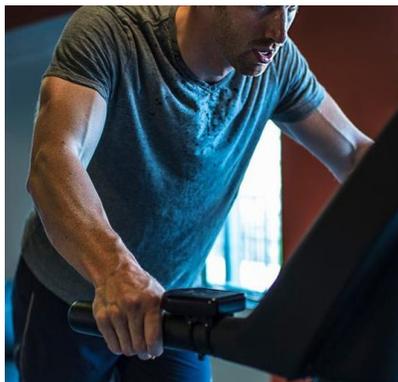




Fix Your Exercise Form for Better Results



Before increasing your exercise reps or lifting weight to add difficulty, consider evaluating your form. Practicing proper exercise execution and form not only helps you get the results you want, but lowers your risk of getting injuries that might derail your progress. Take a look at these common exercise form mistakes:

Bad Posture On Cardio Machines: Fatigue or distraction can cause you to unknowingly cheat by slouching over the treadmill or bike, turning your hands inward and bowing your elbows out while holding onto the rails or handles. These are bad habits that can cause back and neck pain. Posture speaks volumes! Focus on keeping a straight, relaxed posture with your core tight and your eyes looking straight ahead.

-Neck Alignment: The average human head weighs 10-12 pounds and according to Dr. Adalbert Kapandji, author of *Physiology of the Joints*, "For every inch of forward head posture, it can increase the weight of the head on the spine by an additional 10 pounds." This is why alignment of the head, neck, and spine is so important. Dropping your head towards the floor during a pushup, looking up at the bottom of a squat, or yanking on your neck during crunches are common errors. Try pretending you're holding an apple between your chin and chest to keep your neck straight.

-Taking Baby Steps When Lunging: The lunge can be a scary exercise if you've never done them or if you tend to have knee pain. Although you may want to "take baby steps" when starting to lunge this can cause too much stress on the front of the knee. Try taking a big enough step so that your front heel is about 2 feet in front of your back knee as it bends toward the floor. If while lunging your front heel comes off the ground, the lunge is too short; if you have to lean forward to step, the lunge is too long.

-Drooping Hips While Planking: The plank is a great foundational multi-purpose exercise. When the core is weak it is common to see your hips sag towards the floor or inch to the ceiling. Sagging hips places strain on the low back and shoulders. Concentrate on lifting your thighs away from the floor and drawing your navel towards your spine. Use the mirror or grab a friend to watch your form.

Our fitness specialists are dedicated to helping you improve your health through exercise. Take advantage of a free one-hour exercise consultation and a one-hour follow up with a fitness specialist. Have your exercise form checked and allow us to make recommendations to your current exercise regime. To schedule a fitness consultation, stop by the front desk or call (513) 243-9404.



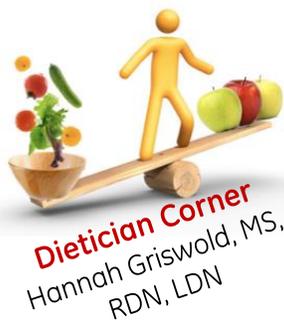
GEFC Holiday Hours



•Monday, 12/25 - Closed •Tuesday, 12/26 - 8a.m.- 4p.m. •Monday, 1/1 - Closed

- No regular group fitness classes Dec 17th - Jan 1st
- **Try our special feature classes:**
 - **Mindful Meditation** - 12/18 5-6p.m. & 12/20 11:30a.m.-12:30p.m.
 - **Water Walking** - 12/18 & 12/21 - 9:30a.m.-10:30a.m.





Healthy Holiday Eating Tips

Don't let the holiday season derail your health goals. Follow these tips to keep you healthy and feeling your best all season long.

Before the Meal:

- Begin day with a small well-balanced meal (protein + carbohydrate + fat).
- Have a healthy **snack before the celebration** to prevent overeating.
- **Drink plenty of water** throughout the day to keep hydrated and tame cravings.
- **Keep distracted.** Bring a card game to play before the meal.

At the Table:

- At buffets - survey foods options and choose your foods carefully. **Pick personal favorites** and don't waste calories on foods you eat year round - if you don't love it, don't eat it.
- **Use small plates** (and bowls and glasses) instead of large ones to help keep portions small.
- Pace yourself while eating - remember **it takes 20 min for your brain to recognize fullness**.
- At home, have people serve themselves from the kitchen or a sideboard, not the dining table.
- Eat like the French - **take 1 bite of 15 foods** rather than indulging in every dish.

After Dinner:

- Socialize with friends and family. **Make connecting with friends and family the focus of the holidays, not food.**
- Go for a walk or engage in active games with family.

General Tips:

- Balance high-calorie and high-fat foods with lower-calorie options. Load up on fruit, veggies, boiled shrimp and crab and consume small portions of dips, rich sauces, and cheesy items.
- **Eat smaller low-fat and fiber-rich foods throughout the day.** Consume whole grain breads, yogurt and fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds, water-based soups.
- At parties or other holiday gatherings, sit or stand where extra food isn't constantly in the line of sight.
- Remind yourself how you would like to feel at the end of the night. **Do you want to feel light and energetic or full and sluggish?**



New Blood Pressure Guidelines

High blood pressure should be treated earlier with lifestyle changes and in some patients with medication - at 130/80 mm Hg rather than 140/90 - based on new ACC and American Heart Association (AHA) guidelines for the detection, prevention, management and treatment of high blood pressure. The new ACC/AHA guidelines were developed with nine other health professional organizations and were written by a panel of 21 scientists and health experts who reviewed more than 900 published studies.

The new guidelines - the first comprehensive set since 2003 - lower the definition of high blood pressure to account for complications that can occur at lower numbers and to allow for earlier intervention. The new definition will result in nearly half of the U.S. adult population (46 percent) having high blood pressure, with the greatest impact expected among younger people. Additionally, the prevalence of high blood pressure is expected to triple among men under age 45, and double among women under 45, the guideline authors note. However, only a small increase is expected in the number of adults requiring anti-hypertensive medication.

Blood pressure categories in the new guideline are:

- Normal: Less than 120/80 mm Hg;
- Elevated: Systolic between 120-129 *and* diastolic less than 80;
- Stage 1: Systolic between 130-139 *or* diastolic between 80-89;
- Stage 2: Systolic at least 140 *or* diastolic at least 90 mm Hg;
- Hypertensive crisis: Systolic over 180 *and/or* diastolic over 120, with patients needing prompt changes in medication if there are no other indications of problems, or immediate hospitalization if there are signs of organ damage.

