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The Bod Squad

How to get going on your big-day fitness regimen

04/09/2009 - By: Kate Sullivan

To feel and look your best as you walk down the aisle, don't forget to schedule pre-wedding workouts when planning the big day. Good for your mind and body, here's how to get your bridal booty in shape.

Get Started

Pulling your package together doesn't start in the gym - it begins at home. When certified personal trainer Gerri Clark of Chicago works with brides-to-be she suggests a healthy eating plan. "Cut out junk like sweets to fatty foods right away," she says. Clark's No. 1 culprit that derails any workout regimen? "Eliminate alcohol. It's slows metabolism, dehydrates the body and causes weight gain around the mid-section." If boycotting booze seems too strict, "limit to moderate consumption one night per week," suggests Clark.

Eating right benefits more than just the body. According to smile professional Dr. Brian Kantor of Lowenberg & Lituchy cosmetic dentists in New York, "Eating crunchy fruits and vegetables like apples, carrots, celery and pears helps clean teeth and mechanically remove surface stains," he says, so add a stroll through the produce aisle to your workout plan.

Get Moving

The key to getting fit means finding what works for you. "If you have never walked into a gym before, think about a walking program or a running group to work out with other people," advises Clark. If group exercise appeals to you, Clark suggests Pilates or yoga classes for upper body toning. Erika Bloom, who runs her own Pilates studio, Erika Bloom Pilates Plus, in New York, says her routine of choice scores lends itself well to all the wedding-day posing brides must do. "Pilates improves posture, which makes one look leaner, more toned, confident and younger," she says.

After picking your plan, schedule your exercise time. Clark prefers the morning routine. "There are a thousand reasons why not to exercise as the day goes on, from the last-minute baseball tickets to the impromptu barbecue," she says. In the morning it's only you versus the snooze button.

Get Results

For Clark, the best toning comes from incorporating movements that put multiple muscle groups to work. "Squats with dumbbells, walking lunges, push-ups and pull-ups all done while pulling the belly into the spine gets results fast. The bigger the movement, the more calories burned and the more muscles used," Clark says. With targeted exercises done properly, a workout can be complete in 30 minutes.

Whether it's hiking hills or downward dog, mix up your routine about every two weeks. "After a few weeks of the same moves, your body is not going to be challenged as much and results will slow down," warns Clark.

Your body isn't the only benefactor of a pre-wedding workout routine. With all pressure of planning the biggest day of your life, exercise becomes a stress reducer, so tame bridezilla with the treadmill. Your figure and your friends will thank you.