



Your Healthy Lifestyle Starts Now

Novi Parks fitness classes will help get you in shape

Kim Chilton isn't big on New Year's resolutions. The Milford resident, and current group fitness instructor for Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, is a big believer that eating right and exercising should be a yearlong lifestyle, not a short-term gimmick.

"My guidelines are my guidelines," she said. "I drink my water, eat fruits and vegetables, get eight hours of sleep, exercise and I run five or six days a week. My lifestyle is like that throughout the year, it doesn't change because it's January."

Surely over the next few weeks we will hear people talk about getting a gym membership, vowing to eat better and losing 20 pounds before summer. All are great goals, but saying them or writing them down is one thing – sticking to them is another.

That's why Chilton is a big proponent of classes -- and not just because she is an instructor.

"So many people can use a gym and waste time and money because they are doing the exercises incorrectly or unsafely," she said.

Classes also tend to hold people more accountable. If you miss a day or a week you will surely hear from your fellow classmates, if not your instructor as well.

"A lot of us come with another person," said Novi resident Donna Aguilo. "You have to do whatever it takes to be there."

Linda Gabel, who lives in Livonia, first started exercising

about two-and-a-half years ago with her husband. He recently passed away but she relied on the friends she made to keep her coming back.

"You can be as motivated as you want to be," she said. "When my husband passed away it would have been easy for me to not come but I knew it was beneficial to me. Plus, I didn't have a good enough excuse."

If you are looking for some motivation when the calendar turns to 2017, Novi's "Healthy Active" offerings could be just what you need to get over the hump and onto a healthier lifestyle.

Chilton heads up three classes catering to a wide range of ages and activity levels. Morning Tone and Stretch is offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday for ages 18 and older. This class will help you build lean muscle mass, improve bone density and as a result increase your metabolism and help with weight loss.

The Interval Cardio Workout class on Fridays is one of Chilton's favorite. The High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) workout is a great method for weight loss and improving heart health.

And for the older adults, Keep on Movin' is a class that anyone can benefit from. Most exercises are done seated in a chair, but the more advanced can go at their own pace and do it standing.

"The cumulative health benefits are pretty remarkable," said Novi resident Loren Colwell. "I am doing things I thought I would never be doing again. It really surprised me a lot. The more you do it and the longer you do it, the better the quality of life. It is well worth the time and effort."

Chilton admits often the biggest hurdle for people to overcome is the mental one. She said 99 percent of the people she has met in Novi are determined and driven, including a woman who came into one of her classes with a walker and four months later didn't need it any longer.

Janet Stayler has also seen the benefits of exercise after a nearly two year layoff following surgery. She said during her time away she "stiffened up all over and gained weight."

"When I came back it was hard to get started again but it has been great," she said. "Now I can run and go upstairs without having to hold on. I've really improved, and once you start working out again for a few weeks you get back into the swing of it pretty quickly."

The key, Chilton says, is seeing results.

"When you know and believe in the benefits of cardio, strength, stretching and eating right you are more motivated to do the exercises," she said.

All of the Novi Parks classes can be found in *Engage!* and feature "ability icons" to help people choose the class that is best for them. Level 1 is low impact and light cardio, level 2 is low to medium impact and medium cardio and level 3 is high impact and medium to high cardio.

Other popular Novi Parks classes include: Drums Alive!, Tai Chi, Yoga, Zumba Gold, Barre Toning and more.

Still not sure of what class to take? Contact the department to try one class free of charge. Call (248) 347-0414 for details or visit cityofnovi.org.



Instructor Kim Chilton believes eating right and working out should be everyone's year-long lifestyle.