeared within a few weeks. My energy levels skyrocketed, and yours could, too. My patients also routinely tell me that when they start wearing oral appliances, they lose up to 10 pounds of belly fat! Patients who have stopped wearing their appliances quickly put weight back on.

- 2. The Problem: Your metabolism seems sluggish, and you can't lose weight no matter what you do.** If this sounds familiar, the root cause could be an airway



problem interrupting your sleep OR another dental issue like gum disease. A lack of sleep can slow down your digestion, and both airway issues and gum disease cause a serious problem called inflammation, which puts the body in "fight or flight" mode and makes it difficult to lose weight.

**The Dental Solution: An oral appliance can move your jaw forward and open your airway.** If you've read this letter, you know how an oral appliance could solve this issue! My team can also treat gum disease to lower inflammation so your body can heal and digest correctly.

I hope this opened your eyes to how oral health and weight loss connect. If any of these things sound familiar, give my office a call! We'll help you sort out your dental health and get you back on track to meet your weight loss goals and feel fit, healthy, and rested again.

To your great smiles and better health,



# HACKS FOR AT-HOME PT ROUTINES

While working with your physical therapist in person is a crucial part of recovery, the maintenance you do at home matters just as much. However, most people find sticking with their at-home therapy routine harder than expected. Sometimes we're exhausted after a long day, have other plans, or simply forget to perform home therapy. It makes sense why so many people can easily fall behind on their healing. We'd like to help — so if you're feeling unmotivated, try these four easy hacks.

## Educating Yourself

The most straightforward way to ensure you follow through with your at-home therapy is to understand the benefits you're receiving from it. If you feel it's pointless to exercise at home — and you plan on just waiting to see your therapist — you will lose the motivation to accomplish what you should be doing to properly heal.

Next time you see your physical therapist, ask them about the benefits

you're getting from those at-home exercises. That way, when deciding whether to do them, you'll know precisely how you may harm yourself by failing to follow through.



## Using an Alarm

Once your at-home therapy is prescribed, figure out when it best fits into your schedule. Maybe you have free time after dinner or during your lunch break. Whatever the case may

be, find these pockets of time and set an alarm as a reminder to do your physical therapy.

## Starting Earlier

If you don't want to use your lunch break or relaxation time for physical therapy, start your day earlier to fit it in. Set your morning alarm to go off only 10–15 minutes before it normally would — and get those exercises in! This way, you'll feel more awake by moving your body first thing in the morning. Plus, you won't have to feel anxious about completing your routine later in the day.

## Multitasking

You don't need to do your physical therapy alone in a silent room. If you like to watch TV in the evenings, complete your therapy while watching and exercising simultaneously. If your dinner has to bake for 30 minutes, use that time to do your PT. Before you know it, you'll have completed your therapy, and you can be proud of how hard you've worked to improve your health.

# Volunteer to Keep Your Body and Mind Active!

## *Sharing Your Time Can Become Your Favorite Exercise*

Staying active is increasingly vital to our health as we age. But pain, injury, or the lack of an exercise location can limit how we keep fit. But luckily, there is an easy way to have an active lifestyle without lifting weights or joining a gym: volunteer! Here are three reasons volunteering can be your new favorite exercise if you're looking to flex some physical, mental, or social "muscle."

### It moves you.

Volunteering offers different ways to move your body! Even small things like strolling through a park to pick up litter, navigating around a soup kitchen, or directing visitors at your local donation center keep you active.

Most organizations are happy to modify more strenuous activities (like lifting heavy boxes or walking up a steep hill) to fit your abilities. So, even if you're just beginning an exercise habit, volunteering is a perfect initial step in your fitness journey.

### Your brain expands.

When you volunteer with others, you usually have a common goal, like feeding the community, cleaning up a park, or planting

a garden. Joining others to accomplish a task provides a significant brain boost, and studies show camaraderie increases positive thoughts and feelings.



On top of feeling better, volunteering keeps your mind agile. By working hard to solve a problem, you're using more neural pathways, which helps keep mental decline at bay.

### You form connections.

As we mentioned earlier, when you show up to volunteer, others usually attend for the same reason. Socializing with the group can help you feel less isolated and more connected to others, and some of these people may even become friends when the job is complete.

If you want to get active but don't know of volunteer opportunities in your area, visit [VolunteerMatch.org](http://VolunteerMatch.org) and enter your zip code to find local in-person options. Help yourself and others by making volunteer work your go-to exercise!



## WANT A BALANCED DIET?

EAT DARK  
LEAFY  
GREENS!



After a long day of work, sometimes we want nothing more than to come home and relax, unburdened by the worry of whether or not our dinner is healthy. Unfortunately, these days add up, and the longer these unhealthy meals continue, the worse it can be for you.

So how can you still eat a balanced diet even when you're exhausted or busy? The answer is to add dark leafy greens to your diet.

While any vegetable is better than a burger or a cookie, darker greens — like spinach, kale, bok choy, and mustard greens — provide many impressive health benefits. Because of their rich color, these greens have higher folate levels, a B vitamin responsible for promoting heart health and preventing cancer.

Along with B vitamins, dark leafy greens have tons of vitamin K. This protects bones from osteoporosis and helps

the body fight against inflammatory diseases. Their abundant antioxidants fight free radicals that can damage our cells and contain very low cholesterol levels. To top it off, they have minimal carbs and sodium, too.

### Incorporating More Dark Greens Into Your Diet

Unlike some people might think, you don't need to eat a kale salad every night or Popeye your way through a can of spinach to consume a healthy amount of greens. Even if you're in a rush, there are many simple ways to sneak some dark greens into your meals.

- **Wrap your favorite protein** in a tortilla and add spinach, arugula, or kale. Whether it's tuna salad or chicken breast, rolling it together with some dark greens and light sauce is an easy way to eat healthy while on the go.
- **Stir-fry your veggies** with some chicken or tofu. Toss in greens like spinach, bok choy, or broccoli with garlic, onion, ginger, and soy sauce for an effortless weeknight meal.
- **Soften your greens in a soup.** Even if you're quickly making a can of Campbell's or ramen noodles, tossing your dark greens into the broth right before it's done can help soften them. Just make sure to chop them so they're small enough to slurp up from your spoon.

Any way you prepare them, darker greens are better for your health. Try to incorporate them into at least one meal daily to receive the excellent benefits they provide.

## TAKE A BREAK!



## Air Fryer Roasted Salmon With Sautéed Balsamic Spinach

*Inspired by FeastingAtHome.com*

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 tsp olive oil, divided
- 4 salmon fillets (6 oz each)
- 1 1/2 tsp reduced-sodium seafood seasoning
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1 garlic clove, sliced
- Dash of crushed red pepper flakes
- 10 cups fresh baby spinach (about 10 oz)
- 6 small tomatoes, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat air fryer to 450 F. Rub 1 tsp oil over both sides of salmon, then sprinkle with seafood seasoning and pepper. In a greased air fryer basket, place salmon.
2. Cook about 10-12 minutes until fish flakes easily.
3. In a 6-qt stockpot, place remaining oil, garlic, and pepper flakes. Heat over medium-low heat for 3-4 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Add spinach and cook until wilted. Stir in tomatoes; heat through.
4. In a small saucepan, bring vinegar to a boil. Cook until vinegar is reduced by half, then remove from heat.
5. Arrange spinach on serving dish. Place salmon over spinach mixture and drizzle with balsamic glaze.

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# 11 MINUTES OF MOVEMENT A DAY CAN HELP KEEP DEPRESSION AWAY

According to the Hope for Depression Research Foundation, depression affects 10% of Americans annually. And since the disorder doesn't pick favorites, anyone can suffer from its melancholy grasp. But there are things people can do to help. In fact, exercise has been known to help, but what if people are limited on time or motivation?

New research by JAMA Psychiatry shows that completing just *half* of your recommended daily exercise (only 11 minutes!) can lower your risk of experiencing depression. So, when battling the blues, some exercise is always better than none. Here's how to squeeze that movement into your schedule.

### Increased Walking Time

If you're not exercising already, you don't need to start running a 5K tomorrow. Take it slow before building on the activity that's already in your routine. The easiest way to hit that exercise mark is by slowly increasing the time you spend walking each day. If you work from home and never leave the couch, consider taking a lap around your house every 30 minutes. If you need to go grocery shopping, make yourself walk through every aisle or park your car farther away so you have a longer distance to walk.

Get those steps in however you feel comfortable, but the goal is to walk for at least 11 minutes a day.



### Workout Videos

When you're depressed or feeling down, following a peppy exercise influencer in a 35-minute YouTube video is probably the last thing you want to do. But remember, you only need to start with 11 minutes a day. Simply choose a video and plan to only complete a portion of it. You can even choose to follow the easy parts, but set your timer for 11 minutes and follow along the best you can. Once your alarm goes off, reward yourself for getting that movement in!

### The Benefits of Dancing

Any movement counts, even dancing. And you don't need to be good at it to participate, either. To meet your 11 minutes, simply put on four of your favorite dance songs and bust a move!

Even if it takes months to get there, moving your body a little each day will help. So, push that cart, pop on that video, or pull out your best dance moves to fight depression.