



Be Physically Active Daily

CHALLENGE
Get 30+ minutes
of physical activity
5 or more days
each week.

Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Keep a written record of how many minutes you exercise each day. Record the activity on the **Health Challenge Calendar**.
2. Read “How fitness improves your health” and “Exercise guidelines.”
3. You complete the Challenge when you are physically active for 30-60 minutes at least 22 days this month!
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

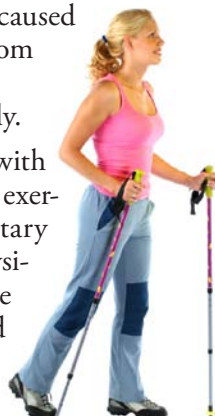
How fitness improves your health

Physical activity and fitness are important components of a healthy lifestyle. When done regularly, physical activity helps prevent heart disease, diabetes, cancer, depression, anxiety, obesity, osteoporosis, and other serious health problems.

According to many studies, about half of all cancers could be prevented by maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active on a daily basis, and eating a healthful diet.

According to studies conducted by the American Cancer Society (ACS) over the past 16 years, more than 20% of all cancer deaths in women and 14% in men are linked directly to being overweight. Another 33% of cancer deaths are linked to poor diet and physical inactivity. That comes to about 90,000 cancer deaths a year caused by being overweight and another 186,000 from poor nutritional choices and lack of physical activity. That's a lot of people dying needlessly.

When researchers looked at risks associated with developing diabetes, they found that regular exercise has a big impact. People who were sedentary at the start of the study but who became physically active during the 15-year follow-up were 60% less likely to develop diabetes compared to those who remained sedentary.



In a Harvard study of 80,000 nurses, those who walked at least half an hour on 5 or more days per week had only half as many heart attacks as those who didn't exercise regularly.

Regular exercise helps you look and feel your best

Regular physical activity helps you control body weight by increasing the calories you expend each day.

As you exercise, you burn 4-10 times as many calories per minute as when sitting quietly, watching TV or working on the computer. Walking 4 mph burns 5 times the calories per minute as sitting; biking burns 7 times the calories, and jogging burns at least 10 times the calories as does sitting. Exercise also builds muscle which results in you burning more calories all day long, even at rest.

A study by Duke University found that regular exercise is just as effective as medication in treating depression. In addition, the people in the study who exercised saw improvement in mental function that those on medication didn't experience. The Duke researchers also found that staying active greatly reduces the chance that depression will return.

Overall, fitness helps nearly every aspect of life – from physical to mental and emotional health. Everybody needs regular physical activity to achieve his or her full health potential.

Regular exercise helps you live longer

Regular activity, such as brisk walking for at least 30 minutes most days of the week, is vital to healthy aging. The Adventist Health Study and the Alameda County Study (2 landmark, large, population-based studies) showed physical activity to be a top predictor of long life. Another study found that unfit seniors were 4 times more likely to die early than were those who were most fit.

Another study found that getting exercise 5+ days each week reduces the risk of early death by 27%. It's even more beneficial if some of the activity is vigorous – reducing the risk of premature death by 50%. Getting regular exercise – even at levels less than recommended – still cut the risk of early death by 19% compared to not getting any regular physical activity. The Harvard Alumni Study showed that for every hour you exercise, you increase your life expectancy by 2 hours. Not a bad investment!





Physical activity...

- ✓ Burns excess calories helping you achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Helps lower blood pressure and improves cholesterol levels (raises HDL cholesterol)
- ✓ Decreases the risk of stroke
- ✓ Improves insulin sensitivity, lowering blood glucose levels, and preventing diabetes
- ✓ Improves mood and self image and combats depression and anxiety
- ✓ Strengthens both muscle and bones, decreasing risk of injury
- ✓ Reduces risk for colon and breast cancer
- ✓ Helps you sleep better
- ✓ Reduces the risk of cold or flu
- ✓ Promotes a long, healthy life

Unfortunately, the majority of people are sedentary. A recent survey by the National Center for Health Statistics found that more than two-thirds (70%) of adults don't get the recommended amount of regular leisure time physical activity (defined as vigorous activity 20 minutes 3+ times/ week or moderate activity 30+ minutes 5+ days/week).

Exercise guidelines

Just about anyone can be physically active. The good news for most people is that physical activity doesn't need to be strenuous to be beneficial. When first getting started, keep your activity moderate. Don't over do! Choose activities you enjoy and that are within your current level of capacity.

The components of a good physical activity program include:

- ✓ **Duration** (length of continuous activity): at least 10-minute sessions with an accumulated total of 20-60 minutes daily.
- ✓ **Frequency** (how many times a week you do it): at least 3 days a week, preferably 5+ days a week.
- ✓ **Intensity** (how much effort you put into it): start with light to moderate activities – more vigorous activities if you are young and healthy.
- ✓ **Strength Training** (exercises to make muscles stronger): one set of 8-12 repetitions of 8-10 exercises that condition the major muscle groups at least 2 days a week.
- ✓ **Flexibility Exercises** (stretching to maintain balance and a good range of motion in your joints): at least 3 days a week – especially essential for those age 50+.

Read about endurance exercises recommended by the National Institute on Aging: www.weboflife.ksc.nasa.gov/exerciseandaging/chapter4_endurance.html

Increasing Intensity

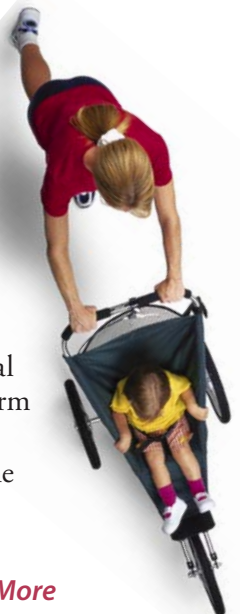
Some activities require minimal effort (strolling through a park, dusting, or golfing using a cart). These are termed light activities. Start with these activities if you're unaccustomed to physical activity. Once you've achieved a level of endurance, you can increase your endurance by upping the duration, then the frequency, and finally the intensity.

Activities requiring moderate intensity of effort are those you can engage in while still carrying on a conversation. Examples of moderate activities are bicycling, rowing, dancing, golfing without a cart, walking briskly on a level surface, mopping, and raking. After you can easily participate in moderate-intensity activities, you can begin vigorous activities: climbing stairs or hills, swimming laps, digging holes, skiing, jogging, hiking, and playing singles tennis.

How to get started and stay motivated

Maintaining an active lifestyle for a lifetime is the real Challenge. Currently, only about 1 in 4 people are maintaining physical activity for good health. Here are some ideas to consider when planning for lifelong fitness.

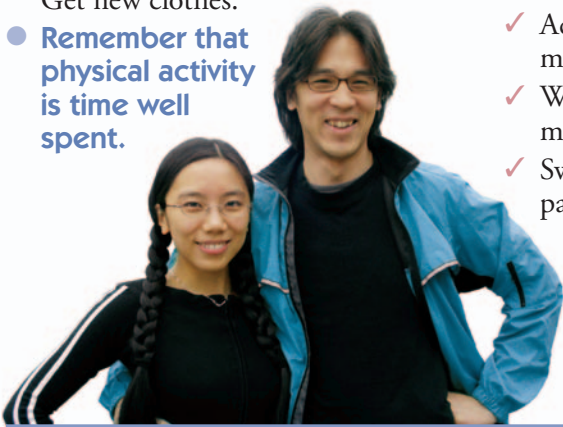
- **Set weekly goals.** A goal might be 30+ minutes of activity 5+ days each week. Or, it may be walking 2 miles daily, or biking to work. Be specific. Write out your goals and keep a written log of your progress daily.
- **Exercise with your spouse or a friend.** Adding a social element helps keep your activity fun and improves long-term success.
- **Try a variety of activities.** Walk, bike, swim, hike on the weekends, play tennis, and garden. Have fun!



➔ **More**



- **Don't overdo!** If you get too tired or sore muscles from attempting too much too soon, simply ease back a little. Don't go so hard that it isn't fun any more and you give up. Take it easy. Be consistent, and your body will adapt.
- **Think of exercise as "play."** Have fun! Choose pleasant surroundings when possible: exercise in a park, by a river, lake, or other scenic setting.
- **Get comfortable, well fitting shoes** and clothes to exercise in. Join the fitness ranks. Look the part! Keep it fun.
- **Get additional guidance or support.** Join a fitness center, a community aerobics class, the YMCA, or a biking or hiking club.
- **Reward yourself as you reach your fitness goals.** Take a trip. Get new clothes.
- **Remember that physical activity is time well spent.**



Aim for 30-60 minutes

The national fitness guideline by the American College of Sports Medicine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states: Every adult should get 20 minutes of vigorous activity 3+ times per week or 30-60 minutes of moderate activity on at least 5 days each week. It's OK to break the exercise into two 15-minute sessions or three 10-minute sessions if it fits into your schedule better. Examples of moderate activities that are all similar in intensity include:

- ✓ Walking for 35 minutes (covering about 2 miles)
- ✓ Active gardening for 30 to 45 minutes
- ✓ Bicycling at 8 to 10 mph for 30 minutes
- ✓ Mowing the lawn with a push mower or raking leaves for 30 to 40 minutes
- ✓ Active dancing for 30 to 40 minutes
- ✓ Water aerobics for 30 to 40 minutes
- ✓ Swimming laps at a moderate pace for 25 to 30 minutes
- ✓ Golfing for 45 to 60 minutes
- ✓ Playing volleyball for 45 to 60 minutes
- ✓ Doing conditioning exercises for 30 to 45 minutes

Safety

Most people don't need to see their doctor before starting a moderate-intensity activity program. However, if you have a health problem such as obesity, diabetes, or a heart problem, get your doctor's guidance before beginning a fitness program. A moderate-intensity activity should feel "fairly easy to somewhat hard" and make you breathe deeply but not be out of breath. Working up a good sweat is also an indication of cardiovascular benefit. Start within your current fitness level and gradually progress to meet your goal.

Progression

If you are already fit and enjoy more vigorous activity, that's great! Running, skiing, tennis, and other active sports add challenge and enjoyment. If you are over age 40, however, and not used to vigorous activity, get your doctor's guidance before significantly increasing your level of physical activity. Aerobic activities should also be supplemented with strength-developing exercises at least twice per week to improve muscle/bone health. If you want further benefit from exercise, gradually work up to 45-60 minutes per day. This is especially helpful for those needing help in losing or maintaining their weight.

Sources:

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Instructions

1. Post this record sheet where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of minutes you exercise each day. Put an "X" in the box on those days you met your Health Challenge™. Use this calendar to also record weight and any other items you may want to track.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you exercised at least 30 minutes. You must meet this goal at least 22 days out of the month to complete the Challenge. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of best health!
4. Enter your completion of this Health Challenge™ on the Health Activity Tracker report for the month. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>		
ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____		
HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>		
ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____		
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ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____		
HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>	HC <input type="checkbox"/>		
ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____	ex. min. _____		

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Signature _____ Date _____

