

Physical Activity Matters
Important Steps for **YOUR** Health

Physical Activity **Why it Matters and How to Begin Your Daily Exercise**



Physical Activity Matters-Part 1

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says, “Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health.”

Everyone can improve their health through **regular physical activity** no matter their age, ethnicity, shape, or size.

The benefits of exercise far outweigh any health risks.

Health benefits are noticeable when you exercise **regularly**. Many activities, like walking, have no costs. Doing house or yard work will also keep you more fit. *The more physical activity you build into your day, the healthier you will be.*

Try walking instead of driving whenever you can. Take the stairs if possible. Perhaps park further away from a store entrance in a parking lot. For exercise, maybe ride a bike or do some yoga. Be social and plan a walk with family, friends, or your dog. **There are many ways to be active.**

Some benefits of exercise:

- *helps reduce risk factors for colon and breast cancer and other diseases like stroke, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.*
- *reduces obesity and helps control weight.*
- *increases your stamina and muscle strength, and improves your balance.*
- *enhances your mood, gives you more energy, and can boost your immune system.*
- *improves your learning ability and memory, and may prevent or delay Alzheimer’s disease.*
- *helps build muscle and bone tissue and prevent osteoporosis.*



Exercise can relieve stress and anxiety; improve muscle and bone development; reduce fat and control weight; improve blood pressure and cholesterol; and contribute to better health and longevity.



Physical Activity Matters-Part 2

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says, “Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health.”

Before you Begin. Speak with your doctor(s) if you have been inactive, have health issues, or experienced any of the following:

- chest, neck, or arm pain
- diagnosed heart condition
- shortness of breath or dizziness
- joint or bone problems
- diabetes or high blood pressure



First Steps. Tips for creating a fitness program:

- Create an exercise plan with **realistic, achievable, and measurable goals**.
- Choose activities that **you enjoy**, like walking or gardening, and stick with them.
- Commit to a new lifestyle and include exercise as **part of your daily routine**.
- Break activities up into smaller units (10-15 minutes, twice a day), if this is easier.

For adults over age 40, a weekly minimum of 150 minutes (or 30 minutes, five days a week) is recommended for noticeable health benefits.

Remember, health risks of an inactive (or sedentary) life include:

- Increased risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and stroke
- loss of muscle strength and endurance
- loss of flexibility and greater risk of falls
- lower quality of life and increased isolation
- decreased sleep quality

The US Department of Health and Human Services estimates over 80% of adults do not meet the guidelines for both aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities and **less than 5% of adults participate in 30 minutes of physical activity each day**. The good news is that you can get active at any age and enjoy health benefits.



It's Your Choice.

Physical exercise is an important part of wellness, along with good nutrition and sufficient rest. Exercise is also proven to reduce chronic pain over time.

Remember, it's never too late to start exercising.