

# Adult Physical Activity Tip Sheet

Physical activity is any movement of the body that uses energy. Physical activity, along with a healthy diet, is the key to having a healthy weight, and an overall healthy lifestyle. Adults need 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day to keep their weight the same. To lose weight, adults need even more minutes of physical activity. This activity can be broken up into small amounts of time like 10 minutes three times a day or 15 minutes twice a day.

## Benefits of Physical Activity

Normal amounts of physical activity are good for your health and well-being in a variety of ways. Physical activity can:

- Raise your self-esteem and lower stress, anxiety, and depression
- Make your bones, muscles, and joints strong
- Make you more flexible and make your posture better
- Lower your risk of stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and breast and colon cancer
- Boost your energy level

Read the following tips to learn more about physical activity:

### 1. Prioritize Physical Activity

Adding physical activity to your daily routine at work, home, and other places can ease stress, boost energy, help you perform better, and improve your long-term health.



- Walk, bike, skate, or jog to work, school, the store and other destinations
- Walk up the stairs instead of taking the elevator
- Get off the bus a stop or two early and walk up the rest of the way
- Do simple exercises while watching television or at work like sit-ups, push-ups, or stretching
- Play with your children or take the dog for a walk
- Clean the house, wash the car, or plant a garden
- Take 10-minute fitness breaks at work to go on a brisk walk

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## 2. Start Out Slow

Even small amounts of physical activity are good for your health. Start with small, doable goals for physical activity and you will be more likely to keep the habits over time.

- Choose a light physical activity to improve strength, such as walking, biking, swimming, skating, yoga, or light weight training
- Build up the time spent doing the activity towards a goal of at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week
- Try different types of machines, weights, and classes at the gym or at home until you find what you like or a combination that is enjoyable

## 3. Have Fun

Physical activity can be fun if you choose activities you like. Try many types of activities that appeal to you and invite friends and family members so that exercising turns into a social event.



- Try something new like dancing, bicycling, martial arts, or Pilates
- Take your family hiking on local trails
- Explore many parks, mountains, and beaches where you can be active
- Throw a ball or Frisbee back and forth for fun
- Join a neighborhood walking group, local gym, or YMCA

## 4. Safety Tips When Exercising

Talk to your doctor if you have a history of heart problems, stroke or other serious health problems before you start a new exercise routine. To avoid injury or harming your body when exercising, follow these tips:



- Warm up before exercising by starting off slowly, and cool down after exercising by stretching and taking slow, deep breaths
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water before, during, and after exercising
- Listen to your body, and stop if you feel signs of fatigue or injury, like pain or shortness of breath