

**Overcome Your Excuses and Reach Your Goals!**  
**-Amy Hesse, M.S., JAM Wellness Expert**

There are many challenges you face daily; family, work, school, travel and other commitments, which may make it difficult for you to live an active lifestyle and exercise regularly. Roughly 50% of people who begin an exercise program drop out within the first six months. It is common to come across surprises and setbacks along the way to making healthy lifestyle changes. These setbacks are inevitable and you must be prepared for them. The challenge for you is to make them temporary setbacks and not lifetime excuses. The first step in overcoming barriers that prevent you from being physically active on a consistent basis is to identify your barriers to change. What are the obstacles that may be interfering with your commitment to be active? Make a list of these barriers and think about how you can overcome these barriers. Take responsibility for the barriers that are interfering with your exercise program and make specific plans for how to overcome them. Read on to find out the most common excuses and how to overcome them...it's the first step to hurdling these barriers.

EXCUSE	COMMENT
"I don't have time."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in a 30-minute workout.</li> <li>• Schedule a time (like an appointment) and stick to it.</li> <li>• Watch less TV!</li> <li>• Remember exercise is a stimulant and leads to more productive use of time.</li> </ul>
"Exercise is work."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is work, and most people do it 40 hours a week.</li> </ul>
"I'm too tired."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The benefits of exercise will help to improve energy levels throughout the day and also improve your quality of sleep.</li> </ul>
"Exercise is boring."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who get bored with exercise are doing the same thing for every workout. With so many options out there, vary your routine and watch your motivation skyrocket. Try a new activity, exercise with a friend, or listen to music. The possibilities are endless.</li> </ul>
"I'm too heavy."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is one of the best reasons to get started. Some of the most well suited activities for overweight individuals are swimming and seated weight-training exercises.</li> </ul>
"I might fail."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's not a contest. If you stick with your program, you will succeed.</li> <li>• Start out slowly and gradually increase your duration and intensity.</li> <li>• Set small, realistic, and attainable goals.</li> </ul>
"I'm too old."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are never too old to exercise.</li> </ul>
"I'll start tomorrow."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop making this excuse and take the first step. Go for a walk after dinner.</li> </ul>
"I don't know how."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone knows how to walk which is a great form of physical activity.</li> </ul>

**Keep the following in mind when overcoming these barriers**

- Anticipate and plan for obstacles.
- Be aware of 'high-risk situations' that may lead to old behaviors.
- Create strategies that you can put into place when you hit a roadblock.
- Focus on your achievements rather than on your setbacks. Be positive!
- Forgive yourself for not being perfect.
- Learn from your mistakes.
- Tomorrow is always another day!

