

# Get a taste for eating smart and moving more

## 12 Ways to Create an Active Lifestyle

1. **Forget the fads:** Like diets, exercise fads come and go. When you think about a new workout, ask yourself: Is this something I really enjoy doing?
2. **Be realistic:** Any activity has to fit into your schedule and lifestyle. If you don't belong to a gym or if you hate running, it's time to look for some new activities.
3. **Make a commitment:** Write down some important reasons for being more active. Share a written or verbal promise to be more physically active with your friends or family.
4. **Start slow:** Making drastic changes can be a recipe for failure. Small changes can make a big difference, if they last. Pick one change, like walking more, and make it a habit.
5. **Be consistent:** The human body responds well to consistency. For example, if you decide to walk more, make walking part of your daily routine – rather than an occasional activity.
6. **Stick with it:** Research suggests that it takes about 21 days for a behavior to become habit. If you want to start walking more, make a plan to walk 30 minutes a day for 21 days!
7. **Be flexible:** Life is full of surprises and some times plans need to change. If you can't get out in the morning, fit a 30-minute walk into a lunch break or go out after dinner.
8. **Be creative:** Make a list of all the possible ways to fit a 30-minute walk into your life – like walking a dog, walking with a friend, walking to the store, or walking around the mall.
9. **Make a list of options:** It's always good to have options, like indoor ideas when it's cold. Make a list of all the ways you like to move, so you'll always have a fun option.
10. **Plan for activity:** There is always too much to do in our busy lives. Make room for physical activity in yours by putting it on your schedule.
11. **Forgive yourself:** If you miss a day of activity, it's no big deal. Just put on your shoes and get your walk in today! The goal is at least 30 minutes of activity, at least 5 days a week.
12. **Congratulate yourself:** Becoming more active can be tough. Just think how long you've been sitting around. Give yourself a big pat on the back for any increases in physical activity.



## 12 Ways to Make Physical Activity More Routine

1. **Choose the right activity for you:** Different body types do better with different physical activities. Not every body is built for running, but every body can find an activity that is right for them.
2. **Choose the right time:** Some of us are naturally morning people. Others prefer to be active at the end of the day. Listen to when your body likes to move and it will be more fun.
3. **Choose the right goal:** Goals can motivate us, if we choose the right ones. Focus on what you want to do.
4. **Choose the right speed:** Some people like high-energy activities, like running. Others like something slower and calmer, like walking.



5. **Choose the right shoes:** Comfort is essential for physical activity. When your feet hurt, it makes activity hard to do. Choose shoes that fit well and that are right for your activity level.
6. **Make it fun:** When we enjoy an activity, we want to make it part of our day. The best activity is one that you enjoy, because you will be able to make it a regular routine.
7. **Make it easy:** Keep comfortable shoes by the door or in the car, so it's easy to take a walk. Set out comfy clothes the night before, so getting ready for activity is just routine.
8. **Make it simple:** Being active doesn't mean you have to join a gym. Walking is a great activity. Just get up and move.
9. **Have a routine:** Once we get into a new routine, it's easier to stick with it over time (and a new habit takes at least 21 days to establish).
10. **Do it with friends:** When we are active with someone else, it helps us get out. You can join a class together or just plan to meet for a neighborhood walk.
11. **Keep a record:** Research shows that self-monitoring is a key to a healthy weight. You can track your activity in different ways, like minutes per day or steps on a pedometer.
12. **Reward yourself:** Becoming more active is a gradual process. Just think how long you've been sitting around. Give yourself a big pat on the back for any increases in physical activity.

## 12 Fun Ways to Enjoy TV-Free Family Time

Turning off the TV is an easy way to enhance your family's health and happiness. More screen time (TV, computers and video games) leads to higher weights for both adults and children. TV time leads to weight gain, because people are more sedentary and because they see so many food ads (about 40,000 a year). Turning off the TV will help your family maintain a healthy weight and give you time together.

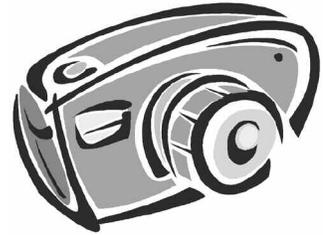
1. **Snuggle up and read a book:** Reading together as a family is one of the best ways to ensure your children do well in school.
2. **Snuggle up and tell a story:** Telling stories is another way to enhance children's verbal skills – and to share special memories.
3. **Snuggle up and sing a song:** Kids don't care if you can carry a tune and they love to sing with you, learning new words along the way.
4. **Snuggle up and talk:** Turning off the TV gives you more time to talk with your children.
5. **Snuggle up and listen:** You learn more about your children by talking less and listening more. If you listen, they will talk.
6. **Just snuggle up together:** The biggest benefit of turning off TVs, computers and video games is that your family can grow closer.
7. **Get up and take a walk:** A simple neighborhood walk gives you time together and an easy way to get healthier and stronger together too!
8. **Get up and dance:** Dancing combines fun and activity for every age. Let your kids pick the music and teach you the moves.
9. **Get up and play a game:** Pick the right game for your child's skills – like tossing a foam ball with a toddler or baseball with older kids.
10. **Get up and play with a pet:** Dogs and cats also need activity to maintain a healthy weight and live long healthy lives with you.
11. **Get up and play with friends:** Kids (and adults) need time to play with their friends – in the backyard, at the park or in the wilderness.
12. **Get up for a family fun night:** Plan a weekly fun activity, like riding bikes or bowling with another family. Make it a weekly thing!



## 12 Ways to Add Value to Your Daily Walk

A daily walk is one of the best ways to maintain a healthy weight. Research also shows that 30 to 45 minutes of brisk walking helps boost your immune system, reduce your risk of disease and lower your stress level. If these benefits aren't enough to get you off the couch, here are twelve easy ways to make your walking time even more valuable.

1. **Take a friend:** Walking and talking with a friend is good for your body, good for your heart and good for your soul.
2. **Take a child:** See the world through the eyes of a child – in a stroller, in a wagon, in a backpack or just hand-in-hand.
3. **Take a pet:** America's pets are facing their own weight crisis. Do your dog a favor – take a long walk together.
4. **Take a song on CD or tape:** Music lightens every step and makes the time go faster. Pick your favorite tunes and pick up the pace.
5. **Take a book (on tape):** If you need to do two things at once, walking and listening to books on tape is the perfect solution.
6. **Take a camera:** Want to be a better photographer? Make every walk a photo expedition and you'll be a pro in no time.
7. **Learn about birds:** Wherever you walk outdoors, there are birds to watch and hear.
8. **Learn about plants:** City parks, country roads and wilderness trails all have flowers and trees waiting to be enjoyed.
9. **Learn about geology:** With a little reading and a lot of observation, you can learn about the forces that shape our land.
10. **Learn about history:** History is all around us. Use a map or guidebook to learn what happened before your time.
11. **Learn about your community:** Become more informed and more involved by walking around your neighborhood and your town.
12. **Learn a language:** Language tapes or CDs make ideal walking companions and you can even practice out loud.



## 12 Easy Ways to Be Active Around Your Home

All of us are busy and physical activity is missing in our hectic schedules. A quick way to be more active is to do it at home! Here are 12 easy ways to start a healthy lifestyle at your front door.

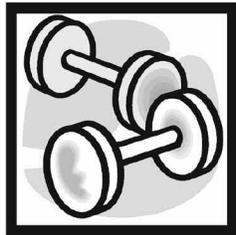
1. **WALK around the block:** Two or three 10-minute walks in your neighborhood can add up to some serious health benefits.
2. **BIKE down the street:** Keep your bikes (and helmets) ready to go at a moment's notice, like for a quick jaunt to the grocery store.
3. **GARDEN in the yard:** A vegetable garden, even a small one, is the most delicious way to get active and eat better at the same time.
4. **MOW or RAKE the lawn:** Forget a fancy riding mower. A push mower, even an electric one, helps with extra steps for a healthy weight.
5. **JUMP in the driveway:** Jump rope, jump shots with ball and hoop, or even jump with a pogo stick (good for your balance too!).
6. **STRETCH with a band:** Keep a resistance band next to the remote – so you can stretch your arms and legs while watching TV.
7. **LIFT a weight:** Keep a weight near the telephone. Pick it up when you get a call and pump your arms while you talk.
8. **DANCE with a DVD or video:** Turn a TV room into a fitness center with your favorite flavor of music. Salsa? Country? Disco? Rock?
9. **PUMP with a machine:** Exercise machines can be a fitness bonus if you keep them in an accessible place and use them often.
10. **STEP with the stairs:** You don't need a fancy machine to build beautiful legs and thighs. Just go up the stairs as often as you can.
11. **PUSH with a broom or mop:** It's not a real glamorous way to get active, but it works! Housework burns as many calories as golf without a cart.
12. **LAUGH and PLAY together:** Add some laughter and play into your life. Research shows that they can have powerful health benefits.



## 12 Easy Ways to Enjoy Physical Activity at Work

There are some serious benefits to increasing your physical activity at work. Even brief bursts of activity, like a 10-minute walk, can improve your concentration, creativity and performance (especially on detailed tasks). If your employer has a worksite wellness program, take advantage of group exercises and the activities offered. If not, create your own program with four simple pieces of equipment: a comfortable pair of shoes, a pedometer, a set of light hand weights and a resistance band (like a Dynaband®).

1. **Wear a pedometer at work:** Since every step counts, wearing a pedometer is wonderful motivator to walk more during your workday.
2. **Walk around the office:** There's no need to sit still while you talk on the phone or think. Pacing and fidgeting are physical activity.
3. **Walk around the building:** Sometimes a face-to-face talk is the best way to communicate (and it gets you up and moving around).
4. **Walk up (and down) stairs:** If you have a choice, always take the stairs. If you have stairs, take as many trips up and down as possible.
5. **Walk around the block:** Got a coffee break? Got a few free minutes? Take a walk outside and get some fresh air (and extra steps).
6. **Walk and talk:** Need to discuss something with a co-worker? A walking meeting can be more productive and healthier too!



7. **Lift weights while you talk:** Keep a weight near the telephone; pick it up when you get a call and pump your arms while you talk.
8. **Take a weight break:** Feeling tired and bogged down? Take 5-10 minutes to lift your hand weights and get your blood flowing.
9. **Work your abs:** You can strengthen tummy muscles while sitting in a chair. Sit straight, tighten muscles and release. Repeat.
10. **Stretch your arms and legs:** Stuck at your desk? Use a resistance band for a 5-10 minute stretch. Your mind and body will be more flexible.
11. **Stretch your stress away:** Tension in your shoulders, neck and back is easy to release with standing stretches and a resistance band.
12. **Check your pedometer:** How many steps do you take during a typical workday? Any ideas for adding a few more steps here or there?

## 12 Fun Ways to Walk the Talk in Your Organization

Almost everyone in America is looking for easy ways to be more physically active. Any group, organization or club (service, professional, educational or social) can easily help its members become healthier. It doesn't have to take a lot of time or money. All it takes is a commitment to an active lifestyle and a little creativity to get things moving along. Here are a dozen fun ways to help your group get up and get moving, one step at a time.

1. **Take 10 at every meeting:** Take ten minutes to get moving – with a few stretches, a few dance moves or a few leg lifts in a chair.
2. **Introduce new activities:** Expose co-workers to new options for being active. Invite local experts to showcase yoga, Pilates or zumba!
3. **Sponsor a sports team:** Get actively involved with getting kids active. Practice with the kids, set up the field or actively coach.
4. **Plan active celebrations:** Hula-Hoop® or limbo contests? Conga lines? A little silliness can provide active fun at almost no cost.
5. **Join active events:** Nearly every community has walks, runs or other active events where you can share your group spirit.
6. **Start a walking club:** Getting together at a specific time and place often makes it easier to get motivated and get moving.
7. **Get a little competitive:** Some people are motivated by a competitive spirit and like to see who can walk the most steps.
8. **Take an active challenge:** At [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org), individuals, teams and clubs can track their activity levels.
9. **Give activity awards:** Recognize members who become more active and those who support others in active lifestyles.
10. **Support active communities:** Actively work towards bike paths, skate parks or hiking trails – fun, safe activity for people of all ages.
11. **Choose an active location:** Move meetings to places where members can be active before or after – like a park or bowling alley.
12. **Play, play, play:** An organization or club that plays together stays together and has a lot more fun too!



## 12 Fun Ways to Enjoy Active Vacation Time

The goal of most vacations is to rest, relax and rejuvenate. Wherever you are vacationing this year, make sure to plan plenty of time for outdoor activities. Being more active is a wonderful way to reduce your stress and improve your mood. The best physical activities are those that combine moving outside with having a good time. Fun and physical activity are the ideal combo for family vacations!

1. **Dig into some sand:** Build sand castles, splash in the waves or see how many different seashells you can collect.
2. **Discover a local tourist site:** Sometimes we forget about places that are close to home. Make a list of local sites you've forgotten to visit.
3. **Explore a historical site:** Battlefields, monuments and memorials are all interesting and educational places to explore.
4. **Hunt for unusual activities:** Many places have unique, fun ways to be active – like four-person, pedal powered surreys or boats to rent.
5. **Investigate a riverbank:** Rivers are the obvious place to fish and paddle. Many also have walking and biking paths along their banks.
6. **Learn about birds or wildlife:** Take a walk with a birder or a hike with a wildlife ranger. Get active and learn about the world around you.
7. **Search online for outdoor fun:** Go online before your vacation to learn about local playgrounds, parks, paths, and other places to be active.
8. **Seek active competitions:** Walking, running, biking or combo races can be serious vacation fun whether you are at home or away.
9. **Survey the world from a hill:** Climbing to the top of a hill (large or small) lets you see the world from a new, active perspective.
10. **Toss a Frisbee®:** Frisbees are fantastic – for tossing at a highway rest stop or for an active game of golf (Frisbee Golf) at a park.
11. **Walk around a museum:** Many museums now have cool stuff outside too. Check out opportunities to use your ticket for even more fun.
12. **Wander around a meadow:** The path doesn't have to be a straight line. Enjoy wandering in a mountain meadow or at a local park.



## The Joy of Physical Activity from Morning 'til Night

The key to a physically active lifestyle is simple. Find physical activities that you enjoy and do them regularly. If you enjoy an activity, you won't dread and avoid finding time to do it. Different people enjoy different activities—so the real key is to find a variety of activities that bring a smile to your face and a bounce to your feet. Here are twelve joyful ways to incorporate physical activity into your day.

1. **Greet the day with a stretch:** Early morning activity can energize your day. Even a few gentle stretches can make a big difference.
2. **Walk a dog or several dogs:** New research shows that both dogs and their people lost weight and were healthier by taking daily walks.
3. **Play with a child:** Kids naturally love to move their bodies, so moving with them is bound to be fun – indoors or out.
4. **Balance your day with yoga:** Studies show that yoga is good for your body and even better for stress reduction and relaxation.
5. **Splash in a pool:** If moving around on land is hard on your joints, a water aerobics class or lap swim can be a real pleasure.
6. **Toss a ball with friends:** A pickup game of basketball at the gym? An evening volleyball league? Or just a soft foam ball with a child?
7. **Do it to music:** Any activity goes faster when you listen to something. Pick some up-beat tunes or listen to books on CD.
8. **Kick up your heels:** Even short bursts of activity improve your health. All it takes is 10 minutes of activity, 3 times a day.
9. **Do something silly:** Laughter is good for everyone. It moves all the muscles on your face, relieves tension and reduces stress.
10. **Make it a family thing:** A family that plays together, stays healthy together. Give every person a chance to choose a favorite activity.
11. **Try a totally new activity:** Try yoga, Pilates, tai chi, kickboxing or the hottest new trend in group exercise classes – belly dancing!
12. **Dance with someone you love:** It's the perfect holiday combination – activity for your body, music for your ears and joy for your heart.



## Being Active - ANYWHERE!!

Being physically active is much easier than you thought possible. There's no need to join an expensive health club or to spend hours doing activities you hate. You don't even have to change your clothes!! Best of all, you can be active ANYWHERE - ANYTIME of day!

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### WHY make physical activity part of your day?

- 🚴 **ENJOY** the pleasure that comes from getting stronger and healthier.
- 🚴 **BOOST** your brainpower and your energy levels all day long.
- 🚴 **IMPROVE** your strength and endurance (both physical and mental).
- 🚴 **ENHANCE** your natural good looks from the inside out.
- 🚴 **PROTECT** yourself from the pain of heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis.

### WHAT activities are the healthiest choices?

For overall health, your best bet is to enjoy a wide variety of physical activities. Just follow the 30-10-5 rule: at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, at least 10 minutes at a time, at least 5 days a week. For best results, give your body what it deserves.

- 🚴 **Fun activities** - because they are the ones that you'll stick with!
- 🚴 **Aerobic activities** - that get your heart pumping, like brisk walking or dancing.
- 🚴 **Body-shaping activities** - to maintain muscles, like lifting weights or groceries.
- 🚴 **Stretching activities** - for flexibility and tone, like water aerobics or gardening.
- 🚴 **Balance activities** - to strengthen bones and prevent falls, like yoga or bike riding.

### HOW can I make activity part of every day?

With a few simple guidelines, you can make physical activity an integral part of your day even with a hectic schedule. Look for all the easy ways to fit activity into your life.

- 🚴 **Play more:** Feel like a kid again by skating, swinging, playing ball or flying a kite.
- 🚴 **Use leg power:** Walk the dog; walk to the store; walk around the mall; just walk.
- 🚴 **Hide the remote:** Change the channels the old-fashioned way - by getting up!
- 🚴 **Practice inefficiency:** Make multiple trips on the stairs or to the car for groceries.
- 🚴 **Pick up the pace:** Use a longer stride when you walk - everywhere, all the time.

## Being Active - at Lunchtime!!

Many people find that noontime is the perfect time to fit physical activity into their day. Lunchtime provides a natural break in the day. It is also a time when some people have a bit more flexibility. Many fitness centers offer classes specially designed for mid-day activity.

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### WHY be active at lunchtime?

- 🚲 **RE-ENERGIZE** your brain for afternoon work or school.
- 🚲 **WAKE UP** your body for afternoon and evening fun.
- 🚲 **STRETCH OUT** your muscles after sitting all morning.
- 🚲 **TAKE A WELL-DESERVED BREAK!!**

### WHAT activities fit best into lunchtime?

Any physical activity can fit into the middle of the day. It's just a question of what works for your schedule, location and budget. Health clubs are great, plus they offer showers!

- 🚲 **Aerobic activities:** Most clubs and gyms offer a menu of heart-pumping classes designed to firm, tone and burn off extra calories and stress.
- 🚲 **Balance activities:** Yoga, Tai Chi and swim classes can relax and energize at the same time. Experiment with several options to find what suits you best.
- 🚲 **Fun activities:** Focus on fun and you'll be much more likely to stick with activity over the long run. Dancing? Kite flying? Swinging at the playground?

### HOW can I fit physical activity into my lunchtime?

No gym, no money, no time to shower - walking works wonders too!

- 🚲 **Walk to and from lunch:** Instead of automatically jumping into your car, think about a 15-minute walk (each way) to a local restaurant. In under an hour, you can eat a leisurely lunch and get 30 minutes of physical activity. What a healthy deal!
- 🚲 **Walk (or run) errands:** Keep a pair of walking shoes in your office or car. When you have a long list of things to do, walk to at least some of them. Bad weather? No problem! Head to the mall and use those walking shoes to shop for sales!
- 🚲 **Walk with friends or colleagues:** Walking groups offer a long list of benefits. Walk with colleagues and get some additional work done while you walk and talk. Walk with friends or neighbors and stay connected to the important things in life!

## Being Active - in the Morning!!

Talk to one of those cheerful "morning people" and they'll tell you how great it feels to get up and get going early in the day. Whether you do 5 minutes or 45 minutes of activity in the morning, the benefits can make a big difference in your whole day.

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### WHY be active in the morning?

- 🚴 **ENERGIZE** your body for the busy day ahead.
- 🚴 **FOCUS** your brain for tasks at work or school.
- 🚴 **FLEX** your muscles for all-day strength.
- 🚴 **STRETCH** your body and your mind for new challenges.

### WHAT activities fit best into the morning?

Any physical activity can fit into the morning hours. If you go outside when it is still dark, just make sure to put safety at the top of your list with reflective clothing and shoes. In terms of physical activity, it's always better to be safe than sorry.

- 🚴 **Stretching activities:** Slow and gentle stretches, like yoga, are a wonderful way to warm up your muscles, tendons and ligaments.
- 🚴 **Balance activities:** Try a Tai Chi tape or one of the new exercise balls to improve your balance and make a healthy mind-body connection.
- 🚴 **Fun activities:** For a new outlook on life, start your day with something that makes you smile, like a salsa dance video or a splashy water aerobics class.

### HOW can I fit physical activity into my morning?

- 🚴 **Get up 5 or 10 minutes early:** If you're not a morning person, start small and set the alarm just a little earlier. Remember, you don't have to get all your activity at one time. Even 10-minute "sparks" of activity can get you onto a fast track to health.
- 🚴 **Get clothes, shoes and equipment ready the night before:** Take a few minutes before bedtime to get yourself organized for an early walk or trip to the gym. It's one more way to make physical activity a normal part of your morning routine.
- 🚴 **Get together with friends or family:** Making a commitment to someone else can motivate you when sleeping in seems tempting. Walking kids to school is a triple play – activity for you, activity for them and quality family time too!

## Five Fun Ways to Stay Active on Road Trips

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### 1. Walk around a rest stop

- Many rest stops are in scenic places. Even when the scenery is boring, there are plenty of people to watch. Instead of jumping back into the car after your bathroom break, take ten minutes to stretch your legs. If you have a dog, that's a great reason for both of you to walk around the perimeter a couple of times. No dog? No problem! Take a couple of laps by yourself or with your travel companions. Remember, every step counts!

### 2. Explore a roadside attraction

- America's highways are lined with interesting and bizarre places to explore, from historical markers to giant sculptures of bears and lumberjacks. On your next trip, plan to take a couple of 30-minute breaks to discover something new along your route. Physical activity helps drivers feel more alert and makes kids less restless. And, who knows, you might create a wonderful family memory along the way!

### 3. Play in a park

- City parks, county parks, state parks, national parks, slides, swings, climbing structures, swimming pools, sandy beaches, nature trails, guided walks and more -- there are unlimited options for active fun in parks and recreation areas across the country. Many are free and most of the others have reasonable admission fees. All you have to do is get out of the car and walk, run, stretch, swing, roll, climb or paddle your way to a more active life.

### 4. Carry physical activity "equipment" in your car

- Bikes, canoes and rafts are great ways to fit your activity in as you travel. However, sports equipment doesn't need to be big, heavy or expensive in order to be fun and healthy. A bat and baseball, a Frisbee or a boomerang are all small, portable and cheap ways to have fun anywhere. A quick game of catch or Frisbee can be played by everyone, anywhere -- from a rest stop to an empty schoolyard.

### 5. Try some Commuter Aerobics™

- If you'd like a bit more "serious" car-based workout, check out Commuter Aerobics™ by Cinder at [www.commuteraerobics.com](http://www.commuteraerobics.com). You can read about her specially-designed exercises, including a rest stop series, online or order an audiotape with background music for \$10. The idea is to practice proper posture and strengthen various muscle groups while driving and following Cinder's safety guidelines at all times.

## Playing Together for Health and Fitness

Being active is one of the best (and easiest) ways for American families to spend time together. With a small investment in time (and maybe a little equipment), your family can enjoy a long list of physical and emotional benefits. What is your family waiting for?

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### WHY play together as a family?

- 🚲 **A family that plays together, stays together.**
- 🚲 **Regular fun activities lead to better health.**
- 🚲 **Children who are physically fit do better in school.**
- 🚲 **Being active helps maintain a healthy weight.**
- 🚲 **Active play is good for kids – and their parents too!**

### WHAT activities work best for families?

Kids need at least 60 minutes of daily activity for optimal health. P.E. classes and athletics count. So do sports like Little League and soccer, swim classes and family activities.

- 🚲 **Aerobic activities:** Walk the dog. Bike to the store. Swing at the park. Dance down the sidewalk. Slide at the playground. Fun, fun, fun for everyone!
- 🚲 **Helping activities:** Kids like to help, and "chores" can be fun with the right attitude. Sweep the floor to music. See how quickly you can clean up the yard.
- 🚲 **Fun activities:** Focus on the fun and nobody will feel like they are doing exercise. Kite flying? Chasing bubbles in the wind? Splashing in a pool?

### HOW can we fit physical activity into a busy schedule?

- 🚲 **Walk to and from school:** If you live near school, start walking, biking, or riding a scooter as often as you can. Go both ways or just one way. After school, spend time at the playground or stop at the park for a game of folf (Frisbee golf) or baseball.
- 🚲 **Create a fun zone at home:** Turn off the TVs, computers and video games. Make a place to play inside (clear a piece of carpet to toss foam balls or dance) and outside (flower or vegetable gardens, basketball hoops or an old-fashioned tree house).
- 🚲 **Join a club:** Sometimes it is safer or warmer to play indoors. Check out the options in your area. Some health clubs and gyms have fun family programs. Boys and Girls Clubs and YMCA/YWCAs often provide free or low-cost family memberships.

## Simple Ways to Promote Wellness at Work

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### 1. Start a fresh fruit snack basket

- Rotate shopping duties (once or twice a week) and charge 25 or 50 cents for a piece of fruit. Make fruit a cheaper and easier option than visiting the vending machine.

### 2. Take 10 (or 15) while training or meeting

- Five, ten or fifteen minutes of physical activity can pay off during training days and important meetings. Activity helps relieve tension and boosts brainpower, too!

### 3. Plan to “meet and eat” with health in mind

- Establish easy guidelines for foods and beverages brought or bought for office meetings and celebrations. Invite people to share their best tasting, healthiest recipes.

### 4. Get a walking group going

- Peer pressure can work in positive ways. People are more likely to get going when they are accountable to someone else. Make it formal, make it informal; just do it!

### 5. Offer regular office “health day” activities

- Set regular times, like an hour or two a month, to explore healthy options as a staff. Tour a fitness facility, try a new restaurant, visit a farmer’s market or play a game.

### 6. Increase your vending options

- Tired of the same old choices? Visit with the vending company about healthier options like beef jerky, animal crackers, nuts, trail mix or peanut butter crackers.

### 7. Add art in the stairwells

- Want people to take the stairs instead of the elevator? A few murals (painted by school art classes or talented employees) can really increase stairway traffic.

### 8. Email motivational messages

- Short, fun tips via computer screens can remind staff to sit up straight, stand and stretch, eat a fruit, drink some water, take a walk or add a vegetable to lunch.

### 9. Create health-enhancing challenges

- People enjoy a bit of healthy competition, especially with delicious prizes (a fruit and cheese basket!). Challenge staff to increase their daily steps or eat 5 A Day, every day!

### 10. Put up a basketball hoop

- Put up a real hoop outside or a child-size/foam ball toy inside. Keep a few balls at a reception desk and encourage people to borrow them for breaks or at lunch.

## Smart Moves for a Healthy Weight

Everyone agrees that physical activity is essential for good health. While any amount of activity is better than none, experts suggest accumulating a total of 30 to 60 minutes on most, if not all days of the week. The ideal combination is a variety of activities to build aerobic capacity, strength and flexibility.

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### 1. Move more: Every step counts toward better health

- When it comes to physical activity, every step has health benefits. The goal is to spend more time moving and less time sitting. Get off the couch and aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, at least 10 minutes at a time, at least 5 days a week.

### 2. Move often: Be active throughout the day

- Finding a free hour for physical activity can feel impossible, especially with travel and clean up. Finding 10 to 20 minutes is often more realistic. Short bursts of activity can provide the same health benefits and help reduce daily stress at the same time.

### 3. Move inside: Walk the stairs, the halls, the malls

- Weather, work and hectic schedules can be obstacles to getting enough activity. The solution is to build more steps into your daily routine. Take the stairs at a power pace, walk around the office when you are on the phone or take an extra lap around the mall.

### 4. Move outside: Walk, bike, blade, mow, rake, shovel

- Spend as much time outside as possible -- in the yard, in the park or in the wilderness. Gardening is great way to get physical and grow delicious produce at the same time. Always, remember to use sunscreen, wear comfortable shoes and carry a water bottle.

### 5. Move for fun: Dance, skip, swing, or go fly a kite

- Dance with someone you love, walk your dog, or be young at heart and play with the kids. Put on your favorite music and rock around the house -- it can make vacuuming a whole lot more fun!

### 6. Move together: Join a class or walk with friends

- Making a commitment to someone else can make it easier to fit your activity in. Sign up together for water aerobics, line dancing or yoga. Organize a formal or informal walking group in your neighborhood and check out the local mall walkers.

## Ten Tips for Hiking Trips

Hiking and backpacking adventures can be lots of fun -- or not! Your overall fitness has a big impact on your comfort level during, and after, a hike or backpacking trip. Weekday couch potatoes who try to become weekend warriors often end up injured or completely exhausted. Here are ten sensible tips guaranteed to make your next hiking and backpacking trip safer and more enjoyable for you and those around you.

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- 1. Be realistic:** If you've been sitting around for months, planning a 20-mile day hike or a two-week backpacking trip is a recipe for a serious injury, a heart attack or worse.
- 2. Get a professional opinion:** If you already have health problems (like high blood pressure), check with your health care provider before you go on an extended trip.
- 3. Stay in year-round shape:** "Use it or lose it" is more than a clever saying. If you are out of shape, it can take 6 to 8 weeks to build up muscle tone and endurance.
- 4. Practice the activity you want to do:** The best way to get in shape for hiking is to walk up hills - even little hills. Walking up stairs can be a good substitute.
- 5. Focus on your core:** Your back and stomach muscles must be strong and flexible for carrying packs, twisting, starting and stopping. Think crunches!
- 6. Warm up your muscles:** Pushing too hard before your muscles have warmed up is one of the quickest ways to get injured. Start by gently swinging your arms and legs.
- 7. Build up slowly:** No one can get fit overnight. The best way to improve performance is to gradually increase effort. Give yourself time!
- 8. Stretch, stretch and stretch again:** Slow stretching, not bouncing, helps prevent injuries and muscle soreness, especially if you stretch at the end of an activity.
- 9. Know your limits:** A real hero is the one who says it's time to turn back. Learn to gauge your endurance level and start heading home before you are exhausted.
- 10. Pay attention to nutrition:** Food, fluids and fitness go hand-in-hand. Your muscles need the right fuel to train and to perform.

## Ten Fun Ways to Upgrade Activity Levels

Do you travel for business or pleasure? Find it hard to locate a gym? Hate those cramped hotel fitness centers? Fortunately, it's easy to fit activity in - anytime, anywhere. All you need is a little creativity and a commitment to daily physical activity. Just imagine the benefits - less stress during the day, improved sleep at night, more energy for everything and a healthier future. There is no better way to invest your time!

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- 1. Put activity at the top of your to-do list:** No one has enough time for everything. Make physical activity a priority and you'll have more energy for everything else.
- 2. Plan activity in your schedule:** Put physical activity on your calendar. It's just as important as (or more important than) those lunches, dinners, meetings and phone calls.
- 3. Wear (or carry) comfortable shoes:** With the right shoes, you can take advantage of every opportunity to be more active like walking up the stairs.
- 4. Walk to your appointments:** Using your legs for transportation is one of the easiest ways to be physically active every day. Park in a central location and walk back and forth.
- 5. Wait by walking rather than sitting:** We do lots of waiting and sitting. Instead of sitting, walk around the building, the block or the airport.
- 6. Stand up and stretch:** Stretching is an important part of healthy living (along with aerobics, balance and strength training). It's as easy as standing and reaching for the sky.
- 7. Break up your day with physical activity:** Ten minutes is all it takes! Just three 10-minute activity breaks - for a total of 30 minutes per day - can provide big health benefits.
- 8. Sit and be fit:** Do you spend hours sitting at a desk, sitting in the car or sitting on a plane? No sweat! Strengthen your abs by tightening them against the chair back.
- 9. Fidget and squirm:** Research actually shows that fidgeting burns calories. So, get in the habit of wiggling, squirming and moving around wherever you are.
- 10. Explore the neighborhood:** When you are in someplace new, walk or bike around the area (check safety first). You can get your bearings and be active at the same time.

## Ten Steps to Moving at Work

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### 1. Walk with a colleague, walk with a client

- Invite a co-worker to join you for a walking break, meeting or appointment. Walking and talking can open up new conversation topics and create strong bonds.

### 2. Choose an activity friend

- Being accountable to someone else often makes it easier to fit physical activity in. Set up specific times to walk together or to try out new activities like a yoga class.

### 3. Sit up straight

- Sound too simple? Actually, sitting up straight and tightening your stomach muscles can make a big difference in your posture (and it helps prevent back pain too!).

### 4. Walk while you wait

- Waiting for the train or the bus? Walk around the station or up and down the block. Waiting for an appointment? Stroll down the hall or around your office.

### 5. Stretch your body (and your mind)

- A few good stretches can help relax your body and clear your mind. You can stretch while working at a computer, while talking on phone or just for the fun of it!

### 6. Reward yourself with an activity break

- Take an activity break whenever you can. After working diligently at your desk, take 5-10 minutes to hand-deliver a file, set up a meeting in person or walk to the copier.

### 7. Plan a regular walking route

- Some people love a routine. Map out a regular route (or routes) inside and/or outside, so you can get up and get moving, without having to think about it at all.

### 8. Use your legs for errands

- Need to go to the bank, the post office, the dentist or the hairdresser? Need to deliver some papers to a colleague? Use your legs to walk (or bike) there and back.

### 9. Become a "stair master"

- Think you need a fancy machine for your backside? Think again! Build beautiful legs and thighs for free. Just take the stairs (up and down) whenever you can.

### 10. Explore your workplace options

- Do you always use the same restroom, the same water fountain and the same route to your office? Enjoy a few extra steps by using facilities that are farther away!

## Ten Ways to “Take 10” for Healthy Holidays

Holidays are stressful. Too much food, too much alcohol, too much shopping, too many parties, too many people and even too much fun. It can all add up to feeling exhausted, overwhelmed and completely stressed out. Fortunately, we can change our reactions to the pressures of the season and keep our brains and our bodies healthy. Here are ten easy ways to take 10 minutes to “de-stress” in the midst of the usual holiday commotion.

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- 1. Take a break:** 10 minutes is all it takes. A small break can make a big difference in your attitude. Regular relaxation can also help fight off colds and other infections.
- 2. Take a walk:** Moving for 10 minutes can help you maintain a healthy weight and a healthy attitude. Take three 10-minute walks and your heart will get the benefits too!
- 3. Take a nap:** A good night’s sleep is essential for good health, especially when your days are beyond busy. A 10-minute daytime nap can also help boost energy levels.
- 4. Take a bath:** With or without bubbles, running water is relaxing. A 10-minute bath (or shower) can sooth tired muscles and release holiday tensions.
- 5. Take a call:** It does make a difference to “reach out and touch someone.” Connect with a special friend or family member for 10 minutes by phone or in person.
- 6. Take a dog break:** Fresh air is good for humans and animals. Take 10 minutes to throw a few balls and bring some sunshine into your life and the dog’s life!
- 7. Take a child break:** Children have the right attitude toward holidays - wonder and joy. Just 10 minutes with a child can help revive anyone’s sagging spirits.
- 8. Take a book break:** A good book can give you a healthy rest from the holiday hubbub. Put all your lists aside for 10 minutes and curl up with a book and a cup of tea.
- 9. Take a snack break:** Stress often leads to overeating. Sit down for 10 minutes and eat a nutrient-rich snack, like fruit and cheese, half a sandwich or a handful of nuts.
- 10. Take a music break:** Holiday songs, carols and hymns are a lovely way to take a break, to relax or even to dance. Try a 10-minute sing-a-long as a stress reliever.

## The Seven Cs of Successful Change

### Taking charge of your health and your life

Many of us want to make changes in our habits. Sometimes it's a New Year's resolution; sometimes it's advice from the doctor. Sometimes it's just a desire to be stronger or have more energy. We want to eat better and be more active, but we don't always know how to make the necessary changes. Taking some time to consider these seven "C's" of change may help you understand how to get from where you are now - to where you want to be.

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#### 1. **Caring** enough to treat your body really well.

Caring about yourself is essential for making any behavior change. Self-care is not selfish - it is what we have to do in order to stop doing one thing and start doing another. Taking good care of yourself also helps you be in better shape to take care of those around you.

#### 2. **Choice** to take small steps in a new direction.

Change is all about making choices. It is making the choice to do one thing (like taking a walk) rather than another (like watching TV). It doesn't mean that you have to give up all television programs. It just means that sometimes you make the choice to be more active.

#### 3. **Creativity** to find a variety of food and fitness options.

The world is filled with stressful situations that can get in the way of our plans to eat well or to be active. The key is to stay calm and to brainstorm a variety of possible solutions. If you are out of fresh produce, you can still enjoy some canned fruit or frozen vegetables.

#### 4. **Courage** for new adventures and everyday challenges.

There is no way around it. It takes courage to make a change. There are many ways to find the courage you need. You can discuss your struggles with friends or family; read inspiring stories about people who have made difficult changes; or find strength in faith and prayer.

#### 5. **Comfort** through tough times with relaxation (or even pampering).

Change is hard work and can be stressful even when it is a positive change. When you are trying to do things differently, you need to rest and recharge your internal batteries. Take time to read a book, to take a nap, to play with the kids or just to do nothing for a while.

#### 6. **Confidence** to take risks and to make normal mistakes.

Optimistic people are generally healthier than pessimistic people. Being confident that you can make positive changes is at least half the battle. Sometimes it helps to make a list of all the changes you have already made, like eating more whole grains or drinking less soda.

#### 7. **Celebration** of the progress toward a strong and healthy you.

Rewards and celebrations are an important part of successful change (think about why we celebrate graduations or job promotions). Give yourself plenty of pats on the back just for moving a step closer to your goal. Gold stars on the calendar aren't just for kids anymore!

## **BIKING: Pedal Your Way to a Healthier You**

Contrary to popular opinion, it is possible to have fun, get fit and move toward a healthy weight - all at the same time. Whatever your age, you can get all the benefits of physical activity - by just strapping on a helmet and getting into gear on a bicycle or tricycle. Anytime is the right time to get in the saddle again - and enjoy the freedom of biking.

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### **1. BIKING indoors**

Stationary, indoor bicycles have many benefits. They are safe and stable - and can be used in any weather. Better yet, you can read a book or watch TV while you pedal. For a strenuous indoor adventure, try a spinning class at your local gym or fitness center.

### **2. BIKING outdoors**

When you want to bike outside, there are many options - bike lanes, bike paths, bike trails, city streets, country roads and mountain trails. When you share the space with cars or pedestrians, remember to be visible and to ride predictably and responsibly.

### **3. BIKING safely**

Safety starts with the right gear - a well-tuned bike, well-fitting helmet and clothes that make you visible day or night. You also need to know - and follow - the rules of the road. Ride on the right with the traffic, obey all traffic signs and signal your turns.

### **4. BIKING for recreation**

For many people, a steady pedal in fresh air is all they need. For some others, happiness is the companionship of a bike club and group rides on the weekends. Those who want a bigger challenge may enjoy bike races (roads, trails, and hills) or longer biking vacations.

### **5. BIKING for transportation**

A bicycle can be an easy way to do errands or to commute to work. Sometimes biking is even faster than driving. All you need is a bike bag or comfortable backpack to carry a few packages - and a sturdy lock to secure your bike while you are shopping or working.

### **6. BIKING for all ages**

Biking can be fun fitness for the whole family - from tots on trikes to couples on bicycles built-for-two. Small children can be pulled in wagons and older people can enjoy stability on an adult tricycle. Visit your local bike store - where there's something for everyone.

## Motivation Boosters

Ten easy ways for healthy eating, healthy weight, healthy you!

### 1. Get started today

Waiting for next Monday, next week or any time in the future delays the time that you will start to feel better. Commit to your health right now - and for the rest of your life.

### 2. Do it for yourself

Trying to change for someone else usually ends in no change at all. The strongest reasons are ones that are important to you - not to a parent, spouse, child or friend.

### 3. Make health a priority

No time to eat right or be active? All of us have time - it's a question of how we spend it. Move health up on your priority list, and you'll have more energy for everything else too!

### 4. Set realistic goals

Getting a model-perfect body isn't realistic for most of us (despite what the ads say). Set yourself up for success with achievable goals - and you'll stick with the program longer.

### 5. Make small changes

Small changes work better than giant leaps and, over time, they make a big difference. Break behaviors down into smaller "bites" - and work on them one at a time.

### 6. Expect to be successful

Plan for success rather than failure. Positive self-talk and an enthusiastic approach are often self-fulfilling prophecies. Reviewing past failures is a recipe for disaster.

### 7. Ask for support

Supportive people can help you stay with your plan. You can take a class, join a group or just hook up with a good friend (or family member) who also wants to make a change.

### 8. Consult an expert

The right "coach" can make all the difference in your attitude and progress. Go to a RD (registered dietitian) for nutrition help and a certified trainer for fitness help.

### 9. Track your progress

Research shows that tracking changes is a real motivator. Pick a convenient place to write down how you're doing, like notes on a calendar or in your computer scheduler.

### 10. Celebrate every success

Rewards and positive feedback work for kids - and adults too! Choose several ways to give yourself pats on the back, like saving for a massage or spending time with a friend.

## Moving for a Healthy Weight

Want to lose weight and keep it off? Regular, enjoyable physical activity is an essential part of any successful weight management plan. These six simple steps can help you and your family move toward a healthy weight.

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### 1. Make a commitment to physical activity

There is no way around it. An active lifestyle is essential to maintain a healthy weight. However, there's **NO** need for painful exercise or boring workouts. All it takes is a commitment to regular, enjoyable physical activity - for the rest of your life.

### 2. Make physical activity a part of every day

Most people identify **TIME** as the biggest obstacle to being more active. The secret is to fit activity into your normal day. The good news is that every step counts. Set a simple activity goal: **at least 10 minutes at a time - at least 30 minutes total - at least 5 days a week.**

### 3. Be active at least 10 minutes at a time

If you have an hour to go to the fitness center, that's great. If you don't, it's still possible to get the activity you need for weight management and overall health. All it takes is **TEN minutes of activity at a time** - like walking around the block or around the mall.

### 4. Be active at least 30 to 45 minutes a day

You can do it all at once; you can do 10-minute "sparks" of activity. You can do it inside or you can do it outside. You can do it alone or you can do it with friends. All you have to do is get a **TOTAL of 30 to 45 minutes** of fun physical activity on most days of the week.

### 5. Be active at least 5 days a week

Some people like the routine of going to a class at the gym, while others get bored doing the same thing day after day. Group exercise classes, dancing with friends, playing with the kids, walking the dog, mowing the lawn, **it all counts** - just do something every day (or almost).

### 6. Choose activities you enjoy

Dance with a loved one, walk the dog or fly a kite. Put on some music and rock around the house. If you love what you are doing, you'll keep doing it - and you'll keep moving toward a healthy weight.

## PLAYING Your Way to Fitness

Kids need regular physical activity (at least 60 minutes a day) to maintain a healthy weight, while growing normally. School classes and athletics count and so do sports like Little League. Active play with friends and family is another FUN way to get moving.

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### 1. **PLAY inside**

There are plenty of ways to enjoy FUN indoor family play, without destroying the house. Turn off the TV and the computer - and play an old-fashioned game of hide-and-seek. Clear a space for wiggling, dancing and playing with soft-foam balls and squishy toys.

### 2. **PLAY outside**

The options for outdoor FUN are unlimited: bikes, trikes, scooters, balls, kites, Frisbees, jump ropes, squirt guns and hula-hoops. There's also a long list of childhood games that the whole family can play together - like more hide-and-seek, tag and hopscotch.

### 3. **PLAY in the yard**

Whatever the size of your yard, you can turn it into a neighborhood FUN zone - with a few basic toys: a basketball hoop, a rope swing or a sandbox depending on the age of your children. Keep it simple - and let kids use their innate creativity to stay active.

### 4. **PLAY at the park**

Many communities have FUN park facilities. Often they are close enough so that you can leave the car at home - and walk or ride a bike. Make it a regular family outing - when the weather is nice, you can even take a picnic and play before and after dinner.

### 5. **PLAY at the gym**

Indoor gyms offer safety, warmth and FUN programs for kids and parents. Check your area for schools, colleges, community centers, fitness facilities, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCAs and other agencies that are open evenings, weekends and vacations.

### 6. **PLAY on the field**

Almost every community in the USA offers sports programs for children - baseball, football, basketball, soccer, tennis and swimming. There are programs for all ages and all levels of skill - and most emphasize FUN and the opportunity for parents to get involved.

## Putting SPARKS into Your Physical Activity Plan

Think that you need an hour to get the benefits of physical activity. Think that you need to constantly measure your pulse? Think that you need expensive machines? Think again!! Based on research by exercise physiologist Dr. Glenn Gaesser, this new program shows how small bursts of activity can lead to big improvements in weight, strength and fitness.

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### 1. The goal = 15 SPARKS per week

Dr. Gaesser believes that small bouts of activity (10-minute SPARKS) provide the same benefits as longer exercise bouts - and he has research to back it up. The key is to fit at least 15 ten-minute SPARKS into every week - up to three 10-minute SPARKS per day.

### 2. The 10-minute aerobic SPARK

There are three basic SPARKS. The first is the aerobic SPARK - a 10-minute period of any activity that gets your heart pumping and your blood flowing. Walk to the store, bike around the block, dance through the living room, climb the stairs or stride down the hall.

### 3. The 10-minute strength-training SPARK

The second type is the strength-training SPARK. Forget complicated exercise apparatus or pricey health club memberships - all you need are some inexpensive hand-held weights and a few basic curls, crunches, and extensions (see *The SPARK* book for simple ideas).

### 4. The 10-minute flexibility SPARKS

Activity experts know that stretches are a vital part of the health equation. A flexibility SPARK can also help reduce stress and increase energy. Go for a steady stretch and a gentle pull - like leg lifts and body twists. Yoga moves are full of SPARK possibilities.

### 5. The goal = gradually increasing the SPARK

The SPARK program features a continuous, but gradual, increase in the effort that you put into all three types of activity. The goal is to challenge your body and maximize the health benefits - without having to increase the amount of time you spend.

### 6. The goal = maintaining the SPARK forever

The key to success with SPARKS (and any other plan) is to find activities you enjoy - and will do forever. For more information, read *The Spark: The Revolutionary New Plan to Get Fit and Lose Weight, 10 Minutes at a Time* (Fireside, \$12.00).

## **SPLASHING Your Way to Health**

When it comes to activity, water activities have many benefits over similar land activities. Water provides buoyancy and support - and, at the same time, uses more muscle groups than any other activity. Moving in water is cooler and more comfortable for many people. Best of all, you don't have to be a serious swimmer to enjoy all the benefits.

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### **1. WATER FUN is for pregnant women**

Water exercise is ideal for pregnant women who may feel uncomfortable or unsafe in other activities. It reduces the risk of accidents (like falling off a bike) or over-heating while running. Since there is less jarring and bouncing, it can be done right up until delivery.

### **2. WATER FUN is for babies**

New moms and their babies can continue with water activities after delivery. This dual-purpose activity is a fun way to provide infants with the muscle stimulation they need - and to teach them water safety skills (like floating on their backs) at the same time.

### **3. WATER FUN is for kids**

Kids naturally love to play in water - from wading pools to ocean waves. Basic swim classes are essential to ensure that children can enjoy water safely. Advanced classes and swim teams are fun ways for kids to stay active and to maintain a healthy weight.

### **4. WATER FUN is for seniors**

Water's gentle support makes pool-based classes perfect for people as they age. Water activities can be adjusted to any level of intensity - and any chronic disease or condition that limits activity. Always check with your physician before starting a new program.

### **5. WATER FUN is for people with asthma & arthritis**

Most of the medical problems that limit activity on land are not a problem in the water. The humid atmosphere of a pool usually works well for people with asthma. Water is so easy on painful joints, muscles and bones that many pools offer special arthritis classes.

### **6. WATER FUN is for everyone**

Finding a place to enjoy water fun is easier than ever. The growing popularity of water exercise means that there are more pools and classes than ever. Check with your local Y, fitness clubs, colleges, schools and parks for convenient options - and make a splash!!

## Walking Works Wonders

Want to lose fat, get fit and have more energy? Want to improve your blood pressure, blood sugar, blood cholesterol and reduce your risk of disease? Amazingly, you can get all these benefits (and many more) from just putting one foot in front of the other!

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### 1. **WALK regularly**

The key to success is consistency. Start by picking a walk (or several small walks) that fits into your schedule - a walk to work, a walk to school, a walk at lunch or a walk around the block. Make your walk a top priority - and aim for walking at least five days a week.

### 2. **WALK 10,000 steps a day**

Research shows that walking 10,000 steps a day is all it takes to reduce stress, improve health and reduce the risk of disease. With an inexpensive pedometer, it's fun (and easy) to see how quickly your steps add up from simple changes like taking the stairs.

### 3. **WALK for transportation**

Using your legs instead of a car is one of the most efficient ways to fit physical activity into your day. Try walking to the grocery store, the post office or the restaurant. If walking all the way takes too long, park in a central location - then walk back and forth to your car.

### 4. **WALK for fun**

Walking + friends or kids or dog = FUN! A daily walk can do double duty - as a daily dose of companionship with friends, a time to connect with family or a way to keep your pets strong and healthy. It can also be a relaxing solo time to think or listen to music.

### 5. **WALK outside**

In almost any weather, walking outside is possible with the right clothes and shoes. Look for safe sidewalks, country roads and parks. Athletic fields are also fun to walk around. The ground is usually smooth - and watching a practice or game makes the time fly by.

### 6. **WALK inside**

Remember, every steps counts - every step around the house, around the office or around the mall. You can walk around the house during TV commercials, walk around the office during break time and walk around the mall before or after a shopping trip.

## What is a healthy weight for you?

A common-sense approach to setting weight management goals

### Weight and body image in America

Aiming for a healthy weight can be confusing in today's celebrity-driven culture. Although there has been some movement toward more realistic body images, most of the models that people see in the media are extremely thin, lean and athletic - digital manipulation of fashion photography also helps quite a bit!

Few average Americans have the genetics, time or money necessary for such "perfect" bodies. Unfortunately, many people damage their mental and physical health in vain attempts to be beautiful and acceptable. Dumb diets, dangerous weight loss products and disordered eating are all too common, especially among teens, women and overweight people who will do anything in a desperate effort to reach the unattainable.

### Government weight guidelines

Government weight guidelines have shifted from the old height-weight tables to the concept of Body Mass Index (BMI). In 1998, an expert panel from the National Institutes of Health chose BMI as a reliable and inexpensive way to classify the health risk of being overweight or obese.

BMI was used to define a healthy weight in the December 2001 *Surgeon General's Call To Action To Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*. A BMI table, complete description of BMI calculations, and the relationship of BMI to health can be found in the Surgeon General's healthy weight advice for consumers at:

- [www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact\\_advice.htm](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_advice.htm)

### Looking beyond BMI for your healthy weight

Many health professionals are using a more holistic definition of healthy weight - one that focuses more on health than weight. Here are some thoughts from experts who think beyond BMI when looking at weight management. **A healthy weight is:**

- determined by your lifestyle, not by a number on the scale or BMI chart.
- a weight where you can have food be part of your life, but not all of your life.
- the weight that one's body settles into with a balanced lifestyle, healthful eating and regular physical activity.
- a weight that is attainable and maintainable within a reasonably stable range without having to resort to heroic efforts of restricting caloric intake or excessively exaggerating caloric expenditure.
- a weight range that a person settles into while respecting natural appetites for food, movement and rest; without using restrictive eating patterns, compulsive exercise, medications or supplements to manage their weight.

## **YOGA: Good for the Whole Body**

Yoga is an ancient system of personal development encompassing mind, body and spirit. It is now embraced by modern science and by millions of Americans. Yoga can benefit anybody, from babies to seniors, and can be adapted for any body, from pregnant women to hardcore athletes. Take a class and see why yoga is often called the "fountain of life."

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### **1. YOGA for strength**

Building or rebuilding - muscle strength is just one of the many reasons to do yoga. The wide variety of yoga poses helps strengthen muscles in all areas of your body. Yoga can be especially helpful in strengthening back muscles - and reducing lower back problems.

### **2. YOGA for flexibility**

When people think 'yoga,' they often picture extraordinary flexibility - bodies twisted into amazing postures. Fortunately, you don't have to be naturally flexible to do yoga. With yoga's gentle pace, your body can become flexible and strong at the same time.

### **3. YOGA for balance**

Yoga teaches balance in body and mind, both essential for overall health in hectic times. Good physical balance reduces the risk of injuries and life-threatening falls, especially for older people. Mental balance helps us survive the natural ups and downs of daily life.

### **4. YOGA for energy**

Yoga is an energizing activity - both physically and mentally. Yoga poses stimulate the flow of oxygen into the lungs and the flow of blood throughout the body. Traditionally, yoga classes also include a relaxation pose - time to breathe deeply and rest completely.

### **5. YOGA for stress reduction**

Numerous studies confirm that people who do yoga feel less stressed generally - and are better able to handle highly stressful situations. Yoga enhances your ability to concentrate (by paying attention to your breathing) - and to clear your mind of extraneous thoughts.

### **6. YOGA for every body**

A wide spectrum of yoga classes are available in this country. Some have a spiritual emphasis and include teaching about Eastern philosophy. Others focus on the health and fitness aspects of yoga. The key is to find a class or video that fits you and your lifestyle.

# Eat Smart, Move More - Stay Healthy

## Ten Ways to Fit Physical Activity into Every Day

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### 1. Put on some comfortable shoes

- Feet were made for walking. With comfortable shoes on yours, you'll be ready to fit more walking into your life: at least 30 minutes a day, at least 10 minutes at a time.

### 2. Put on a pedometer

- These tiny step-counters are rapidly becoming today's most important piece of fitness equipment. While there is no "magic" number of steps, 10,000 per day is a great goal.

### 3. Put on some music

- Hate to exercise? How about dancing? Your favorite tunes - softly on headphones or loudly in the living room - can help you pick up the pace and enjoy moving more.

### 4. Use your legs – instead of the telephone

- Need to talk with a co-worker down the hall or a neighbor across the street? Hang up the phone and take a short walk to have your talk. Remember, every step counts!

### 5. Use your legs – instead of the elevator

- Need to go upstairs or downstairs? Forget the crowded elevator or the slow escalator! The stairs are an easy (and free!) way to build beautiful, strong leg muscles.

### 6. Use your legs – instead of the car

- For short errands, walking can be as fast (or even faster) than driving, waiting and parking. Plan to park in one place and walk to several different stores.

### 7. Fidget more

- The experts say it's true - fidgeting burns calories. Forget about sitting still at your desk - wiggle, squirm, standup, sit down, move around as much as you can.

### 8. Lift more

- One easy way to pump up arm muscles is to keep a set of weights (5 to 10 pounds) at your desk, near the TV or under the couch. Lift while you talk, watch or read.

### 9. Stretch more

- A few good stretches can help relax your body and your mind. You can stretch while working at a computer, watching TV or even driving a car. Just reach out and stretch.

### 10. Play more.

- Bounce a ball, fly a kite, swing on a swing, chase a child. There is no end to the fun when you play at getting fit. Need some playful ideas? Just ask your favorite kid!!!

# Get Moving... Physical Activity for Adults.



## Physical Activity to Improve Health

Great News! Physical activity does not have to be hard to give you health benefits. Dancing, swimming, walking, biking, or any number of other activities can improve your health. You don't have to sweat in a gym with special clothes to call it physical activity. Try to do a total of 30 minutes physical activity most days of the week.

For example, maybe you park away from work and take a 10 minute walk into work and a 10 minute walk back after work, then you walk to the park with your children, grandchildren, or dog. That adds up to 30+ minutes and you've got it. Those little doses of exercise add up. Try different activities until you find one you are comfortable with, start slowly, listen to your body, and stick with it. It doesn't have to hurt to be good for you.

Check out the exercise pyramid for examples of fun ways to stay active. Do it for yourself, do it for your family, but most importantly do it today!

## Benefits of Physical Activity

- ◆ *Reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of illness and death in the U.S.*
- ◆ *Reduces symptoms of stress, depression, and anxiety and may improve mood.*
- ◆ *Improves overall health and feeling of well-being.*
- ◆ *Improves appetite control and weight maintenance.*

## A Special Note to Older Adults

You too can benefit from moderate activity most days of the week. Remaining active is very important to staying healthy. If you are not physically active, check with your doctor before starting any form of exercise. Then, start slowly and build up to a comfortable pace. You may also need to start with shorter activity sessions – perhaps only 5 minutes. Work up to 30 or more minutes of activity per day. By the way, playing with grandchildren is a great form of activity.

## Physical Activity to Improve Fitness

More intense exercise may provide even greater health benefits. It will increase your heart and muscles' ability to work, increase your lean body tissues, decrease your fat stores and improve your overall feelings of well-being.

Improving your lung and heart fitness involves moving your large muscles (legs and arms) continuously in a rhythmic manner for a long time. This type of activity is called AEROBIC ACTIVITY.

Examples of Aerobic Activity are:

- ◆ Brisk walking
- ◆ Jogging
- ◆ Stair climbing
- ◆ Swimming
- ◆ Cycling
- ◆ Rowing
- ◆ Skating
- ◆ Dancing
- ◆ Cross-country skiing

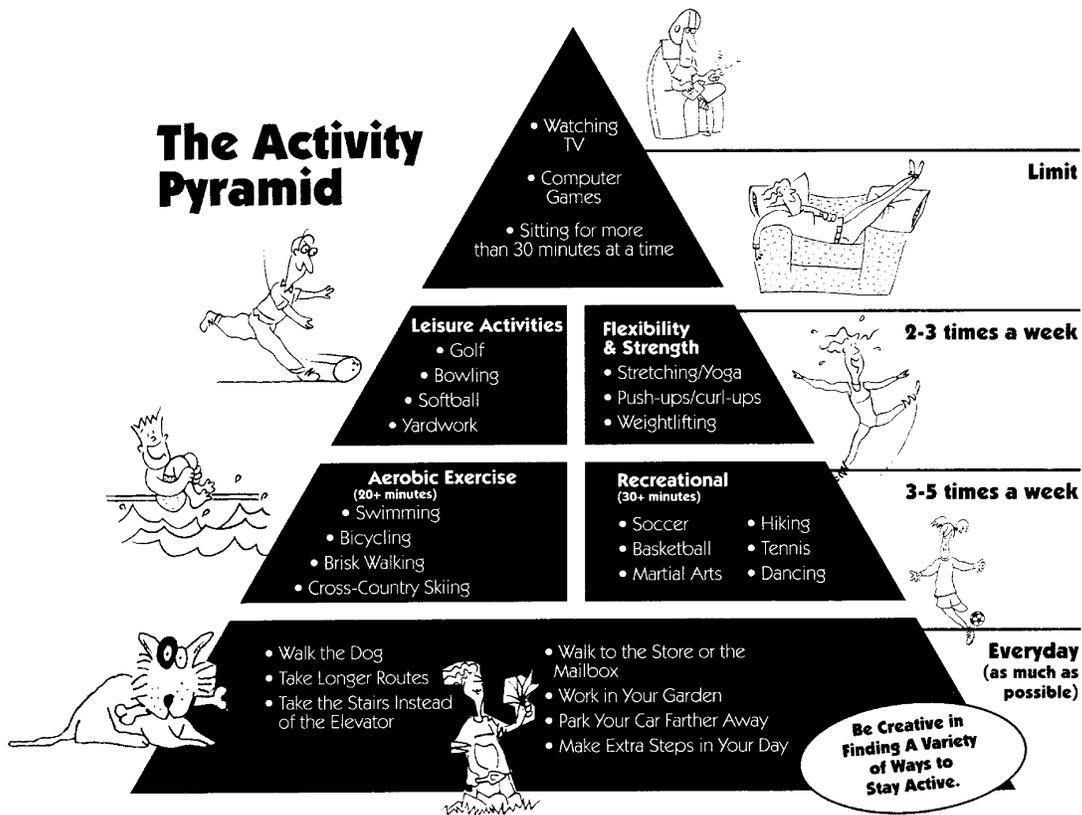
These AEROBIC ACTIVITIES need to be done hard enough to increase your heart and breathing rates. Your breathing should increase, but you should not get out of breath. You should still be able to carry on a conversation or sing with your workout music.

If you want to lose body fat, you should do AEROBIC ACTIVITIES 4 to 6 times a week for at least 30 minutes. Healthful eating is also important if your goal is to lose body fat.

Choose activities that you like and vary them daily so you don't get bored. For example, jog Monday, then Tuesday ride a stationary bike, etc. Use the activity pyramid below for examples of different forms of exercise.

**Be sure you drink enough fluids when you exercise.**

- ◆ Drink 1 cup (8 ounces) of water before and after you exercise.
- ◆ Drink 1 cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes during exercise.
- ◆ You should also be drinking at least 2 quarts of fluids that do not contain caffeine every day.



*If you have diabetes, heart disease or other chronic diseases, talk with your doctor about the right exercise program for you.*



## Ideas for Physical Activity Breaks in Meetings

*Benjamin Franklin once said,  
" You don't stop playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing."*

The following are sample ideas for physical activity breaks. Some of them are taken directly from improvisational theater exercises and others were made up on the spot. Activities are limited only by your own creativity (and safety concerns). Mix and match motions with movement ideas or come up with your own. There is no right or wrong way to have physical activity breaks; however, you should be aware of the needs of persons with disabilities. For example, you can ask folks to "stand up or roll back" to begin an activity. Share your ideas, be willing to pretend like you are visiting a kindergarten class, and have fun!

### **Potential Motions**

balance	chew	go	pinch	rotate	skip	tap
bend	clap	hit	pirouette	ride	slide	throw
blow	climb	hop	poke	run	slip	turn
bounce	clog	jump	pop	sashay	slither	walk
brush	cycle	kick	press	serve	spin	wave
build	dance	levitate	pull	shuffle	swagger	wiggle
bump	float	lift	push	skate	swim	wipe
catch	fix	paint	roll	ski	swing	write

### **Movement Ideas:**

Can you:

... pounce like a tiger  
... balance on a high wire  
... climb a rope  
... swagger like a cowboy  
... swim the butterfly  
... clog like you're on stage  
... paint the fence  
... wax the car  
... shuffle like you just got out of bed  
... float in the waves at the beach  
... balance a ball like a seal  
... wiggle like an inch worm  
... push the donkey up the hill

Can you stretch like you're a giraffe  
Can you pretend you're an elephant  
... a cat  
... a snake  
... a bull frog  
Can you be  
... a lumberjack  
... a fireman  
Can you pretend you are  
... a ball  
... a flower  
Can you give 4 people high five  
Can you giggle like it's your birthday  
Can you sit down like it's time for school



## **Group Activities**

### *Writing Your Name:*

Raise your right hand. Pretend you have a pencil in your hand. Print your first name. Using your left foot, write your name in cursive. Pretend you have a pencil sticking out of your belly button. Print or cursive, write your first name. No abbreviations! Don't forget to cross the 't's' and dot the 'i's'. Every activity, even one as simple as writing your name or conducting a meeting, can be made fun.

### *Beach Volleyball:*

Pass out several invisible beach balls. Pass (carefully hit) them around the room. Play along. You may want to make a show of bringing the invisible balls into the room. "Hand" them out to folks to get them started. You can also use real balls and name them with the issues you are addressing. You have to keep all of the "issues" up at the same time. Invisible balls get more people active because people wait for the real one to come to them rather than pretend its already there.

### *Mr. Ed's School of Counting:*

Each hand clap counts as 1. Each foot stomp (or knee slap) counts as 10. Can you count to 4? Can you count to 32? What is  $5 \times 7$ ? What is  $144 \div 12$ ? Great job, give yourself 4!

### *Lead With Your Body*

Walk around the room while leading with a particular body part of your choosing. It could be a foot, shoulder, knee, hip, ear, whatever! Lead as if that part would hit the wall first if you walked into it. Freeze! Lead with a new body part. Freeze! Now come up with a unique sound to go along with your new walk.

### *Story Time*

Make up or find a short story (3-6 paragraphs) with lots of action words. As you read it out loud, the participants can act out every action.

**Rx:** Each person should get 15 laughs / day; 2 of them must be "belly laughs". (Share with the audience a demonstration)

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Need more ideas? Check out Whole Person Associates Inc. for the following books: *Instant Icebreakers* by Sandy Christian and Nancy Loving; *Mind-Body Magic* by Martha Belknap; and *Playing Along* by Izzy Gesell.

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