

The old idiom “*mind over matter*” applies to plenty of things in life. This also appears to be true when it comes to overall health and wellness.

A recent [study](#) in the journal *Health Psychology* found that people who label themselves as couch potatoes can significantly cut their own life expectancy with that belief.

Blair Gorsuch is the Supervisor of Employee Wellness for OSF HealthCare, and he says perception can often directly lead to physical results.

“I’ve always kind of looked at the body, mind, spirit kind of being related in terms of overall health and wellbeing,” said Gorsuch. “I think that if you believe something to be true, it can be more likely to be true, and I think that’s true with fitness and how you perceive your own health and wellbeing.”

So how can someone change that couch potato perception? According to Gorsuch, one small step at a time.

“Look at one change and make that change, and any change will do, rather than being overwhelmed by four or five things that you might have to do, let’s see where you could maybe have a significant impact, but it’s the easiest one for you to make a change with,” he said.

Gorsuch says staying motivated is key to any positive change, and taking on too much at one time is often a stumbling block for long term success.

“They don’t need to start out with an hour’s worth of running their first time out the door, even though that’s maybe what they did years ago,” said Gorsuch. “Just a few steps a day maybe just walking to the end of the driveway and back, or walking to the end of the block and back for the first week to kind of get started. It can be an easier change to make, and they can kind of build on to it as they go.”

Mind over matter can be the difference between loving and loathing any lifestyle change. Outside motivation can also help on the road to success, whether it comes from family and friends or professionals like dietitians, personal trainers or wellness programs.