



HERE'S YOUR HALLOWEEN-THEMED WORKOUT TO BOOST IMMUNITY!

Crisp, cool air and crunchy, crimson leaves signal to our senses the turn of the season is here. As we get in the Halloween spirit, let's aim to move more this autumn! Some experts theorize fitness has immunity benefits that might bolster our defenses as we enter cold and flu season:

- Exercise may help flush bacteria from the lungs and airways, possibly reducing our chances of getting a cold, flu or other illness.
- Exercise changes our white blood cells (WBCs), which are the body's cells that fight disease. When we work out, WBCs circulate faster and work more efficiently, possibly detecting illnesses earlier.
- The brief rise in body temps during and after exercise might prevent bacteria from growing, possibly fighting infection.
- Exercise slows the release of the stress hormones that we know all-too-well increase the chances of us getting sick.

The Recommendation: 30 minutes of moderate cardio each day may do the trick when it comes to keeping our immune systems strong.

GIVE THESE A TRY:

Full-Moon Warmup: The best way to prevent injury during fitness is to warm up first. Get your arms moving with light weights or using your body weight, your choice. Stretch your arms out to either side, perpendicular to the floor. In one smooth swooping motion, raise your arms over your head, until they meet at the top and gently tap (with weights) or clap them together. Then, slowly lower your arms back to your sides and repeat the motion until you feel warmed up. Add in a few side steps (think jumping jacks without the jumping) to get the blood flowing to your legs, too.

Zombie Squats: Stand straight with your legs slightly wider than hip-width distance with your toes pointed outward and your feet flat. Raise your arms straight out in front of your body up to shoulder height, as if you're a zombie. Controlling your movement, lower your torso into a deep squat by driving your hips back and slowly bending your knees. Keep your back flat

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and your shoulders pulled back. Lower your bottom into a seated position then drive through your feet to raise your body back up. Repeat as often as desired. Be sure to check out [this quick, video tutorial](#) on how to perform a proper squat to protect your back and knees.

Coffin Sit-Ups: Here's a fun variation to the traditional sit-up. Lay flat on your back, legs together and arms crossed over your chest – yes, like a spooky vampire lying in a, ahem, coffin. Gradually raise your torso off the ground until you're in a seated position while keeping your legs flat on the ground the entire time. Slowly “settle” back into the “coffin” and repeat this move to your liking.

Bear-Plank Lateral Crawl: Start with your hands and knees on the floor. Keep your spine parallel with the floor. Gently bend your legs at 90 degrees so your knees hover just above the floor and your shins are parallel to the floor, too. Draw your belly button in and push through your biceps. Keeping your back stable like a flat table, walk your right arm out to your right side in tandem with your right leg in a sideways crawl. Next, step with your left arm and left leg to the right side in a lateral move. Walk two steps in one direction and return two steps in the opposite direction. Focus on form and smooth coordination, not speed.

Tips: Keep looking at the floor to keep your spine neutral and prevent strain on your neck. Avoid moving your hips up or down. If you need a breather, stop and take a break! Finally, keep your core muscles tensed and engaged. Repeat to your liking.

Black-Cat Stretch: Cool down with a few of your favorite stretches. Give this one a try – also known as the cat/cow yoga pose: From all fours on the floor, gently arch your back into what you'd imagine a startled cat would look like. Then, lower your back and belly down stretching in the opposite direction. Take your time.

If you're looking for more Halloween fitness fun, here are a few additional themed suggestions:

- Learn a classic Halloween dance together – like Michael Jackson's “Thriller,” The Monster Mash or The Monster Shuffle.
- Participate in a zombie fun run at night.
- Work out with a pumpkin as your weight.
- Check out [this link](#) for a Halloween dance-cardio workout video.

Be Alert and Look for Stroke Symptoms Before It's Too Late

Oct. 29 is World Stroke Day, a time to bring awareness to this serious condition and raise discussion about the signs and symptoms of a stroke. A stroke occurs when there is a blockage or bleed in your blood vessels that either stops or slows blood supply to your brain. This results in a lack of oxygen and nutrients in the brain, leading to brain cells dying.

Globally, one in four individuals over the age of 25 will develop a stroke in their lifetime. This staggering number is why it's so important to know the signs and symptoms of a stroke to be able to help loved ones in need so they can get the care they require before irreversible damage is done.

An easy way to remember what to look out for is by using the acronym F.A.S.T.:



F = Face drooping



A = Arm weakness



S = Speech Difficulty



T = Time to call 911

Additional Signs of a Stroke:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arms or legs, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking
- Change in vision in one or both eyes
- Loss of balance and dizziness

“Learn About Stroke,” [world-stroke.org](#), accessed Aug. 31, 2022.

“Stroke Symptoms,” [stroke.org](#), accessed Sept. 1, 2022.