

Help Your Staff Promote Physical Activity

Doctors' offices and clinics are busy places. Staff need to talk with patients about many things, and physical activity can end up at the bottom of the list.

Here are a few ways you can help your staff engage your patients 50 and older about physical activity and exercise.

Help your staff understand why physical activity and exercise are important

Encourage staff to visit the **Go4Life** website (www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life) to:

- Learn more about the four types of exercise (endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility).
- Read about the health benefits of exercise.
- See why it's an important topic of discussion during patient visits.

Create an atmosphere where physical activity is an expected topic of conversation.

- Provide **Go4Life** printed materials in the waiting room and exam rooms.
- Hang **Go4Life** posters in hallways and exam rooms.



Quick Tip

Be physically active yourself and encourage your staff to be active too. The enthusiasm is contagious!

Provide DOs and DON'Ts for conversations with patients.

DO:

- Talk with patients about how physical activity can help them reach their health and life goals.
- Ask open-ended questions about physical activity behaviors. Letting patients talk about what they are doing may reveal physical activity beyond traditional sports or exercise classes.
- Be positive and encouraging. Invite questions and discussion.

DON'T:

- Push too hard. Patients need to start at a pace that's right for them and build slowly.
- Be judgmental. Negative comments can quickly discourage a person's efforts.

VISIT

www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

- Print useful tools.
- Order free exercise guides, DVDs, and posters for your waiting room.



National Institute on Aging

National Institutes of Health

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