

Sisters Together: Move More, Eat Better



# Fit and Fabulous

AS YOU MATURE



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## How can I start feeling fit and fabulous?



No matter what your age, you may be able to improve your health if you move more and eat better! This booklet gives you tips on how to get moving and eat well throughout your life.

Did you know that people tend to gain body fat as they get older? Many women notice that they put on weight in the years leading to menopause (when menstrual periods end). They may find that losing the extra weight is not easy.

Overweight and obesity are also major health problems for black women. More than 82 percent of U.S. black women age 20 and older are overweight or obese. And over 58 percent of black women are obese. This brochure is part of a series of materials and program designed to encourage black women to move more and eat better. You may use this brochure and others in the *Sisters Together* Series to help you and other black women become physically active and make healthy food choices.

Being physically active and eating well may help you to stay fit and feel fabulous over the years. If you are overweight or inactive, you may have a higher risk for these health problems:

- type 2 diabetes (high blood sugar)
- high blood pressure
- heart disease
- stroke
- certain forms of cancer

## Why should I move more and eat better?

Being physically active and making healthier food choices are good for you. In addition to improving your physical health, moving more and eating better may also do the following:

- Reduce stress.
- Set an example for your family.

Your family and friends can be great sources of support as you adopt a healthier lifestyle. Ask them to join you in healthy eating and physical activity. Being healthy is important for them, too! By making healthy choices together, you may find it is easier to move more and eat better!



## How can I add more movement to my daily routine?

### Talk to your health care provider

You may have a chronic health problem that makes it difficult to move more in the ways suggested in this brochure. If so, talk to your health care provider about setting your own goals.

### Aim to move more for 30 minutes a day

Try to do at least 30 minutes of moderately intense physical activity on most or all days of the week. Moderately intense activities, like brisk walking or dancing, speed up your heart rate and breathing. Getting 150 total minutes spread over the week is suggested. But even 60 total minutes a week of activity that is moderately intense may bring you health benefits.

### Start with 10

Fitting in physical activity is not as hard as you may think. You don't have to do the whole 30 minutes at one time. Start with a 10-minute session three times a day, then move to 15 minutes twice a day.

### Strengthen your muscles

Also try to do activities to strengthen your muscles at least two times a week. If you have weights or a rubber exercise band, they are good options to use. You can also lift canned food as weights for strengthening your arms and back. These activities are important because older adults—especially women—tend to lose muscle and bone every year. Activities to strengthen your muscles may help prevent or reduce this loss.

## Battle your barriers

Several reasons may occur to you about why you find being physically active difficult. If some of the thoughts below sound familiar to you, try the tips after each comment to overcome things that may keep you from being active.

### *“It’s too late for me to get physically active.”*

It is never too late to start moving more! Physical activity may help you manage your arthritis and osteoporosis (bone loss). Being more active may also help you do the following:

- Keep your body flexible.
- Help you to improve your balance.
- Control high blood sugar, especially if you lose weight.
- Let you keep living in your own home without help.

### *“Physical activity is a chore.”*

- Physical activity can be fun once you figure out what you like to do. The more enjoyable it is, the more likely you are to stick with it. Walk or take an exercise class with a friend or a group. That way, you can cheer each other on, have company, and feel safer when you are outdoors.
- Start a small garden in your yard or in a community space.
- Break physical activity into short blocks of time. Taking three 10-minute walks during your day may be easier than taking one 30-minute walk.



### TIP

If you are over age 50 or have heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, or obesity, talk to your health care provider before starting an intense physical activity program. In most cases, you don’t need to talk to your provider before starting a less strenuous activity like walking.



## TIP

For more tips on keeping natural, relaxed, or braided hairstyles looking good during and after exercise, see *Hair Care Tips for Sisters On The Move* at <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/files/2012/09/sisters.pdf>.

- Vary what you do from day to day so you can stay interested.
- You may not like being active outdoors because of safety concerns. If this is true for you, join your local recreation or fitness center or go to a relative's neighborhood to walk.

### ***"I spend time and money on my hair and don't want to mess it up."***

- Talk with your stylist about hairstyles that fit your budget and your activity level.
- Try a natural hairstyle.
- Wrap or pull hair away from your face when you exercise.
- Get a short or easy-care hairstyle.
- Try braids, twists, weaves, or locs.
- To remove salt that builds up in hair from day-to-day activities, shampoo with a mild, PH-balanced product at least once a week.

### ***"It's too expensive."***

There are lots of ways to be physically active that are free or low cost:

- Find a local park or school track where you can walk.
- Walk around a mall.
- Be active with your grandchildren—take a walk, toss a softball, or ride bikes (don't forget the helmets).

### ***“I don’t have enough time.”***

No matter how busy you are, there are ways to fit in 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day:

- Spread exercise throughout the day, rather than doing it all at once.
- Set aside time to be active. For instance, make it part of your daily routine to walk after breakfast or dinner.
- Get up and move. Take breaks from sitting at the computer or watching TV.
- If you have a job that requires a lot of sitting, walk around the block when you take your break. Send computer files to the printer farthest from your desk so you can move around a little more.

### ***“I’m not an athlete, so why strength train?”***

Activities to build strength are good for everyone, including older adults. For example, lifting weights may help protect your bones. Strength training may also help you perform your daily activities with more ease. In addition to weight lifting, there are many ways to become stronger:

- Use canned foods or filled water bottles as weights to work your arms, shoulders, and back.
- If you are able to, walk up stairs—lifting your body weight strengthens your legs and hips.



### **TIP**

To avoid injury, it is important to use good form when you do strengthening activities. You can learn about proper form in *Go4Life*, a physical activity program for older adults. See the Resources section at the end of this publication for more information.



## What are some simple ideas for eating well?

- Start every day with breakfast. Try oatmeal or a whole-grain cereal with fat-free or low-fat milk. Smear fruit spread or fat-free or low-fat yogurt on whole-wheat toast. Enjoy some fruit with your breakfast, too.
- Make half of what's on your plate fruit and vegetables.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese instead of full-fat dairy products.
- Choose whole grains more often than refined grains. Whole-wheat bread and pasta, oatmeal, and brown rice have more dietary fiber than white bread, rice, and pasta. Dietary fiber helps keep you regular.
- Don't let sweets like cookies, candy, or sugary sodas and fruit juices crowd out healthy foods.



## TIP

Most Americans need more calcium, which builds strong bones and teeth. If you can't digest milk, try lactose-free milk that is fat-free or low-fat. Fat-free or low-fat yogurt and hard cheeses like cheddar may also be easier to digest than milk.

You can also get calcium from fruit juices, cereals, and soy beverages that have been enriched with calcium. Eating dark leafy vegetables can also help you meet your body's calcium needs. Good sources include collard greens and kale. Canned fish with soft bones like salmon or sardines is also a good source of calcium.



## Make healthy meals that taste good

Fried foods and fatty meats may taste good, but they are high in saturated fat, which is not healthy for your heart. There are other ways to add flavor to your food:

- Bake, roast, broil, grill, or oven-fry chicken or fish—season with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, or vinegar (but not salt).
- Cook collard greens or kale with onions, garlic, chicken broth, or bouillon. Try olive oil instead of butter, margarine, or high-fat meats. Use broth, bouillon, and cured meats like turkey bacon or ham in small amounts because they are high in sodium (salt). Or you can buy low-sodium versions.
- Top baked potatoes with salsa, a small amount of fat-free sour cream, or low-fat cottage cheese.



## TIP

Visit the “Food and Nutrition” section of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website for tips on a number of topics related to healthy food, shopping, and affordable meal planning. See <http://www.usda.gov> and the Resources section at the end of this brochure for more information on federal dietary guidelines.

## Save time and money when you cook

You don't have to spend a lot of time in the kitchen or a lot of money to eat well:

- Cook enough to last. Casseroles and a whole cooked chicken may last for several days. (Be sure to freeze or refrigerate leftovers right away to keep them safe to eat).
- Buy frozen or canned vegetables (no salt added) and canned fruit packed in juice rather than syrup. To reduce the amount of salt in canned vegetables, rinse them in plain water. These foods are just as good for you as fresh produce. They also last longer on the shelf or in the freezer and make quick and easy additions to your meals.
- Check the grocery newspaper advertisements for specials, clip coupons, and look for produce in season (when it is cheaper) and/or at a farmers market.

## How can reading the Nutrition Facts label help me?


The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Nutrition Facts label appears on most packaged foods. It tells you how many calories and servings are in a box or can. The label also shows how many nutrients like fat, fiber, sodium, and sugar are in one serving of food. You can use these facts to figure out how many calories you are eating and to make healthy food choices.<sup>1</sup> Here are some tips on how reading food labels can help you make healthy food choices:

### Calories ■

All the information on a food label is based on the serving size. Be careful—one serving may be much smaller than you think. If you have two servings, you will be eating two times the calories and nutrients noted in the label.

### % Daily Value ■

The % Daily Value (% DV) is a general guide to help you get the right amount of nutrients in your diet. This number tells you whether a food is high or low in nutrients. Foods that have more than 20% DV of a nutrient are high in that nutrient. Foods that have 5% DV or less are low in that nutrient. Limit the amount of cholesterol and sodium (salt) by looking for low DV percentages for these items.



Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin D 4%	Vitamin B12 2%
Calcium 20%	Iron 4%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g

<sup>1</sup>For more information on reading food labels, see the brochure *Using the Nutrition Facts Label: A How-to Guide for Older Adults*, listed under Resources.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
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	Calories: 2,000    2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g    80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g    25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg    300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg    2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g    375g
Dietary Fiber	25g    30g

### ■ Oils, Solid Fats, and Added Sugars

Solid fats like butter, shortening, and margarine can have high levels of saturated or *trans* fats, which are not heart healthy. You can read the ingredients list and choose foods that are low in saturated fat (5% DV or less per serving). Instead of solid fats, choose liquid fats or soft margarines. Good sources are plant-based oils like sunflower, corn, soybean, cottonseed, and safflower.

Keep track of the added sugars that you eat. Added sugars may often be “disguised” in ingredients lists (for example, corn syrup). Choose foods with little or no added sugar, like low-sugar cereals. Limit drinks sweetened with sugar.

### ■ Trans Fat

This type of fat is created when liquid oils are changed into solid fats, like shortening and some margarines, so they will last longer without going bad. This type of fat may be found in crackers, cookies, and snack foods. *Trans* fat raises your LDL (bad) cholesterol and lowers your HDL (good) cholesterol. Try not to eat much *trans* fat.

## Sodium (Salt) ■

Salt contains sodium. Eating less sodium may help lower blood pressure, which may help reduce the risk of heart disease. Eat less than 1,500 mg per day, or about 2/3 of a teaspoon of table salt. This includes sodium within foods you eat as well as extra salt you may add at the table or while cooking. When comparing food labels, choose foods that are low in sodium (5% DV or less per serving).

## Fiber ■

There are different types of dietary fiber. Insoluble fiber, found in food like whole grains and vegetables, helps with digestion and keeping you regular. Soluble fiber, found in foods like oatmeal and beans (such as navy, black, and pinto beans), may improve your cholesterol and blood sugar. Other sources of fiber are peas, lentils, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, bran, and nuts. Leaving the peels on your fruits and vegetables, such as apples and tomatoes, can add extra fiber as well. Choose foods that are high in fiber (20% DV or more per serving).

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Servings Per Container 2			
Amount Per Serving			
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110		
% Daily Value*			
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g			<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g			<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg			<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg			<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g			<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g			<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g			
<b>Protein</b> 5g			
Vitamin D 4%			Vitamin B12 2%
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		Calories: 2,000	2,500
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Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
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Calcium 20%	Iron 4%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		
	Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	30g	37g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g

## ■ Calcium

Lack of calcium can lead to bone loss.

Choose foods that are high in calcium (at least 20% DV) and low in fat.

## ■ Vitamins

**Vitamin D.** This vitamin helps your body absorb calcium. Choose foods high in vitamin D, like fresh, frozen, or canned salmon, shrimp, and light tuna. Be active outside in the sunlight (with sunscreen) to improve vitamin D levels naturally. Ask your health care provider if you should take vitamin D.

**Vitamin B12.** This vitamin helps the body make red blood cells and maintain healthy nerve cells. Older adults often have difficulty absorbing enough vitamin B12. Eat foods with added vitamin B12, such as cereals made from oat bran or whole-grain wheat bran. Ask your health care provider if you should take vitamin B12.

## TIP

Many food labels say “low-fat,” “reduced fat,” or “light.” But these claims don’t always mean the food is low in calories. Remember, fat-free does not mean calorie-free, and calories do count!

## What should I do if I'm a vegetarian?

Many people are now getting more vegetables on their plates by enjoying “meatless Mondays” or becoming vegetarians. If you're a vegetarian, you can get the nutrients you need in a vegetarian diet by eating a variety of foods. Just make sure you watch your portions and work within the calorie guidelines based on your sex, age, and activity level.

Here are some ideas for people who prefer to eat mostly plant-based foods:

- Build meals around sources of protein that are naturally low in fat, like beans, lentils, or peas.
- Try veggie burgers instead of hamburgers. Many different kinds are available, made with soybeans, vegetables, and/or rice.
- To get enough calcium, try foods that have been enriched with calcium, such as soymilk, tofu, breakfast cereals, and orange juice.
- If you don't eat any animal products at all, choose foods that are high in iron, like spinach and lentils, and foods with added vitamin B12 (check the Nutrition Facts label).





## TIPS

- Use oils or soft margarine (margarine in tub or liquid form) instead of butter. Choose a soft margarine that has less than 2 grams of saturated fat per tablespoon and has 0 grams of *trans* fat. "Liquid vegetable oil" should be first on the ingredient list. (American Heart Association)
- Try keeping a food diary. Write down what you eat, when you eat, and how you feel when you eat. Keeping a diary can help you understand your eating habits. You may be able to see ways to make your eating habits healthier.

## How can I eat well when away from home?

In real life, you can't always cook your meals. Here are some ways to make healthy choices when you are away from home:

- Use a small plate to help keep you from eating too much.
- At restaurants, share a meal with a friend or take half of it home.
- Order one or two appetizers or side dishes instead of a whole meal.

## I can do it!

Set goals and move at your own pace to reach them. Ask your family and friends to help you. They can encourage you, help you with setbacks, and be there to celebrate your successes!

No matter what, keep trying—you can do it!

## Resources

### Additional Reading from the Weight-control Information Network

*Just Enough for You: About Food Portions* explains the difference between a portion and a serving, as well as offers tips to help readers eat healthy portions. Available online at [http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/just\\_enough.htm](http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/just_enough.htm).

*Walking . . . A Step in the Right Direction* explains how to start a walking program, presents a sample program, and shows stretches for warming up and cooling down. Available online at <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/walking.htm>.



## Additional Resources

### *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These guidelines discuss the benefits of physical activity and the types and amounts that Americans need to stay healthy. Visit <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>.

### *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010.* HHS and USDA.

These federal guidelines on healthy eating provide detailed information on how to improve your eating habits and on how to make healthy vegetarian choices. Available online at <http://www.health.gov/DietaryGuidelines>.

**Go4Life.** This 120-page guide from the National Institute on Aging has many tools and resources for adding physical activity to your life. Available online at <http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/ExerciseGuide>.

**MyPlate.** USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP). Provides many resources, including tools for finding out how many calories you need and for giving you suggestions on eating and physical activity. This resource also has a menu planner that can help you make healthier menus based on federal dietary guidelines. Available online at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>.

**National Diabetes Education Program.** Publications from the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) provide information about diabetes and obesity prevention and control. NDEP's publications catalog also offers resources specifically for African Americans. Available by phone at 1-888-693-6337 or online at <http://www.yourdiabetesinfo.org>.

**National Kidney Disease Education Program.** Publications from this program provide information about detection and management of kidney disease, as well as the impact of kidney disease on African Americans. Available online at <http://nkdep.nih.gov/resources.shtml>.

***The Food Label and You.*** This fun and educational video, by the FDA, will help you understand and use the Nutrition Facts label to make informed food choices. Available online at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/NFLPM/ucm275409.htm>.

***Using the Nutrition Facts Label: A How-to Guide for Older Adults.*** A resource on food labels, available from the FDA. Available online at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/Seniors/default.htm>.



## Cookbooks

***Heart-Healthy Home Cooking African American Style.***

National Institutes of Health. This pamphlet tells how to prepare your favorite African American dishes in ways that will help protect you and your family from heart disease and stroke. It includes 20 tested recipes. Available free; call 301–592–8573 or 240–629–3255 (TTY) or download at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/chdblack/cooking.pdf>.

***Recipes and Tips for Healthy, Thrifty Meals.*** USDA, CNPP. In addition to 50 pages of tasty recipes, this booklet offers tips on healthy meal planning and “best buys for cost and nutrition.” Available free at <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/FoodPlans/MiscPubs/FoodPlansRecipeBook.pdf>.

Inclusion of resources is for information only and does not imply endorsement by NIDDK or WIN.

## Why should I participate in clinical trials?

Participants in clinical trials can play a more active role in their own health care, gain access to new research treatments before they are widely available, and help others by contributing to medical research. For more information, visit <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>.

## Weight-control Information Network

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The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) is a national information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). WIN provides the general public, health professionals, and the media with science-based, up-to-date, culturally relevant materials and tips. Topics include healthy eating, barriers to physical activity, portion control, and eating and physical activity myths. Publications produced by WIN are reviewed by both NIDDK scientists and outside experts. This publication was also reviewed by Rhonda Bayless, The Center of Wellness for Urban Women, Indianapolis, IN, and Barbi Moore, Jefferson County Department of Health, South Birmingham, AL.

This publication is not copyrighted. WIN encourages users of this brochure to copy and share as many copies as desired. This brochure is also available at <http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov>.

The *Sisters Together* Series includes the following publications:

- Celebrate the Beauty of Youth!
- Energize Yourself and Your Family!
- Fit and Fabulous as You Mature
- *Sisters Together* Program Guide: Move More, Eat Better
- Walking . . . A Step in the Right Direction!  
(also available in Spanish)

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