

HEALTH & WELLNESS

# An Old, Bald Guy's Common-Sensical Approach to Health & Wellness



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Healthcare financial management is no stranger to long hours at a desk. With so much of the work now happening from home, the line between professional and personal routines has blurred, and for many, physical activity has taken a back seat. The result? A sedentary lifestyle that can sneak up on you faster than a Monday morning email avalanche.

As someone who's been there—juggling responsibilities, neglecting health, and wondering why energy levels were at an all-time low—I know how easy it is to let fitness slide. But I also know that reclaiming your health doesn't have to mean drastic overhauls or hours at the gym. It starts with small, practical changes that build momentum and lead to lasting results.

This guide is for anyone in healthcare (or beyond) who's ready to break the cycle of inactivity, feel better, and rediscover the joy of movement. If a regular guy like me can do it, so can you.

The New Year is upon us, and with it comes the annual invasion of the "New Year, New Me" crowd at your local gym. While most will disappear faster than free pizza in the breakroom, a few might stick around long enough to change their lives. If I can help even one person find their footing, I'll consider that a win.

## The Real Starting Line

Ten years ago, I was that guy—stretchy-waist pants, potato chip in one hand, ice cream in the other, wondering why I felt like crap. My wake-up call came when my teenage daughter casually mentioned her regular gym visits. Inspired (or maybe shamed) by her nonchalance, I joined her. It wasn't glamorous, and it wasn't easy, but it was the beginning of a transformation that has left me feeling better at 56 than I did at 36.

Here's the thing: starting isn't about achieving washboard abs or running a marathon. **It's about building habits.** It's about not being the grandparent who struggles to get out of a chair but the one rolling on the floor with the grandkids.

***Fitness isn't just physical—it's a way of reclaiming energy, confidence, and joy.***

Fitness doesn't have to be fancy. One of the biggest myths about fitness is that it requires a lot of money, time, or gear. Social media influencers and fitness companies will try to convince you that you need their programs, supplements, or special gadgets to succeed. Don't fall for it. You don't need fancy equipment or a protein bar with more ingredients than a chemistry textbook. You need simplicity.

## ***My advice? Start with walking.***

It's the most underrated exercise out there. You don't need a marathon pace—just push yourself to the point where a conversation becomes slightly challenging. Research shows that adding even a few thousand steps a day can dramatically reduce your risk of health issues. Don't overcomplicate it. Walk a little faster than usual. **Aim for 7,000 steps a day.** That's it. Plus, walking levels out your blood sugar after meals—a win for your waistline and overall health.





## The Food Reset: Mother Nature Knows Best

When it comes to food, my rule is simple: if it wasn't made by Mother Nature, think twice. Focus on single-ingredient, nutrient-dense foods—like eggs, vegetables, fruits, and lean meats. Skip the processed stuff. If you don't recognize half the ingredients on a package, why would you eat it? An egg is an egg; an apple is an apple. Keep it that simple. And if you're ever tempted by sugary treats, just remember that Arnold Schwarzenegger calls sugar "the white death," and if the Terminator says it's bad, believe him. And here's a pro tip:

***Don't keep junk food in the house.***

If it's there, you'll eat it. If you have to leave the house to satisfy a craving, odds are you'll decide it's not worth the effort.

### Progress, Not Perfection: The 90-20 Rule

Life happens. You'll have bad days. My girlfriend and I call it the 90-20 rule (yes, we know the math doesn't add up - margaritas were involved). The idea is simple:

***Indulge occasionally, but don't let it derail you.***

Don't beat yourself up if you had a night of pizza and dessert. Just get back to your routine the next day. The journey to better health isn't a sprint—it's a (walking) marathon.

### Throw the Scale Away

If you're obsessing over the scale, stop. Weight fluctuates. It's normal. The real wins are in how you feel, how your clothes fit, and hearing someone say, "Damn, you look great!"

When I started, I lost 30 pounds, but I also lost muscle. Now, I've gained those 30 pounds back—but I wear the same waist size as I did when I was lighter. Muscle weighs more than fat.

***Focus on building strength and feeling good, not just hitting a number.***

## If you're reading this and thinking about starting, don't overthink it. Move more. Eat better. Build habits. Be patient.

You won't undo years of inactivity and bad choices in a week, and that's okay. Focus on becoming a slightly better version of yourself every day. Small steps lead to big changes.

***And when you're rolling on the floor with your grandkids 20 years from now, you'll thank yourself for starting today.***



This article is part of TREND Health Partners' thought leadership content series, reflecting our belief that focusing on people—not just processes—creates better outcomes for organizations and for healthcare as a whole. At TREND, we know that empowered individuals lead to collective success, which is as true in personal health as it is in the healthcare back office. **Click here** to read more from our team or subscribe to our content.