



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Exercise is a part of a healthy lifestyle at any age. It helps you feel and look better, aids in weight loss, and can lower the risk for many common diseases. Exercise can be fun—even though it may not seem fun at first. Talk to your health care provider about exercising. People who have not been active, have health problems, are pregnant, or elderly may need special advice.

REASONS PEOPLE GIVE FOR NOT EXERCISING

People have many reasons for not exercising. Look for ways to overcome the ones that affect you.

- *Not enough time or exercising is inconvenient:* Find available time slots. Take exercise breaks at work. Walk for 10 to 15 minutes at a time.
- *Lack of energy:* Plan exercise time during the day or week when you do feel more energetic. Convince yourself that exercise will actually boost your energy level.
- *It is not enjoyable, or it is boring:* Watch television while you exercise. Do gardening or mow the lawn. Exercise with a friend. Join an exercise class.
- *Fear of injury, or have had a recent injury:* Learn how to warm up and cool down. Wear proper shoes for the activity. Pick activities that have little risk.
- *Lack of confidence in being able to exercise:* Exercise with friends who have the same skill level. Take a class to learn a new skill. Walking is the easiest exercise.
- *Not able to maintain an exercise routine due to travel for work or other conflicting schedules:* Walk in hotel halls and take stairs instead of elevators. Pack stretch bands and jump rope and use them in your room. Pick places to stay with pools or fitness rooms.
- *Family or friends are not supportive or encouraging:* Ask your family for support. Invite family or friends to exercise with you. Join a fitness class or hiking club.
- *No place to walk nearby, such as a park or sidewalks, or the weather is bad:* Always have activities that you can do indoors. Exercise to a video-tape. Walk in the mall. Ride an exercise bike.
- *Family obligations take too much time:* Exercise with the kids, such as walking or swimming. Plan on exercising when kids are at school, playing, or sleeping.

WHAT TO DO TO GET STARTED

- Plan on making exercise or physical activity a part of your everyday life. Do things you enjoy. Many people are getting their exercise doing things such as biking, skiing and tennis. Others prefer less active recreation such as walking, gardening, or golf.
- Children and adults should try to get at least 30 to 60 minutes of exercise a day. You can break this into shorter periods of 10 or 15 minutes during the day.

PARTS OF AN EXERCISE PLAN

- *Endurance:* Find an activity that makes you breathe harder, on most or all days of the week. That's called "endurance activity," because it builds your stamina.
- *Muscle strength:* Lack of use lets muscles waste away. Start lifting weights and increase the weight slowly. This will build bone mass and help avoid osteoporosis.
- *Balance:* Do things to help your balance. Stand on one foot, then the other, without holding onto anything for support. Walk heel-to-toe (the toes of the foot in back should almost touch the heel of the foot in front when you walk this way).
- *Stretch:* Stretching won't build endurance or muscles, but helps keep you limber and flexible, and reduces injuries.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEING ACTIVE

- Walk, cycle, jog, or skate to work, school, stores, etc. Walk during breaks at work. Keep a comfortable pair of shoes handy in your office or car.
- Park the car farther away from where you want to go.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Play actively with children or pets.
- Garden at home, or do home repair work.
- Exercise while watching television. Ride an exercise bike, walk in place, lift weights, or stretch.

CAUTIONS

- Don't overdo the activity. Listen to your body. A few muscle aches are to be expected, but not pain.
- Start off a new routine at an easy pace. Then increase your time and effort. If you can talk without any trouble at all, your activity is probably too easy. If you can't talk at all, it's too hard.
- Use the correct equipment, especially shoes.
- Take 3 to 5 minutes to warm up. For example, start a walk at a slow pace, and then increase to a brisk pace.
- Be aware of any warning signs of heart problems: Severe sweating, chest and arm pain, and dizziness.
- Drink plenty of water to replace any lost fluids.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

You or a family member has questions about exercising.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page