

Benefits of Regular Physical Activity

- Helps you manage your weight
- Reduces your risk of coronary heart disease
- Reduces your risk of stroke
- Decreases blood pressure
- Reduces your risk of colon cancer
- Helps prevent and control diabetes
- May decrease “bad” (LDL) cholesterol and raise “good” (HDL) cholesterol
- Helps you sleep better
- Strengthens bones and helps prevent injury
- Increases muscular strength and endurance
- Increases flexibility and range of motion
- Improves your mood
- Helps with stress and depression
- Improves self-esteem
- Makes you feel better



Why is Physical Activity Good for My Heart



- Your heart is a muscle. Physical activity makes it stronger.
- Physical activity is one of the best ways to lose weight. Losing weight takes strain off your heart.
- Physical activity
 - Lowers your blood pressure
 - Reduces your risk of heart disease
 - Reduces “bad” cholesterol (LDL), which clogs the arteries and can cause a heart attack
 - Increases “good” cholesterol (HDL), which helps protect against heart disease

What’s the best type of physical activity for my heart?

Aerobic activities are best. Examples of aerobic activities include walking, jogging, running, swimming, and bicycling.



Tables for:

Moderate Exercise: No Pain, Big Gains

[Medscape Internal Medicine. 2006;8(1) ©2006 Medscape]

Table 1. No Pain, Big Gains: Some Recent Studies of Moderate Daily Activities

Population Group	Type and Amount of Activities	Observed Benefit
10,269 Harvard alumni	Walking at least 9 miles a week	22% lower death rate
	Climbing at least 55 flights of stairs a week	33% lower death rate ^[9]
836 residents of King County, Washington	Gardening at least 1 hour/week	66% lower risk for sudden cardiac death
	Walking at least 1 hour/week	73% lower risk for sudden cardiac death ^[10]
1453 middle-aged Finnish men	At least 2.2 hours of leisure time activity a week	69% lower risk for heart attack
4484 Icelandic men aged 45-80	Spending at least 43 minutes a day on leisure time physical activity after age 40	16% lower risk for stroke ^[11]
73,743 American women aged 50-79	Walking for at least 2.5 hours per week	30% lower risk for cardiovascular events ^[12]
44,452 American male health professionals	Walking at least 30 minutes/day	18% lower risk for coronary artery disease
39,372 American female health professionals	Walking at least 1 hour/week	51% lower risk for coronary artery disease ^[13]
72,488 American female nurses	Walking at least 3 hours/week	35% lower risk for heart attack and cardiac death
		34% lower risk for stroke ^[14]
30,640 Danish men and women aged 20-93	Spending 2-4 hours/week on light leisure time activity	32% lower mortality rate ^[15]
4311 British men aged 40-59	Performing light-to-moderate physical activity	35% to 39% lower mortality rate ^[16]
1404 female residents of Framingham, Massachusetts	Performing moderate physical activity	37% lower mortality rate ^[17]
802 Dutch men, aged 64-84	Walking or biking at least 1 hour/week	29% lower mortality rate ^[18]
707 retired Hawaiian men, aged 61-81	Walking at least 2 miles/day	50% lower mortality rate ^[19]
9518 older American women	Walking up to 10 miles/week	29% lower mortality rate ^[20]
229 postmenopausal American women	Walking 1 mile/day or more (a 10-year randomized clinical trial)	82% lower risk for heart disease ^[21]
7951 pairs of Finnish twins	Exercising at least 30 minutes on at least 6 days/month	43% lower mortality rate ^[22]
6017 Japanese men, aged 35-60	Walking (to work) for 21 minutes or more	29% lower risk of developing

Barriers to Physical Activity

Ever feel like something always gets in the way of doing physical activity? Here is a list of the more common barriers to physical activity along with ideas on how to overcome them.



Do you feel self-conscious about your weight and being seen by others? Being physically active makes you feel healthy and good about yourself almost immediately. Once you feel good, it's easy not to worry so much about how you look. You'll be surprised how supportive people will be.

Have you had little practice or a bad experience with physical activity in the past? Start slowly with something that you might like. If you joined a gym before and hated it, then try something totally different like walking with a friend or taking dance classes.

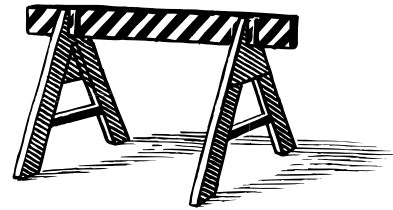
Not in the mood to exercise or have little motivation? When you exercise your mood almost always improves. Once you start moving you usually become motivated to do more because it makes you feel so good. Next time you're not in the mood, try some physical activity and you'll be amazed!

Does the hot and/or cold weather stop you from being physically active? You don't have to exercise outdoors. There are lots of activities you can do inside. You could walk the mall; get an exercise tape from the local library; use items around the house for strength training such as canned foods; join the local YMCA or other health facility; or put on some music and dance.

MOVE!



Do you have difficulty finding the time to be more physically active?



Every bit of activity helps. Spreading exercise over the day in several 10-minute bouts works just as well as exercising all at once. Add physical activity to other daily routines (for example: walk to the store, take the stairs, park farther away and walk, exercise at your desk or while watching TV).

Aren't physical activities expensive? There are lots of physical activities you can do at little or no cost. (Examples: walking, using household items for weights, working in the yard, free or low-cost community events).

Think physical activity will make your pain worse? In most cases, regular physical activity reduces pain over time.

Are you afraid of getting hurt? Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury. Choose activities that have minimal risk such as walking. Consult your doctor if pain is severe or persistent.

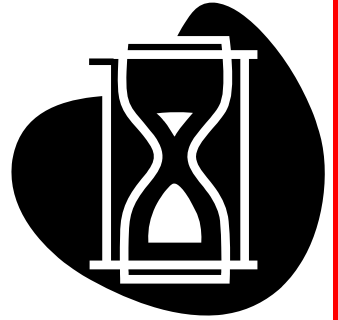
Feel like you have no support? Ask for help from family and friends. Find a physical activity buddy.

Does stress get in the way of physical activity? This does not have to stop you from being physically active. Get help. Ask your primary care provider.



Lack of Time for Physical Activity?

Here are some ideas to help fit more physical activity into your day:



- Look for short periods of time (at least ten minutes) during the day in which you can do some physical activity.
- Walk to the mailbox.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot when at the store, mall, or work.
- Be active during lunchtime! If you bring lunch to work, you may have time to take a brisk walk.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Plan and prepare meals ahead of time, so you'll have time to exercise.
- Walk the dog a little longer at a brisk pace.
- Get your family to exercise with you. It's a fun way to spend some quality time together.
- Keep a daily log; this can help you to see where you can fit in more physical activity.
- Replace part of your TV/computer time with physical activity.
- Do chair exercises while watching TV.
- Set aside a block of time every day for planned physical activity. Make being active a part of your daily routine just like brushing your teeth and taking a shower.



Activities to Fit Your Lifestyle

Exercise does not have to be planned. Think of all the ways you can be active during your day.

- Walk or ride a bike for transportation.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot and walk.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Walk your dog, or borrow someone else's dog.
- Take a brisk walk while you are shopping at the mall.
- Walk to your mailbox.
- Mow the grass. Rake the leaves. Weed the garden.
- Dance whenever you can.
- Wash your car.
- Vacuum or sweep the floor often.
- Get up to change the TV channel, don't use the remote.
- March in place during TV commercials.
- Stretch or do chair exercises while watching TV.
- Stand up and step in place while using the phone.
- Walk down the hall to talk to a coworker instead of using the phone or sending an email.
- On work breaks, take a 5-10 minute walk.
- If you play golf, walk every hole.



Exercise on a Budget

Sometimes cost can be a barrier to being more physically active. There are lots of activities that involve little or no cost.



- Walking is free.
- Churches and community centers often have free events.
- Build strength using household items for weights (canned foods, small bottles of water, etc.).
- Simple stretches can improve flexibility and range of motion.
- Find a local trail.
- Buy a bicycle from a second-hand shop or at a yard sale.
- Try a new sport that doesn't require expensive equipment.
- Look at Senior Centers, the YMCA, and local recreational centers for free or reduced cost activities.
- Physical activities that you build into your daily routine like taking the stairs or parking farther away and walking are free!



Types of Physical Activity

Lifestyle Physical Activities

- Walk or ride bicycle for transportation instead of car or bus.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot, and walk to your destination.
- Mow the grass, and rake the leaves.
- Get off the bus one stop early, and walk the rest of the way.
- Walk every hole if you play golf.
- Dance at every opportunity you have.
- Walk the dog, if you don't have one, borrow someone else's.
- Do some extra laps when you are shopping at the mall.
- Chop or split wood.
- Wash your car.
- Vacuum often.
- Get up to change the TV channel.
- March in place during TV commercials.
- Walk upstairs every time you have something to carry up, instead of waiting for a pile.
- Walk down the hall to talk to a coworker instead of picking up the telephone or sending an email.
- Stretch while watching TV.
- Stand up while you're talking on the telephone.

Programmed Physical Activity

Aerobic

- Walking
- Jogging
- Stair climbing
- Swimming**
- Water walking*
- Water aerobics*
- Gardening
- Dancing-any type
- Aerobic classes
- Bicycling**
- Roller or ice skating
- Snow skiing
- Chair exercises**
- Machines
 - Treadmill
 - Stair climber
 - Stationary bike**
 - Row machine**
 - Ski machine*
 - Elliptical trainer*
- Sports
 - Basketball
 - Tennis
 - Golf
 - Touch football
 - Ultimate frisbee
 - Soccer

Flexibility

- Stretching
- Yoga
- Tai Chi

Strength

- Free weights (dumbbells)
- Elastic bands
- Circuit machines
- Pilates
- Conditioning exercises
- Medicine balls

* = low-impact activities

** = non-weight bearing activities



How Do I Get Started With Increasing My Physical Activity

Increasing your physical activity levels does not mean you have to join the local gym or athletic club. There are many fun ways to increase activity slowly and safely. The best thing about physical activity is that even a little can make you feel a whole lot better. In no time at all, you will have more energy, sleep better, and feel fitter.



Safety First:

- ✓ Ask your *MOVE!* team whether you need to see your primary care provider before beginning a program of physical activity.
- ✓ Stop exercising immediately if you experience any of the following:
 - Severe pain, tightness, pressure or discomfort in your chest
 - Severe shortness of breath
 - Severe nausea or vomiting
 - Sudden onset weakness or changes in sensation in your arm and/or leg on one side of your body
 - Difficulty swallowing, talking, or seeing
 - Severe headache or dizziness

CALL 911 immediately if the symptoms do not disappear within a few minutes.

If you have less severe, new, or worsening symptoms when beginning or increasing physical activity, see your primary care provider.



General tips on increasing physical activity:



- Start slowly; choose the type and amount of activity that is right for you.
- Increase your everyday activity. Take the stairs. Park farther away and walk. Clean your house. Get up to change the TV channel. Walk to check your mail.
- Walking is a great way to increase your physical activity. It's free and you can do it almost anywhere.
- Use a pedometer to count the number of steps you take everyday.
- You don't have to belong to a gym. Choose any activity that gets you moving.
- For weight loss, exercising longer is better than exercising harder. Mild to moderate exercise will do the job.
- Aim to be physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. Even longer would be better. But try not to overdo it at first.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes that are right for the activity and weather.
- Listen to your body. You are the best judge of how hard and how long you should exercise.
- Recruit an activity buddy; someone who likes the same activity and can keep you motivated.
- Warm-up, cool-down, and stretch before, during and after activity to prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness.
- Whether it's summer or winter, drink plenty of water before, during, and after activity.



Exercise Can Be Fun!

So you don't like physical activity? There are lots of ways to be physically active without doing what you might consider "a workout" or "exercise".



- Go walking with others.
- Dance.
- Get the whole family involved in some physical activity like walking in a park.
- Find a beginner's exercise class that you might enjoy.
- Do housework to music.
- Try out a new sport or activity.
- Go bicycling with family or friends.
- Check out your local community center for upcoming events.
- Play golf – carry your clubs to burn more calories or use a pull cart.





Action Plan

This week I will _____ (What)
 _____ (How Much)
 _____ (When)
 _____ (How Often)

Circle how sure you are that you can do this action:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

*If your answer is less than 7, you may not be able to meet your goal.
 Think about modifying your plan to be more doable.*

Give yourself a check mark each day you accomplish your plan	Comments: Write yourself a note about today's activity.
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	

Possible road blocks to meeting my plan:

Things I can do to overcome these road blocks:

Other resources I need to meet my action plan:
