

Protect your health. Prevent disease.

Be active...

your way - every day!



Be Healthy and Active Today

Regular physical activity provides significant health benefits and is essential for a healthy lifestyle. Meeting the activity recommendations below can greatly reduce the risks of chronic disease, such as heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. An active lifestyle helps promote healthy muscles, bones, and joints, and substantially improves an individual's endurance, muscular strength, balance, and flexibility. Regular physical activity is also a critical component of weight control and maintenance.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Children and Adolescents (6 - 17 Years of Age)

For substantial health benefits, children and adolescents should do at least 60 minutes or more of physical activity daily.

Type	Time	Examples
Aerobic Activity	60 minutes or more a day should be moderate intensity	Hiking, brisk walking, bicycle riding, yard work, sports
	At least 3 days/week some of the 60 minutes should be done at vigorous intensity	Jumping rope, martial arts, running, dancing, swimming, sports
Muscle-Strengthening	At least 3 days a week and in combination with aerobic activity	Playing on playground equipment, climbing trees, resistance training
Bone-Strengthening	At least 3 days a week and in combination with aerobic activity	Running, jumping rope, basketball, tennis, hopscotch

Adults (18 - 65 Years of Age) and Older Adults (65+ Years of Age)

For substantial health benefits, adults should do a combination of aerobic and muscle strengthening activities at least 150 minutes a week of moderate activity or at least 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. If you cannot meet the weekly minutes, be as active as your abilities and conditions allow.

Type	Time	Examples
Aerobic Activity	Most of the 150 minutes a week should be at moderate intensity	Ballroom dancing, bicycle riding, general gardening, walking briskly
	Or 75 minutes should be at vigorous intensity	Aerobic dance, jumping rope, martial arts, jogging, running
Muscle-Strengthening	At least 2 days a week and in combination with aerobic activity	Resistance training with dumbbells or resistance bands, calisthenics, or body weight activities such as push ups

Source: 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Intensity Matters

Refers to how much work is being performed during physical activity. There are two levels of intensity: moderate and vigorous.

- **Moderate intensity:** An activity in which there is a noticeable challenge (increased breathing, increased heart rate, and light sweating), but an individual should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably: “I can talk while I do the activity, but I cannot sing.”
- **Vigorous intensity:** An activity in which there is a significant challenge (out of breath, significant increases in heart rate, and heavy sweating): “I can only say a few words without stopping to catch my breath.”

Tips for Success

- Set realistic and achievable goals.
- Choose activities that are fun and easily fit into your lifestyle.
- Engage friends and family to be active with you.
- Slowly build up the amount of time you do activity.
- Do at least 10 minutes of activity at a time.
- Doing some activity is better than none!

Lead the Way!

Be a leader in making it easier for you and your community to be active everyday. Take time to identify access and opportunities for physical activity at home, at school, at work, and in your community. Here are some suggestions:

Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule physical activity into your daily routing • Set aside time for the family to be physically active together several times a week • Define house rules for physical activity time
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the school wellness policies to implement physical activity programs that promote an active school • Increase the number of schools with safe and accessible sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks • Join (or start) a school health and wellness coalition to address physical activity opportunities before, during and after school
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create worksite health education classes that promote the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle • Develop policies at your work that promote active lifestyles, such as promoting stair use and walking breaks or clubs • Join (or start) a worksite wellness coalition to address physical activity opportunities before, during and after work
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify safe places for children and families to play- especially area parks, fields, and recreation facilities • Promote community and transportation design that facilitates walking and bicycling • Join (or start) a community physical activity coalition

Optimize your Health

A physically active lifestyle is one of six national strategies supported by research to protect health and prevent disease. The other strategies include, increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables, breastfeeding, drinking less sugar-sweetened beverages, reducing food portions, and watching less TV. To learn more, visit: www.dhhs.ne.gov/nafh

Resources

www.health.gov/paguidelines
www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity

www.cdc.gov/healthyweight
www.healthierus.gov

