



# Halifax Chiropractic Clinic

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## Fit Over 40

by Dr. Brian S. Seaman, DC, FCCSS(C), FICC

### The big 40!

Yep - - That's 175,210 days, 480 months, 40 years or 4 decades - - whichever way you "slice it" you've put on quite a few miles (and likely a few extra pounds) on your frame.

Many of us, once we are in our 40's, 50's and even our 60's, get busy with careers, families, children and grandchildren. It seems like there are not enough hours in the day. And when there aren't, we often sacrifice our sleep time.

### Healthy Habits At 40 And Beyond ...

Remember -- you're not 20 anymore -- maybe mentally -- but not physically.

Being healthy means doing a number of things on a regular basis to keep you that way.

First and foremost, get a physical examination done to ensure that you will not do yourself more harm than good -- in other words if you don't want your first work out to be your last.

### Be Realistic

Set some goals for yourself but be realistic in doing so. If you have not run in the past 20 years, do not expect to go for a 5 km or 10 km jog the first night. Not only will your heart and lungs probably be unhappy with you, your muscles would have something "to say about it" the next day.

### Keep It Basic

Start by walking -- even just 1 km. Once you get used of doing this regularly, increase the distance or the pace -- but don't do both at once.

If your goal is to start running, begin a walk/jog program. Contact your local Running Room or local running club for more details.

While walking and running helps to improve your "cardio" health (i.e. your heart and lungs), you should do some exercises to increase the strength, flexibility and tone of your muscles.

On the other hand, if you have arthritic changes in your ankles, knees or hips, walking or running may not be the best choice for you. Swimming is a good option for a "cardio" activity and reduces the strain on your leg joints.

Another option would be water aerobics, or a pool exercise program. These are done either in the shallow end or by wearing a water belt in the deep end. Contact your local pool for additional details.

Strengthening your spinal and abdominal muscles increases your core strength and reduces the strain on your lower back.

Strengthening your legs also has the added benefit of helping with your balance. If you want to develop your balance and coordination further, try an activity such as Yoga or Tai Chi.

Weight training exercises as well as walking and running places more strain on your bones. This helps to maintain or improve your bone density. This is very important as osteoporosis (loss of bone density) can result in broken hips or compression fractures in your spine.

### Watch Your Weight

With increased physical activity and exercising, you may be tempted to eat a bit more. If you do, make sure your diet is well balanced and meets your nutritional needs. Remember -- "eat to live" don't "live to eat".

Also remember to drink lots of water every day - - eight glasses per day - - yes that's eight!

**When Should You Start?**

**NOW!** There is no time like the present.

See your family physician for a check up and blood work. If that is okay then plan your strategy and set some goals:

- Walk, run or swim.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Drink lots of water every day (sorry – coffee, tea and alcoholic beverages don't count).
- Do some resistance or weight training exercises. Using exercise tubing is a good option and easy to use if you are travelling a lot.
- Tai Chi and Yoga will help to improve your balance, muscle tone and mental focus/coordination.

**Get Active - - Get Healthy!**

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