



IHRSA

THE COVID ERA FITNESS CONSUMER

Full Report | October 2020

SUMMARY

With news headlines stirring up constant concern in 2020, Americans are stressed—and many are having to get creative to relieve that given Coronavirus closures. Many are finding respite in fitness, whether at the health club or at home.

A new survey* by the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), conducted by Kelton, a Material Company, shows that American health club and gym users are awaiting the opportunity to resume their fitness routine with bated breath.

While at-home workouts satisfy some, many feel they're no match for the health club experience. They're taking note of and are satisfied with the safety precautions their club is taking, leaving many feeling ready to hit the gym again—if they haven't done so already.

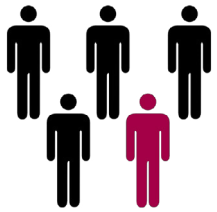
*a survey to 1,171 Americans aged 18+ who have a gym membership or recently canceled one due to COVID-19

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FOR CONSUMERS, THERE'S NO PERFECT SUBSTITUTE FOR THEIR HEALTH CLUB

As gyms closed due to COVID-19, members were forced to change up their routines. While some have gotten creative with at-home workouts, others continue to struggle as nothing quite compares to being in the gym. Health club and gym users look forward to returning to their gym—and the routines and friendly faces they associate with it—as they push to reach their personal fitness goals.



more than **4/5**
(85%) fitness club users admit their exercise regimen has changed over the past several months

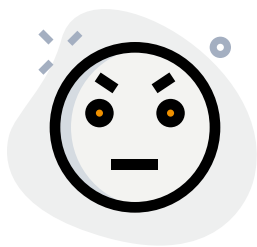
FITNESS ROUTINES HAVE BEEN UPENDED SINCE COVID-19 BEGAN

53% are going for walks or runs more often

33% are streaming at-home fitness videos

30% are taking pets for more walks

29% have purchased fitness equipment



WHY ARE 50% OF GYM GOERS DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR NEW FITNESS ROUTINES?

54% said less challenging

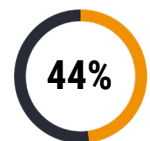
53% said less consistent

51% said simply worse



those who have **not** returned

dissatisfied with their new routine



those who have

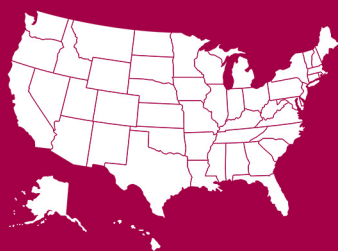


those who have **not** returned

believes their new routine to be worse

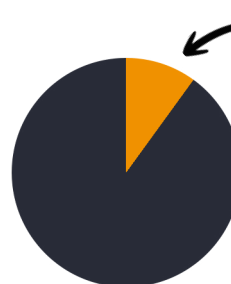


those who have



48%

of people admitted to having a harder time finding the motivation to exercise



10%

or 1/10 of people who haven't kept up their routine, admit they've **stopped exercising altogether**

54%
of women

41%
of men



52% those who have not returned to their gym since it reopened are having a harder time getting motivated to work out compared to 42% of those who have.

admit they have a hard time finding the motivation to exercise

IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY: SAYS 53% OF CONSUMERS WHO CHANGED THEIR FITNESS ROUTINE

63% of Boomers+ say changes are temporary

51% of Gen X say changes are temporary

44% of Millennials say changes are temporary

47% of Gen Z say changes are temporary

MANY LOOK FORWARD TO RESUMING THEIR NORMAL GYM ROUTINE AND THE RESOURCES THAT COME WITH IT

95%

nearly all club users miss at least one aspect of physically being at their gym

54%

report having limited equipment at home

51%

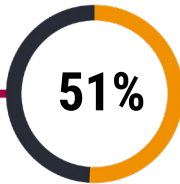
say they're unable to get the same variety of workouts

Many acknowledge that they're now more able to focus on physical fitness and health.

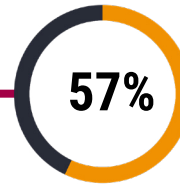
- **68%** say they are prioritizing their health more
- **59%** say they are eating healthier than they did previously
- **77%** members say they have more time to exercise now
- **65%** are spending more time focusing on their own health and fitness than before

53%

of consumers say they and their friends motivate each other to stay active during the pandemic



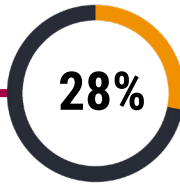
those who have **not** returned to their gym



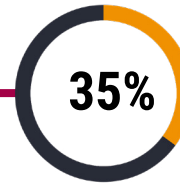
those who have

31%

of consumers participated in an online fitness challenge



those who have **not** returned to their gym



those who have

MEMBERS MISS THE COMMUNITY FITNESS CLUBS PROVIDE

Here are three things consumers miss about their club ...

42%
working out with other people

36%
sense of community that comes with belonging to a gym

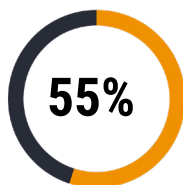
26%
having people at the gym cheer them on through a workout

Among those who miss being at the gym, more women than men say they miss working out with other people (**48% of women vs. 37% of men**) and the sense of community there (**40% of women vs. 33% of men**).

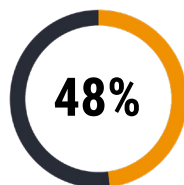
WHY CONSUMERS ARE RETURNING TO THEIR GYMS



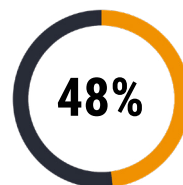
to maintain their overall health



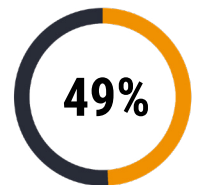
to get stronger



to improve flexibility



to build muscle



to boost their mood

53% of those who have returned to their gym since it reopened say one of their goals in having a membership is to elevate their mood versus 44% of those who have not returned.

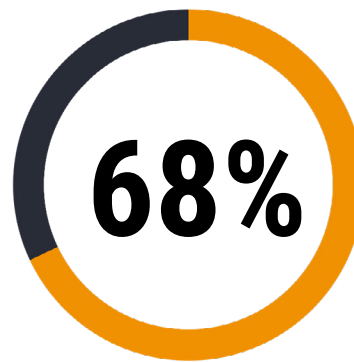
FOR 2020 STRESS, EXERCISE MAY BE THE ANTIDOTE

While it seems there are stressors everywhere in 2020, COVID-19 has been a dominant source of anxiety and worry for millions of Americans. As a result, many are feeling more stressed now than they did at the start of the year and they're agonizing over the state of the world, their communities, and themselves. Many have found that activities like reading, cooking, and, above all, **exercising have offered them a way to cope with such a trying time in their lives.**



STRESS HAS BEEN BUILDING FOR AMERICANS 2020

63% OF FITNESS CLUB USERS FEEL MORE STRESSED NOW THAN AT THE START OF THE YEAR



of those who canceled their gym membership due to the pandemic report feeling more stressed now than they did at the start of the year versus 61% of current members

EVERY GENERATION REPORTS INCREASE IN STRESS

55% of Boomers+ say they feel more stressed

68% of Gen X say they feel more stressed

66% of Millennials say they feel more stressed

73% of Gen Z say they feel more stressed

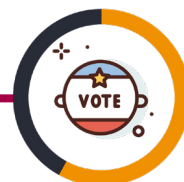
EXTERNAL FORCES WEIGH HEAVILY ON THEIR MINDS

91%

club users are concerned about current events and issues



65% said the U.S. economy



58% said the presidential election



39% said racial inequality

FITNESS CLUB AND GYM USERS ARE JUST AS—IF NOT MORE—CONCERNED FOR THEIR HEALTH IN THE FACE OF COVID-19



3/4 MEMBERS FEEL ANXIOUS ABOUT THEIR HEALTH

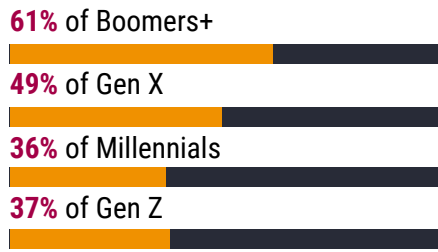
50% club users worried about their physical fitness



56% of women

44% of men

49% club users worried about their immunity



41% club users worried about their mental health



46% of women

34% of men

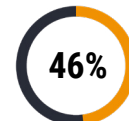
In fact, gym users are more worried about these factors than they are about connecting with family and friends (38%), stay-at-home orders (34%), and returning to malls, restaurants, and gyms (33%).

Those who have not returned to their gym since it reopened are more concerned about their immunity and not getting sick (54% vs. 44%).

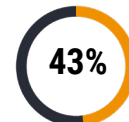
PARENTS HAVE ADDED ANXIETY AROUND THEIR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING



worried about themselves



physical health



mental health



social life

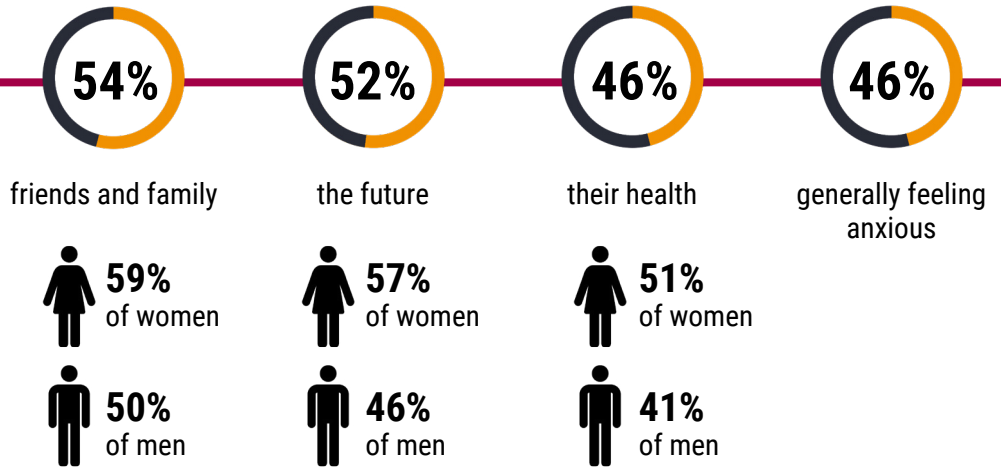
worried about their child



9/10 AMERICANS SAY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED HOW THEY FEEL

4 things they are worried about

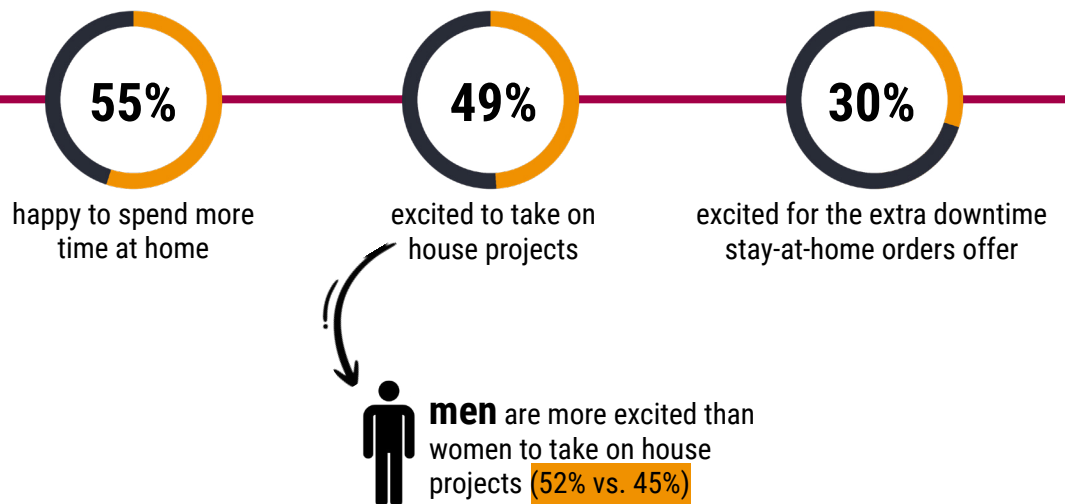
1/5 admit the situation is leading them to be argumentative with loved ones



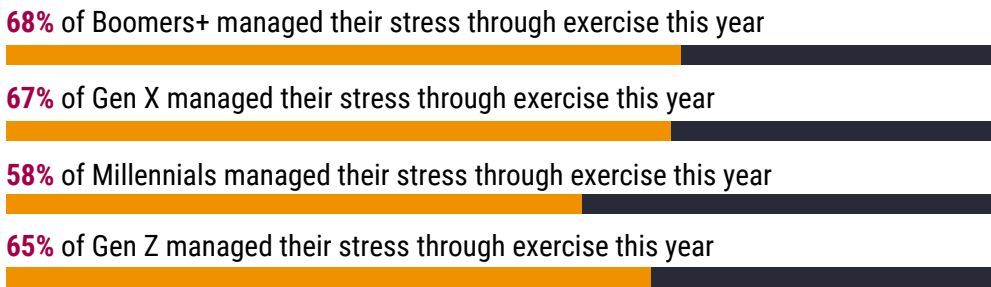
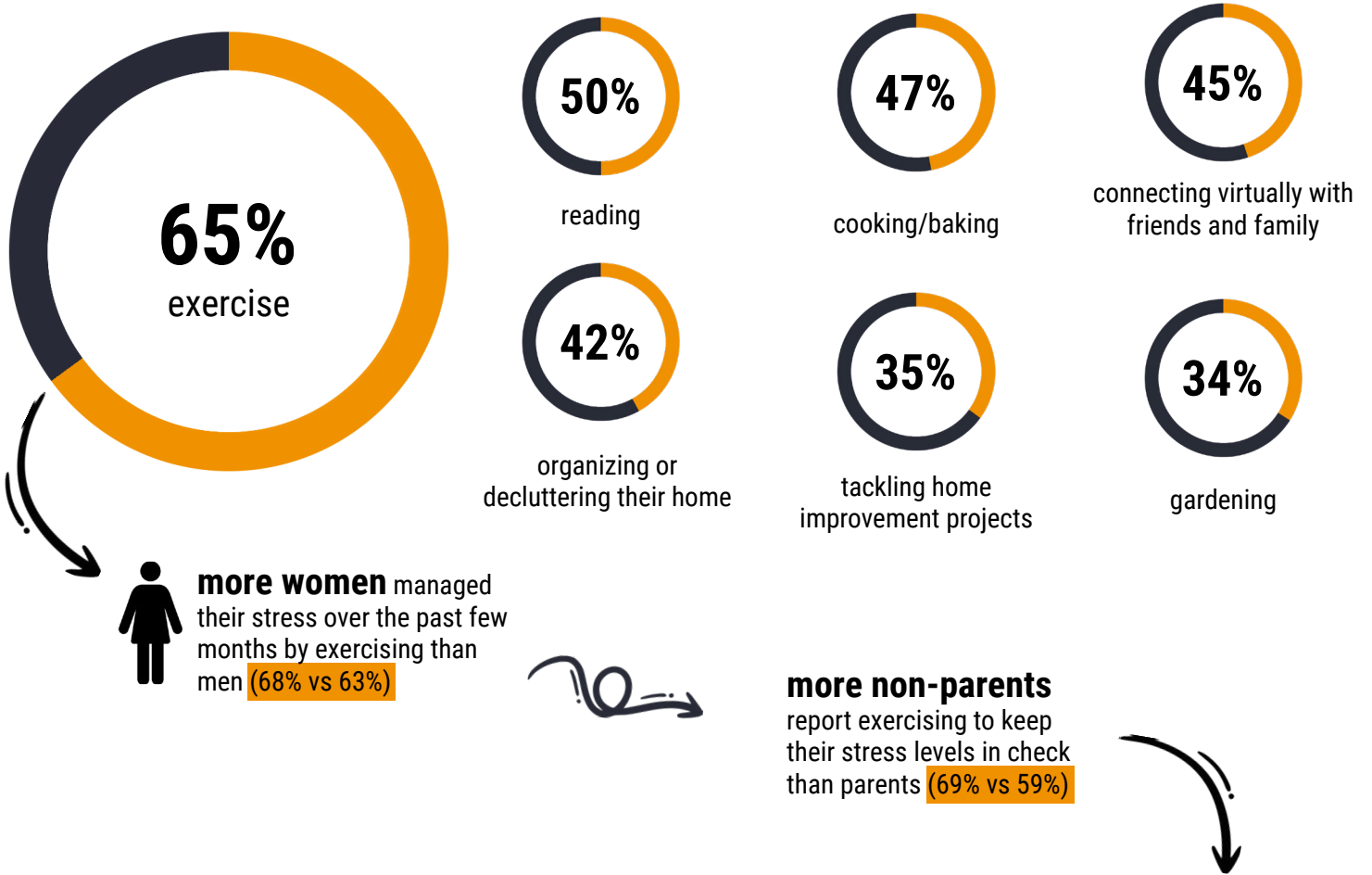
of those feeling the negative impact, **50%** of those who have not returned to their gym report being worried about their health, versus 41% of those who have returned to their gym

NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM, SOME FIND SILVER LININGS

3/5 see the positive side of things



HOW FITNESS CLUB USERS COPING FEELINGS OF STRESS IN 2020?



**FEWER MILLENNIALS
MANAGED THEIR
STRESS THROUGH
EXERCISE THIS
YEAR THAN OTHER
GENERATIONS**

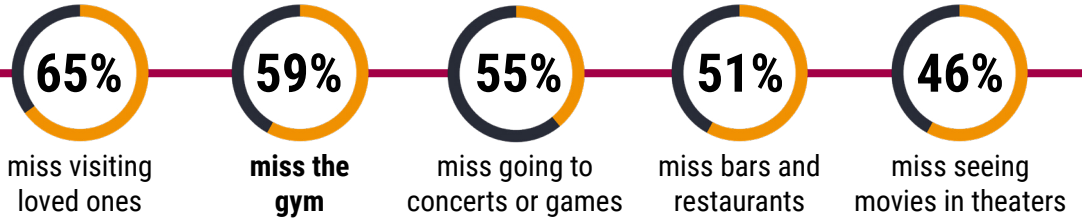
THOSE AT HIGH RISK OF COVID-19 LESS LIKELY TO MANAGE THEIR STRESS WITH EXERCISE



MEMBERS ARE MAKING MOVES TOWARD A HEALTHIER FUTURE

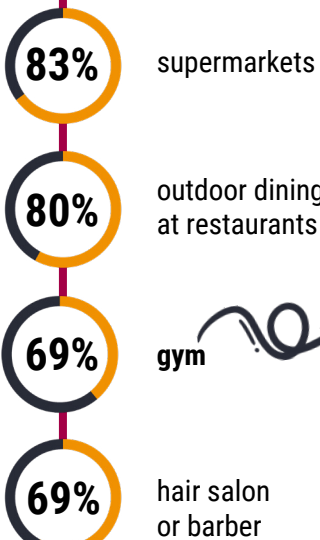
Americans are ready to return to their daily lives after months of stay-at-home orders and business closures. They're optimistic that public spaces and venues will safely welcome them back upon reopening, but that's not to say they aren't taking their own precautions. Health club users are looking to make the most of their future, and many are committed to improving their health to ensure they're able to do so.

GYM GOERS WANT TO GET BACK TO THEIR FAVORITE ACTIVITIES



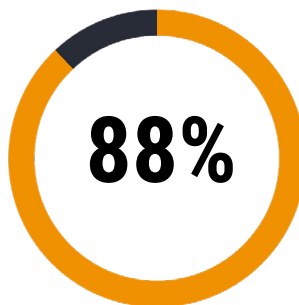
MEMBERS FEEL CONFIDENT IN THE HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES OF THEIR GO-TO SPOTS

CONFIDENCE LEVEL BY LOCATION



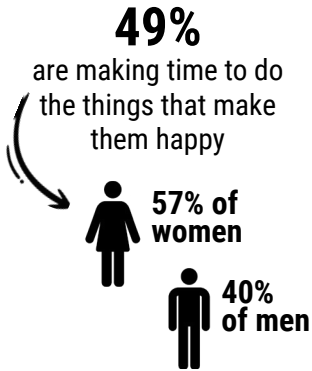
75% of men feel confident in their gym's health and safety measures

64% of women feel confident in their gym's health and safety measures



of those who have returned to their gym since it reopened **are confident in the safety precautions their gym has taken** versus 55% of those who have not

MANY LOOK TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE FUTURE



44% are spending more time with their loved ones

42% are being kinder to others

38% are being kinder to themselves

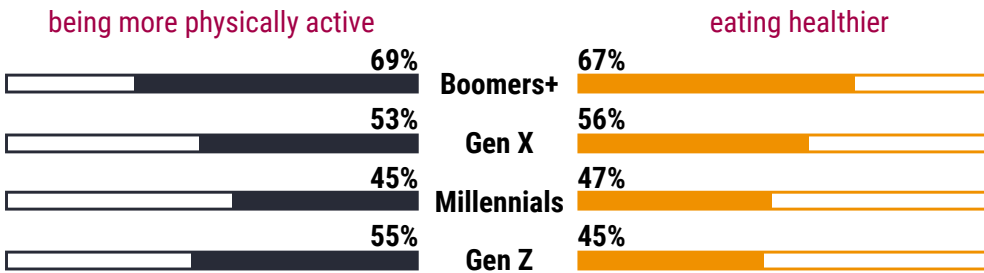
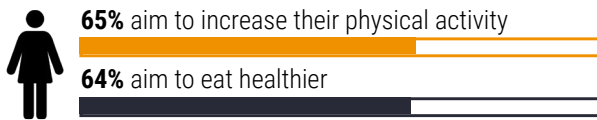
GYM GOERS COMMITTED TO THEIR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

58% aim to be more physically active

57% want to eat healthier

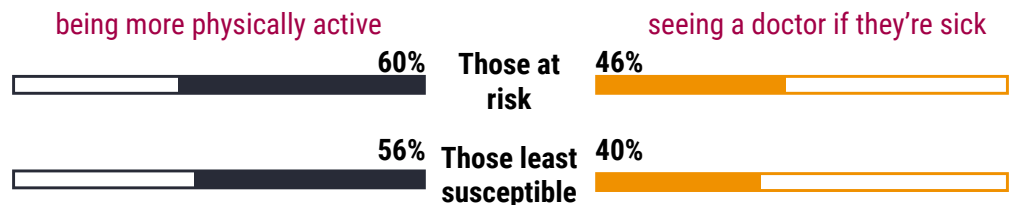
43% plan to see a doctor if they're feeling sick

42% aim to take better care of their mental health



MORE BOOMERS+ SAY THEY'RE COMMITTED TO BEING MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AND EATING HEALTHIER THAN OTHER GENERATIONS

THOSE AT ELEVATED RISK OF COVID-19 DUE TO PREEXISTING CONDITIONS ARE **DOUBLING DOWN ON HEALTH COMMITMENTS**



A RETURN TO THE HEALTH CLUB GIVES MEMBERS AND CLUBS A BOOST

Not only do members feel positively about returning to the gym—many feel ready and motivated to do so. They look forward to the physical and mental benefits of working out at their gym again, from building strength and their immune system, to releasing mood-boosting endorphins. Gym goers trust their health clubs to create a clean and safe environment for members and are satisfied with the measures taken already, allowing many to return to their fitness regimen with confidence.



HEALTH CLUB MEMBERS ARE OVERALL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT RETURNING TO THEIR HEALTH CLUB

66% have positive feelings about going back to the gym

ready **36%** motivated **31%** excited **30%**

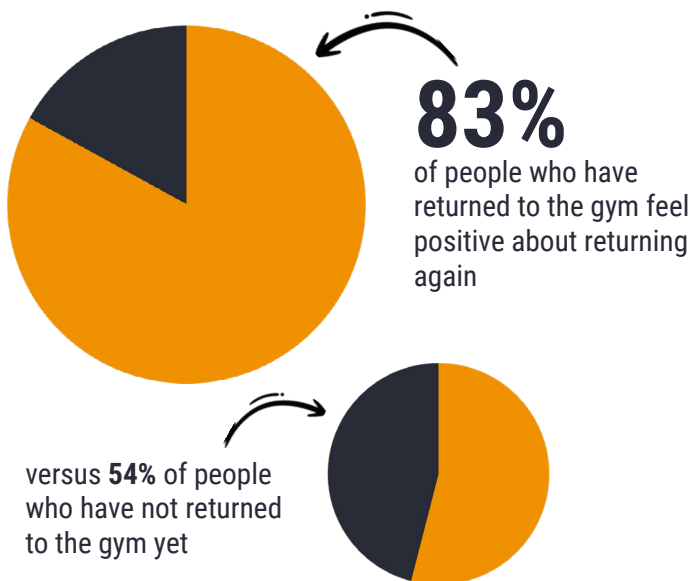
56% admitted to negative feelings about going back to the gym

worried **27%** nervous **31%**

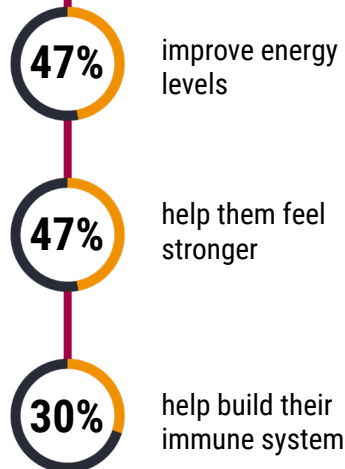


73% of men feel positive about going back to the gym and 60% of women share these feelings

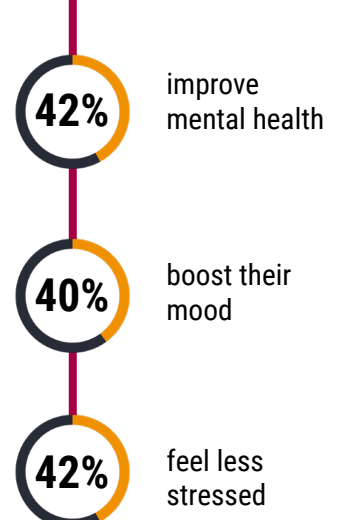
EVEN THOSE YET TO VISIT A GYM RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF RETURNING

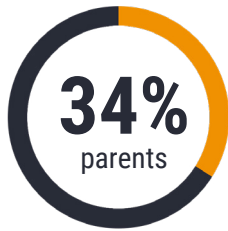
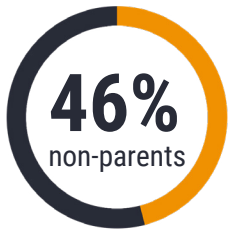


physical benefits



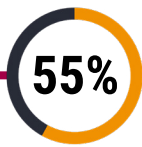
mental benefits



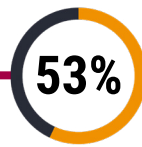


BOTH PARENTS AND NON-PARENTS SAY STRESS RELIEF IS A KEY BENEFIT OF RETURNING TO THE GYM

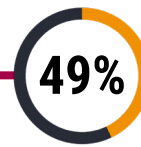
THOSE WHO HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR GYM CONFIRM THE BENEFITS



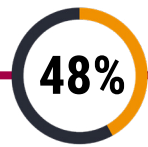
increased strength



improved energy levels



improved mental health



decreased stress



57% the gym has improved mental health

54% the gym has helped them feel less stressed



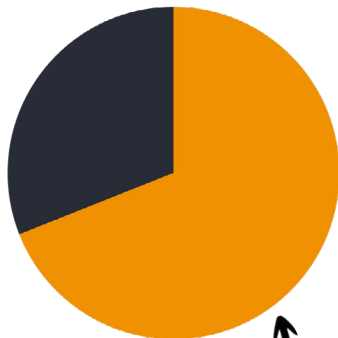
41% the gym has improved mental health

42% the gym has helped them feel less stressed

CONSUMERS FEEL INFORMED AND CONFIDENT ABOUT THE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS THEIR CLUB IS TAKING TO WELCOME THEM BACK

7/10
gym members

know the safety measures their gym is taking to re-open



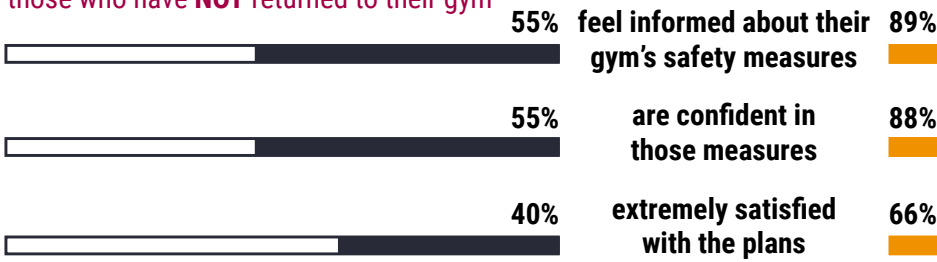
69%

of gym members are confident in the protocols their gym is putting into practice

More people are confident in their gym's protocols than those who feel the same about other businesses:

- **67%** confident in retailers' protocols
- **67%** confident in coffee shops' protocols
- **62%** confident in indoor dining protocols
- **59%** confident in boutique exercise studios' protocols

those who have **NOT** returned to their gym



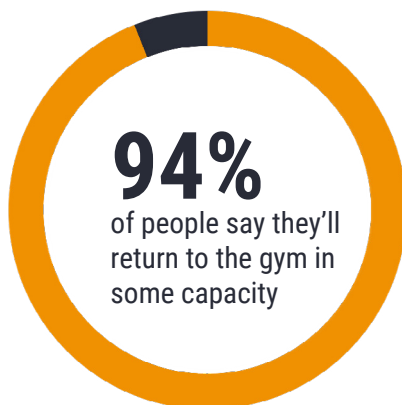
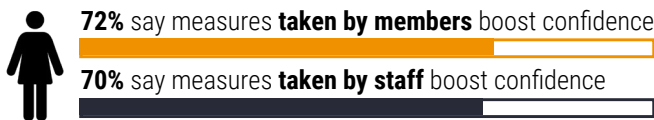
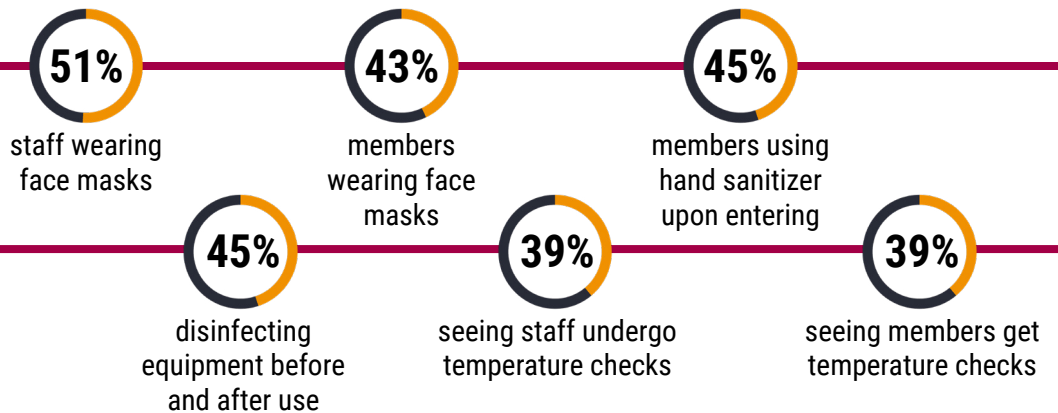
those who **HAVE** returned to their gym



WHAT GERM-BUSTING MEASURES THAT GYMS ALREADY TAKE BOOST CONSUMER CONFIDENCE THE MOST?



CLUB STAFF AND MEMBERS MAKING A **GROUP EFFORT ALSO INSTILLS TRUST FOR RETURNING MEMBERS**



UPON RETURNING, MANY LOOK TO PICK UP WHERE THEY LEFT OFF WITH THEIR ROUTINE

Prior to the pandemic, most users went three to four days a week (42%). Once the gym reopens, almost as many (35%) anticipate they'll be going just as often.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE

This survey was fielded among 1,171 people aged 18+ in the United States who currently have a gym membership, or recently canceled their gym membership due to COVID-19. The survey was conducted online during the period of August 24-28, 2020, and has a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

METHODOLOGY

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 2.9 percent, from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all personas in the universe represented by the sample. The margin of error for any subgroups will be slightly higher.

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ABOUT IHRSA

The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) is a nonprofit trade association founded in 1981. IHRSA represents a global community of health and fitness professionals committed to building their businesses and improving their communities' health and well-being.

Health clubs, gyms, fitness facilities, and industry suppliers—millions of people—all working toward one goal: helping more people get active. To learn more, visit ihrsa.org.

CONNECT WITH IHRSA

IHRSA HELPS HEALTH CLUBS IMPROVE PROFITABILITY, GROW, AND STAY COMPETITIVE BY PROVIDING UNIQUE NETWORKING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, INDUSTRY BENCHMARKING, AND HEALTH PROMOTION TOOLS, SO IHRSA MEMBERS CAN HELP THEIR COMMUNITIES LEAD HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW IHRSA CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS SUCCEED, EMAIL [INFO@IHRSA.ORG](mailto:info@ihrsa.org) OR CALL +1 617-951-0055.



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