

Health Promotion in Motion

Why Be Physically Active?

Because it helps:

- Control your weight
- Reduce your risk of developing heart disease
- Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and prediabetes
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Reduce your risk of some cancers
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Improve your ability to do daily activities
- Prevent falls
- Increase your chances of living longer

To learn about the benefits of physical activity and how to start being active, visit <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/adultguide/>

Getting Started

- If you have been inactive for a while, begin with 10 to 15 minutes of **moderate activity** 2 to 3 times each day. The **talk test** is a simple way to measure how hard you are working. If you're doing moderate-intensity activity you can talk, but not sing. Try:
 - Walking briskly
 - Biking slowly
 - Canoeing
 - Dancing
 - Water aerobics
 - Light gardening -- raking leaves, weeding, trimming shrubs
 - Tennis doubles
 - Using your manual wheelchair

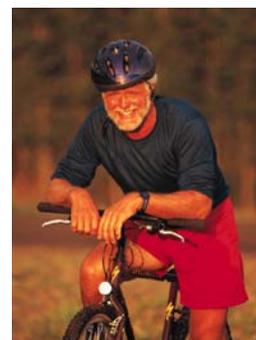
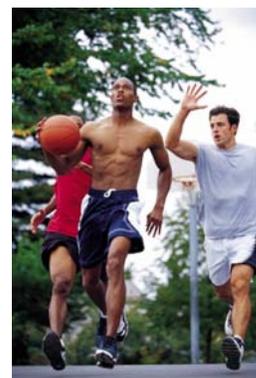
Once you get comfortable being active, **aim for 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate activity every week.**

- For strong bones and muscles, **aim to do strengthening activities 2 days a week.** Try:
 - Push ups
 - Sit ups
 - Lifting weights
 - Working with resistance bands
 - Heavy gardening – digging, shoveling

Stepping It Up

If you are already doing 2½ hours a week of moderate physical activity, gradually increase your time, or, to save time, begin to do vigorous activities. **In general, 15 minutes of vigorous activity gives the same benefits as 30 minutes of moderate activity.** When you do vigorous activity, you can only say a few words without pausing for a breath. You will be breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate will go up quite a bit. Try:

- Heavy gardening
- Race walking
- Swimming laps
- Medium-paced running
- Tennis singles
- Bicycling 10 miles per hour or faster
- Basketball
- Jumping rope
- Hiking uphill



Barriers to Physical Activity

Despite the benefits of physical activity, two out of three American adults do not get the recommended 150 minutes per week. Here are some common barriers and possible solutions.

Common Barriers	Possible Solutions
Not enough time	Break activity into shorter chunks – as little as 10 minutes at a time. Try walking during your lunch break.
Costs too much	You don't have to join a health club or buy fancy equipment to be active. Play tag with your kids. Walk briskly with your dog for 10 minutes or more.
Don't enjoy being active	Find ways to move that you enjoy such as walking with friends, dancing, or gardening.
Lack motivation	Tell your friends and family you are trying to be more physically active. Ask them to help support your efforts.
Not good at sports	You don't have to play sports to be active. Try activities like walking, bicycling, or dancing with friends or family, or playing with your kids.
Busy taking care of family	Trade babysitting time with a friend or family member who also has small children. Or be active with your family: play tag, take walks, or go sledding.



Tips to Increase Physical Activity

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Mow the lawn with a push mower
- Take a walk at lunch or on your break
- Replace 30 minutes of TV time with a walk
- Walk instead of driving your car short distances
- Ask a friend or family member to join you on a walk
- Park at the far end of the parking lot – it's an easy way to add 5 to 10 minutes of activity to your day
- Play active games with your children: hide-n-seek, tag, charades, dance
- Plan active weekends: walk, hike, bicycle, swim, garden

