

Get Moving!



There are no rules for how you choose to be physically active—the possibilities are endless! And anything you choose will come with health benefits.

Regular physical activity—

- helps protect against cardiovascular disease and its risk factors: high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes.
- can reduce risk of osteoporosis and cancer.
- reduces stress.
- improves sleep.
- increases longevity.

Physical Activity Overview

Research shows a payback of approximately 2 minutes of extra life for every minute of aerobic exercise. Besides adding years to your life, exercise also adds life to your years.

The latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2015) recommends getting at least 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days a week.

A brisk walk, gardening, raking leaves, shoveling snow, or washing windows can help you toward your 30-minute goal, even done in 10-minute segments throughout the day!

You do not need to have an expensive membership to a gym or empty your wallet to buy special equipment to get the physical activity you need to stay healthy. Try walking! It's an easy, safe activity that can make you feel and look better. All you need is a pair of walking shoes!

Tips to Get Started

- **Choose your shoes wisely.** A comfortable pair of shoes with good arch support is the only special equipment you need. When buying walking shoes, shop late in the day when your feet may be swollen. Be sure to measure both feet. Wear appropriate socks, and walk around the store in both shoes. Try on several pairs of shoes and compare fit and comfort. If the shoes still feel comfortable after at least 10 minutes—and they fit your budget—buy them.
- **Dress for safety and for the season.** For visibility, wear light-colored clothes and always walk facing oncoming traffic. In cooler weather, opt for several layers of clothes so that you can shed layers if you get too warm. If it's icy, wear shoes with a good grip. Wear a cap to help maintain body temperature.
- **Before beginning any exercise program, it is recommended that you consult with your physician.**
- **Bring a water bottle and drink frequently.** When you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Try to drink a half-cup of water every 15 minutes while being physically active.
- **Warm up** your muscles before working out. Limber up your muscles with some "static stretching," which is a continuous stretch just to the point where you feel a slight pull. A bouncing type of stretching is not recommended. To warm up, start slowly during the first 5 or 10 minutes of your activity; then, increase your pace.
- **Pace yourself. Find a comfortable speed.** Take the talk test: if you can't talk while exercising, slow down. If you feel pain, dizziness, nausea, or other symptoms, STOP. If the problem persists, check with your physician.
- **Cool down.** During the last 5 or 10 minutes, slow your pace to cool down. Stretching again will help prevent sore muscles.
- **Stay motivated. Walk with a buddy!**

References

Garden-Robinson, Julie, and Terbizan, Donna. "Walk This Way." North Dakota State University Extension Service, August 1998.

Sweetgall, Rob. *Walk the Four Seasons*. Clayton, MO: Creative Walking, Inc., 1992.

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Revised by David Buys, PhD, MSPH, Extension State Health Specialist, Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion.



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