

Physical ACTIVITY



Regular physical activity is important for good health. It's especially important if you're trying to lose weight or to maintain a healthy weight. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight requires both regular physical activity and a healthy eating plan!

Physical activity helps to:

- Maintain weight
- Improves mood
- Boosts energy
- Keeps body strong
- Promotes better sleep
- Improves bone health
- Improves heart health
- Helps stabilize blood sugar

How much physical activity do I need?

To maintain your weight: Work your way up to 150 minutes (or about 30 minutes, five times a week) of moderate to vigorous activity per week.

Keep in mind that the exact amount of exercise needed to maintain weight for each person varies. It's possible that you may need more than the 150 minutes of activity a week to maintain your weight.

To lose weight and keep it off: A good place to start is reaching 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week. Once you've reached that goal, try slowly increasing physical activity by:

- **Increase the time spent exercising per day**
 - Go from 30 minutes per day to 45-60 minutes per day
- **Increase the number of days you exercise per week**
 - Go from 5 days per week to 6-7 days per week
- **Add in strength training at least 2 times per week**
 - Strength training can include use of:
 - Weight machines
 - Your own body weight
 - Resistance bands
 - Homemade hand weights like cans of food, water jugs, or books



It takes time to build up your amount of exercise, but any amount will benefit your body. You can even break up your exercise into smaller amounts of time during the day. It's about finding what works best for you!

Check with your primary care doctor before starting any exercise program.

What do moderate and vigorous-intensity mean?

Moderate: While performing the exercise, if your breathing and heart rate is a little faster but you can still talk with another person – it's likely moderate activity. Examples include:

- Walking briskly (a 15-minute mile)
- Light yard work (raking/bagging leaves or using a lawn mower)
- Light snow shoveling
- Actively playing with children
- Biking at a casual pace

Vigorous: If your heart rate is increased and you are breathing too hard and fast to talk, it's likely vigorous activity. Examples include:

- Jogging/running
- Swimming laps
- Most competitive sports (football, basketball, soccer, or tennis)
- Jumping rope

More tips to help increase your exercise throughout the week:

- Walk more!
 - Walk the dog
 - Get up to talk with a co-worker instead of sending an email or phone call
 - Park your car further away at shopping centers
 - Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Make exercise a family event
 - Go for a walk together after dinner
 - Take a hike on the weekend
- Keep comfortable clothes in your car for motivation to exercise after work
- To decrease impact on your joints, try:
 - Pool exercises
 - Water aerobics
 - Stationary bicycle
 - Chair exercises
- Do yard work, gardening, or household chores that require brisk movement
- Check out free exercise videos online

Example of exercise throughout the week

Day	Type of Exercise	Duration
Sunday	Hike with family	60 minutes
Monday	Aerobics exercise video	30 minutes
Tuesday	15-minute walk with hand weights	15 minutes
Wednesday	Zumba class	30 minutes
Thursday	3 ten minute walks	30 minutes
Friday	Elliptical; weight machines	45 minutes
Saturday	Yardwork	30 minutes
Total		240 minutes