

8/3/2005

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Active Living**

**A few generations ago, no one talked about exercise and physical fitness. Daily life took a lot more work back then. People got the activity they needed without thinking about it. Today, we hear a whole lot about fitness. There are fitness clubs, fitness clothes, fitness equipment, and fitness foods. The funny thing is—even though we're surrounded by talk of fitness, we are more inactive than ever. We sit at desks all day in school or at work and in the evening we sit on the couch in front of the TV. We let our cars and appliances to do most of our work for us. When you think about it, we barely move at all. We expend almost NO energy!**

<b>CAN YOU RECOGNIZE FITNESS?</b>	
<b><i>Fitness is not:</i></b>	<b><i>Fitness is:</i></b>
<b>How you look in a bathing suit. Only for athletes. Something you buy in a pill or a powder. Just another way to sell clothes, diet foods, and magazines.</b>	<b>An active lifestyle. Strong heart and lungs. More important than thinness. A lower risk of heart disease and other chronic health problems A lifelong goal.</b>

## **Finding fitness**

**Fitness is more than just a marketing gimmick. Lack of physical activity causes problems for your body. Like a car that won't start when it hasn't been driven in a while, your heart and muscles need to be worked to stay in tune. In this era of inactivity, it takes a conscious choice to get your muscles moving and your heart beating faster. Getting fit doesn't mean that you have to have bulging muscles, a trim waist, or the single-minded dedication of a marathon runner. When you start putting regular activity into your life, fitness will follow naturally.**

**Fitness can take many shapes. Most people recognize the extremes on the fitness spectrum. At the top end is the Olympic athlete; at the bottom is the person who gasps for breath after climbing a flight of stairs. But what about the majority of people who fall in between? Is there a definition of fitness that can apply to everyone? The answer is "yes."**

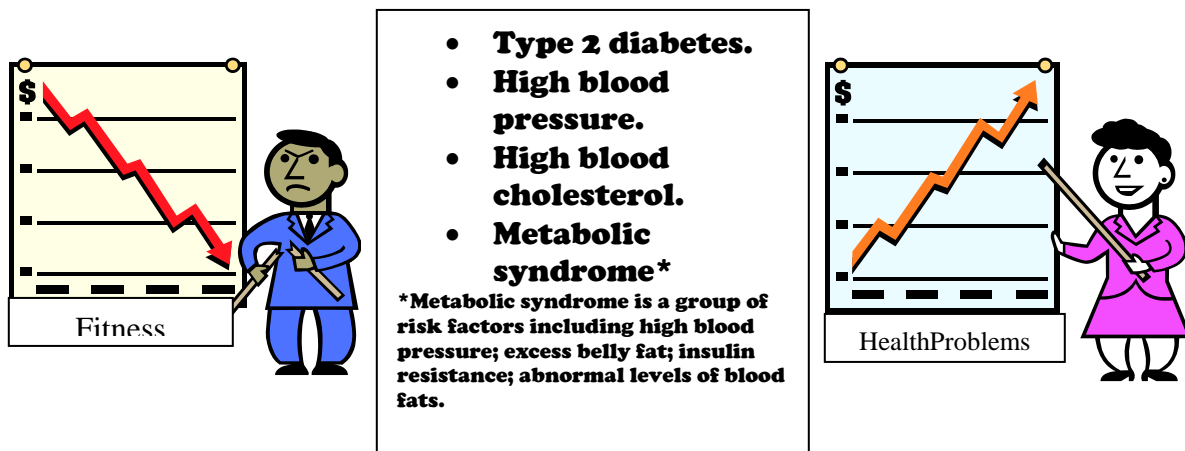
**There are five basic components to physical fitness: cardio-respiratory capacity; muscle strength; muscle endurance; flexibility; and body composition. (See *Foundations of Fitness* p. XX) These qualities can be used as a measure of fitness regardless of whether you are thin or fat, old or young. It's important to consider all aspects of fitness when you start an exercise program. But, the element that has the greatest impact on your long-term your health is your cardio-respiratory capacity. The good news is you can gauge your level of cardio-**

**respiratory fitness just by looking at how much time you spend being physically active.**

### **Fitness vs. fatness**

**Talk of fitness and lifestyle often centers on issues of weight. This is especially true as the number of overweight Americans grows to record proportions. However, being thin doesn't automatically mean that you have good cardio-respiratory capacity—the true measure of fitness.**

**Both overweight (a body mass index (BMI) over 25) and a low fitness level increase your risk of heart disease. The impact on your health of each is about the same. As your weight climbs and your fitness level drops off, your risk of getting any of a number of dangerous health conditions rises sharply. Among the health problems you face are:**



**Common sense tells you that a fit person of normal weight will have the lowest risk. But, what happens to your risk level if you're fit but overweight? How about if you're thin but out of condition? Either way, having a higher fitness level is still your best bet. Good cardio-respiratory conditioning lowers your risk of death from heart disease no matter what your weight is. Improving your fitness level can also**

**lower your odds of developing type 2 diabetes or metabolic syndrome even if you don't lose weight.**

**The lesson in all this is that maintaining a high level of fitness is more valuable to your health than just being thin. You'll do more to protect yourself from disease by adopting an active lifestyle than just by shedding extra pounds. So, when you're considering making lifestyle changes, your number one goal should always be to get active.**

**What is physical activity?**

**To move your body, you have to contract your muscles. In the process, your heart beats faster and you burn up energy. This is the definition of physical activity. Physical activity also involves skill, strength, power, speed, agility, and similar traits, but there are many healthy activities that do not require any special skills or athletic ability.**



**People commonly think that walking, running, swimming, bike-riding and other endurance exercises when they think of physical activity.**

**This kind sustained activity is important for building your cardio-respiratory capacity.**

**However, movement that takes place as part of work, recreation, and transportation also fall under the heading of physical activity.**

**Housework, walking, gardening, karate, mountain climbing, team sports, and dancing fit the bill, as well. The bottom line is that there are many ways you can get active once you start looking for them.**

### **Benefits of physical activity**

**People of all ages can benefit from physical activity. When you're young, it helps you build strong muscles and bones and decrease body fat. It also sets you on the road to an active lifestyle for the rest of your life. In adulthood, exercise lowers your risk of many diseases. It also helps you maintain your weight and lower stress. As you age, activity helps prevent bone loss, and improves strength and flexibility. If you're inactive now, you are not helping your health and even may be hurting it. You don't have to do strenuous exercise to reap benefits. Even 30 minutes of brisk walking every day can work wonders on your health.**

**You have a lot to gain from taking part some type of moderate-intensity activity on a regular basis. Here are just some of the things it can do:**

- **Reduce your risk of heart disease.**
- **Reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes.**
- **Help you maintain a healthy body weight.**
- **Help you manage stress.**
- **Reduce feelings of depression and anxiety.**
- **Improve your cholesterol levels.**
- **Reduce your blood pressure.**
- **Help your body builds and maintain strong bones, muscles, and joints.**
- **Reduce your risk colon cancer.**
- **Reduce your risk of stroke.**
- **Reduce your risk of early death.**

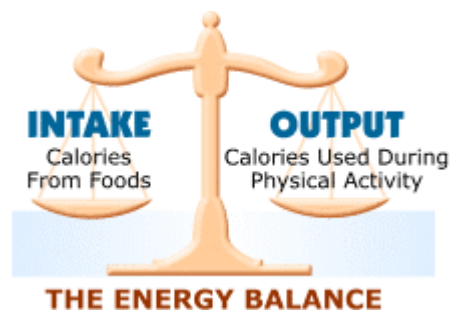


### **Physical activity and your weight**

**Physical activity is a vital to controlling your weight. To keep your weight steady, you need to burn up the same number of calories as you take in. If you eat more than you use, you'll gain weight. You're your body burns a set amount of energy for basic functions, such as breathing, and routine movements. In addition to that number, are the calories you burn in leisure-time activity. Two factors control your energy balance:**

- **How much you eat.**
- **How much activity you get.**

**Energy balance is like a scale. When you eat more calories than you use, you gain weight. You can tip the balance in your favor by increasing your leisure time activity.**



Source: *Nutrition and Physical Activity*, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC.

**[GRAPHIC: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/faq.htm>]**

***Here's something to think about the next time you reach for your favorite snack. The chart below tells you how many calories are in each food and how that translates into minutes of activity you'd need to burn it off.***

<b>BALANCE YOUR FOOD INTAKE AND YOUR ACTIVITY</b>		
<b>Food</b>	<b>Calories</b>	<b>Amount of activity needed</b>
<b>Small chocolate chip cookie</b>	<b>50 calories</b>	<b>Brisk walking (4 mph) 10 minutes</b>
<b>Large gourmet chocolate chip cookie</b>	<b>250 calories</b>	<b>Brisk walking (4 mph) 10 minutes AND Raking leaves 40 minutes</b>
<b>jelly filled doughnut</b>	<b>300 calories</b>	<b>Moderate walking (3 mph) 60 minutes</b>
<b>Fast food meal: a double patty cheeseburger, extra-large fries, and a 24 oz. soft drink</b>	<b>1500 calories</b>	<b>Running (6 mph) 2½ hours</b>

### **Measuring intensity: how hard are you working?**

**The intensity of a physical activity refers to how hard your body is working and how much energy you are using up doing that activity. Intensity is usually described as light, moderate, or vigorous. You can gauge the intensity of your activity by physical changes which signal that your heart is pumping harder.**

### **INTENSITY LEVELS**

<b>Intensity Level</b>	<b>What it feels like</b>
<b>At rest</b>	<b>No signs of exertion</b>
<b>Light</b>	<b>Noticeable exertion with normal to slightly increased breathing</b>
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Medium level of exertion with deeper breathing and light to moderate sweating</b>
<b>Vigorous</b>	<b>Extreme exertion with heavy panting or gasping and heavy sweating</b>



### ***Using the “Talk Test”***

**An easy way to judge if you are exercising at the right intensity level is by using the talk test.**

- **Light activity:** you should be able to sing while doing the activity.
- **Moderate activity:** you should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably while engaging in the activity.
- **Vigorous activity:** you should become winded or too out of breath to carry on a conversation.

### ***Calculating your target heart rate***

**Another way to measure the intensity of activity is to monitor your heart beat. To get the disease-fighting benefits of exercise, your activity should get your heart beat to rise to between 50 and 70% of your heart’s maximum pumping ability. This heart rate is considered moderate intensity activity. Vigorous activity should raise your heart rate to 70 to 85% of maximum.**

**To find your target heart rate, follow these steps:**

- **Subtract your age from 220. This gives you your maximum heart rate.**  
 **$220 - (\text{your age}) = (\text{your heart's maximum beats per minute})$**
- **Multiply that number by the percentage of maximum you are targeting.**  
 **$(\text{Your heart's maximum bpm}) \times (\text{percentage of maximum}) = (\text{target heart rate})$**

### **Example:**

**If you are 18 years old, the equation would look like this:**



**$220 - 18 = 202$  bpm**  
 **$50\% \times 202 = 101$  bpm**  
 **$70\% \times 202 = 141$  bpm**  
 **$85\% \times 202 = 172$  bpm**

***Your target range:***

**101 to 141 bpm: moderate-intensity activity**

**141 to 172 bpm: vigorous-intensity activity**

***Taking your Heart Rate***

**You can measure your pulse at your neck, wrist, or chest. The steps below are for taking your pulse at your wrist.**

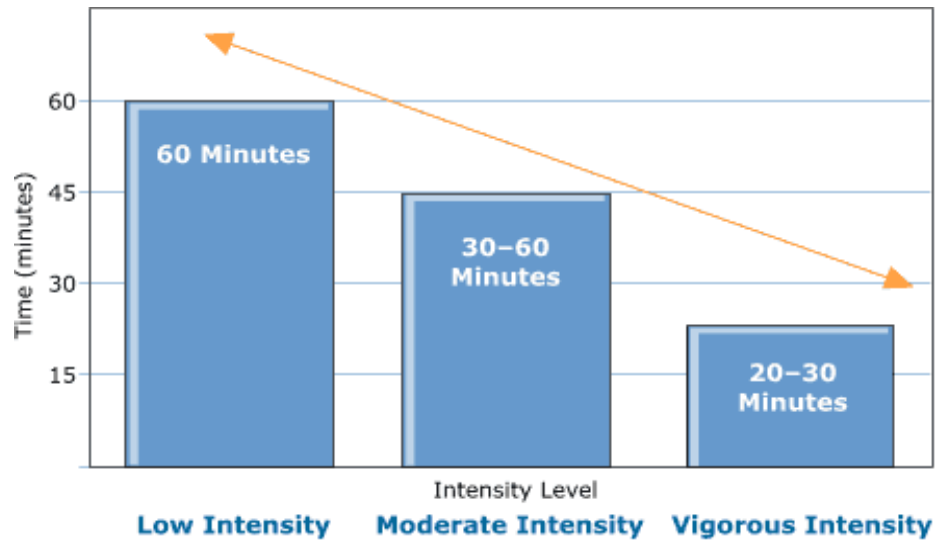
- **Stop exercising briefly.**
- **Place your index middle fingers on the underside of the wrist of your opposite hand. Feel for your pulse where the base of the thumb meets the wrist.**
- **Press lightly with the tips of your fingers. (Do not use your thumb.)**
- **Count the first beat you feel as zero.**
- **Continue counting beats for 60 seconds. (Or, you can count beats for 30 seconds and multiply your total by 2.)**
- **Compare your total with your target heart rate range.**
- **If it falls in the range, you have reached your desired level of intensity.**



***Time and intensity***

**The higher the level of intensity of an activity, the more energy it burns. That means that you'll use up the same number of calories in shorter period of time doing vigorous exercise than you will with moderate-intensity activity.**

**The graph below shows how much time it takes to burn approximately 150 calories at different levels of activity.**



[GRAPHIC: source for this graph is *Nutrition & Activity*, CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/nceodphp/dnpa/physical/measuring/examples.htm>

INTENSITY LEVEL OF COMMON ACTIVITIES		
Light (Burns less than 3.5 cal/min)	Moderate (Burns 3.5 – 7 cal/min)	Vigorous (Burns more than 7 cal/min)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking slowly</li> <li>• Golf, using a powered cart</li> <li>• Treading water slowly</li> <li>• Gardening or pruning</li> <li>• Bicycling with light effort</li> <li>• Dusting or vacuuming</li> <li>• Light stretching or warm up exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking briskly</li> <li>• Golf, pulling or carrying clubs</li> <li>• Recreational swimming</li> <li>• Mowing the lawn, using a power mower</li> <li>• Tennis, doubles</li> <li>• Bicycling 5 to 9 mph or on level ground, few hills</li> <li>• Scrubbing floors or washing windows</li> <li>• Weight lifting, using exercise machines or free weights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race walking, jogging or running</li> <li>• Swimming laps</li> <li>• Mowing the lawn, using a hand mower</li> <li>• Tennis, singles</li> <li>• Bicycling more than 10 mph or on steep uphill terrain</li> <li>• Moving furniture</li> <li>• Circuit training</li> </ul>

**How much activity do you need?**

**The amount of physical activity you should get each day depends on your age and your personal health goals. If you are trying to lose weight—or keep it off—it helps to get more than the minimum suggested amount.**

**If your activity level doesn't measure up to the guidelines, don't feel discouraged. You can increase your amount a little bit at a time. Here are some ideas:**

- **If you're inactive: Try adding a few minutes of activity each day until you build up to the suggested amount.**
- **If you're active, but not getting as much as you should: Make it a goal to be more regular with your activity.**
- **If you're meeting the guideline for moderate-intensity activity: You can benefit even more by exercising longer or by upping the intensity of your activity.**

<b>ACTIVITY GUIDELINES</b>					
	<b>Elementary- school-age children</b>	<b>Adolescents</b>	<b>Adults</b>		
<b>Type/level of activity</b>	<b>Variety of age-appropriate activities.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Play, sports, transportation, and work activities.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Sessions of vigorous exercise.</b></li> </ul>	<b>Moderate activity</b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>Vigorous activity</b>
<b>Length of time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>At least 30 - 60 minutes daily. From 60 minutes to several hours of accumulated daily activity is encouraged.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Some 10-15 minute periods of moderate to vigorous activity should be part of total daily activity.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Daily physical activity.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Periods of vigorous activity lasting 20 minutes or more.</b></li> </ul>	<b>30 minutes or more.</b>		<b>20 minutes or more.</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	<b>All or most days of the week.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Some activity on all or most days of the week.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Vigorous activity at least 3 times weekly.</b></li> </ul>	<b>At least 5 days a week.</b>		<b>At least 3 days a week</b>
<b>Other considerations</b>	<b>Children shouldn't be inactive for extended periods.</b>				

## **Deciding to get active**

**You already know that activity is good for you, but that may not be enough to push you into action. You're not alone. Two out of three Americans still don't get the amount of physical activity they should. This is not just an adult problem. More than a third of high-school age kids don't get any form of vigorous activity on a regular basis. And, even though PE class at school is any easy way to fit activity into the school day, fewer and fewer students are making this choice.**

**Often, the hardest part of building activity into your life is just getting started. You probably have all sorts of very good reasons for not being more active. Most people do. But, to make change, you'll first need to get past these obstacles.**

### **What's standing in your way?**

**The chart below lists the most common reasons people give for not getting physically activity. It also offers tips for beating them. See if you can find your main obstacles on the chart. Could any of these suggestions help you become more active?**



<b>TIPS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS</b>	
<b>Lack of time</b>	<b>Find open time slots. Monitor your daily activities for one week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.</b>

	<b>Add physical activity to your daily routine.</b> For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize school activities around physical activity, walk the dog, exercise while you watch TV, park farther away from your destination, etc.
	<b>Make time for physical activity.</b> For example, walk, jog, or swim during your lunch hour, or take fitness breaks instead of coffee breaks.
	<b>Select activities that take less time,</b> such as walking, jogging, or stairclimbing.
<b>Social influence</b>	<b>Tell your friends and family that you want to get more active. Ask them to support your efforts.</b>
	<b>Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise.</b>
	<b>Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as the YMCA or a hiking club.</b>
<b>Lack of energy</b>	<b>Schedule physical activity for times in the day or week when you have more energy.</b>
	<b>Tell yourself that if you give it a chance, physical activity will increase your energy level; then, try it.</b>
<b>Lack of motivation</b>	<b>Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule. Write it on your calendar.</b>
	<b>Invite a friend to exercise with you on a regular basis. Write it on both your calendars.</b>
	<b>Join an exercise group or class.</b>
<b>Fear of injury</b>	<b>Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury.</b>
	<b>Learn how to exercise appropriately for your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status.</b>
	<b>Choose activities with a low risk of injury.</b>
<b>Lack of skill</b>	<b>Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging.</b>
	<b>Exercise with friends who are at the same skill level as you are.</b>
	<b>Find a friend who is willing to teach you some new skills.</b>
	<b>Take a class to develop new skills.</b>
<b>Lack of resources</b>	<b>Select activities that don't need special equipment such as walking, jogging, jumping rope, or calisthenics.</b>
	<b>Identify inexpensive, convenient resources available in your community such as community education programs, school PE classes, park and recreation programs, worksite programs, etc.</b>
<b>Weather conditions</b>	<b>Develop a set of regular activities that don't depend on the weather such as indoor cycling, aerobic dance, indoor swimming, calisthenics, stair climbing, rope skipping, mall walking, dancing, gymnasium games, etc.</b>
	<b>View outdoor activities that depend on weather conditions such as cross-country skiing, outdoor swimming, outdoor tennis, etc. as "bonus" activities. You do these in addition to your regular program when the weather permits.</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>Put a jump rope in your suitcase and jump rope.</b>
	<b>Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels.</b>
	<b>Stay in places with swimming pools or exercise facilities.</b>
	<b>Join the YMCA or YWCA (ask about reciprocal membership agreement).</b>
	<b>Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.</b>
	<b>Bring a small tape recorder and your favorite aerobic exercise tape.</b>
<b>Family obligations</b>	<b>Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has small children.</b>
	<b>Exercise with the kids-go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids (there are several on the market) and exercise together. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.</b>
	<b>Hire a babysitter and look at the cost as a worthwhile investment in your physical and mental health.</b>
	<b>Jump rope, do calisthenics, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids are busy playing or sleeping.</b>
	<b>Try to exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).</b>
	<b>Encourage exercise facilities to provide child care services.</b>

### ***Are you ready to lose weight?***

***Like getting active, losing weight involves big lifestyle changes. These questions put together by the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, can help you determine if you're ready to take this step.***

- **Am I motivated to change my eating and activity habits right now?**

**Facing the fact that you need to make lifestyle changes is the first step. Make sure you're willing to take on this challenge at this time.**

- **What's going on in my life now, and what will I be dealing with over the next few months?**  
**It will be hard to make behavior change a high priority if you're distracted by other major problems in your life.**
- **Do I have time to keep track of what I eat and how much I exercise?**  
**Tracking your eating and activity improves your chances of success. This takes time at first, but it gets easier as you go along.**
- **Do I truly believe I can change my eating behavior?**  
**You'll need faith in your ability to make changes and get over obstacles.**
- **Am I willing to find ways to become more active?**  
**Activity goes hand-in-hand with weight loss and weight maintenance. Without increasing your activity level, you limit your chances of success.**
- **Can I make this a positive experience?**  
**Losing weight and keeping it off involves hard work and determination. You'll be more successful if you can find ways to enjoy the experience.**

### **Stages of change**

**Most people go through five stages in the process of making a major behavior change. Each stage takes commitment and effort. At every level, you'll need to adjust to new behaviors, and change your attitudes about yourself. People move through the five stages at different paces. You'll advance as you're ready. Once you've decided to change, you'll be anxious to see results. It's important not to give up if you don't move as fast you wish. Also, movement won't always be in a forward direction. But, that's okay. Ups and downs are part of the process. You'll make progress if you stick with it.**

**The five stages of change are described below. There will be challenges at each stage. The tips in this section can help you overcome the obstacles you'll face as you work toward your goals.**



Source: *Nutrition & Physical Activity*, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC.

[GRAPHIC: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/starting/index.html>]

### ***Stage 1: Not Ready for Change***

**At this point, you're not even thinking about getting more physical activity into your daily routine. You may have tried to be active in the past, but the habit didn't stick.**

**If you have no desire to change your attitude about activity right now, and get upset if people mention it to you, you're not ready for change. But, keep reading. Information later on in this chapter might change how you feel.**

### ***Stage 2: Thinking About Change***

**You're beginning to see the value of exercise. But, you know it will take a lot of effort to break your old habits and build new ones.**

**You're still not sure you're ready to put in the work.**

**The chart below will help you assess your readiness. Check off the benefits you see from getting active (pros) and the things that are holding you back (cons).**

<b>PROS AND CONS OF GETTING ACTIVE</b>
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<b>Why do I want to be more active?</b>	<b>What's stopping me from being active?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Lose pounds and belly fat</li> <li>? Feel better physically and emotionally</li> <li>? Maintain a healthy body weight</li> <li>? Reduce my risk of heart disease and diabetes</li> <li>? Look my best</li> <li>? Sleep better</li> <li>? Have more energy</li> <li>? Strengthen my bones and muscles</li> <li>? Reduce stress</li> <li>? Feel less depressed</li> <li>? Feel better about my body</li> <li>? Discover new activities</li> <li>? Have fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Don't have enough time</li> <li>? Don't feel like taking on another challenge</li> <li>? Feel that activity is boring</li> <li>? Worried that exercise will take away from my time with my friends and family</li> <li>? Don't like to sweat</li> <li>? Don't know how to exercise</li> <li>? Don't like how I look in exercise clothes</li> <li>? Don't know anyone to exercise with</li> <li>? Had a bad experience with sports in the past</li> <li>? Don't have money to spend money on equipment or health clubs</li> </ul>

**Now that you've assessed how you feel about getting active, let's sum up where you stand:**

- **Which benefits of activity excite you?**
- **Which barriers do you feel the most strongly about?**
- **Are the barriers things you're willing to work on?**
- **Are you satisfied with leaving things how they are?**



**If your answers tell you that getting more physical activity is something you're willing to work on, congratulations! You're ready to move into Stage 3 of behavior change.**

### ***Stage 3: Preparing for Change***

**You've taken an important first step toward change: you've decided you're ready to work on getting more active. Now you're probably wondering, "Where do I start?"**

**Instead of waiting for that perfect “right time” to get active, why not make a move toward an active lifestyle now? The following steps will bring you closer to your goal.**

- **Target an area to add activity.** You may not think you have room in your busy schedule to fit in exercise. But, what about walking up and down the stairs for 15 minutes at lunch? Or, shooting hoops with your friends for a half an hour in the evening? You may be surprised at the opportunities you find when you start to look.

**ACTION STEP**

**Look at your schedule. Choose one of the following times when you might activity into your day:**

- **During school or work.**
- **On your lunch period or break.**
- **Before or after school/work.**
- **On the weekends.**
- **When doing active indoor chores.**
- **When active outdoor chores.**



- **Remember your physical activity interests and past successes.** Were there times in your life when you were active on a regular basis? Maybe you played a sport, or went to aerobics class several times a week. Or, are there activities you’ve always wanted to try like tennis, tap dancing, or fly-fishing? Focus the on times when you were excited about exercise. Remembering these positive feelings can help you over the hurdle of starting up again.

**ACTION STEP**

- **Make a list of activities that you might want to do. Include:**
  - **Activities you can do alone (example. walking)**
  - **Activities you do with a friend (example. tennis)**
  - **Indoor activities (example: yoga class).**
  - **Outdoor activities (example: biking).**
- **Keep your list by the phone so you can add new activities as you think of them.**
- **Consider all different types of activities. Here are some ideas to get you started:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Walking</b></li><li>○ <b>Yoga</b></li><li>○ <b>Low-impact aerobics.</b></li><li>○ <b>Gardening/yard work.</b></li><li>○ <b>Frisbee.</b></li><li>○ <b>Volleyball.</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Swimming.</b></li><li>○ <b>Basketball.</b></li><li>○ <b>Dancing.</b></li><li>○ <b>Skating.</b></li><li>○ <b>Biking.</b></li><li>○ <b>Tennis.</b></li></ul>
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- **Hiking.**
- **Stair climbing.**
- **Softball.**
- **Jogging.**



- **Find support.** If you're on the fence about getting active, talk over your worries with family and friends who are already physically active. Ask them how they got started and what keeps them motivated. They may have great tips for ways to include activity in your day.

**ACTION STEP**

- **Name two people who you can talk to about getting active.**
- **Set dates within the next month for your conversations with them.**

- **Review your current level of activity.** Knowing where you're starting from can help you move forward. By taking a close look at your existing activity level, you can begin to spot places where there's room for change.

**ACTION STEP**

**Ask yourself the questions below. Use your answers to target one area of your life where you can include a new activity or expand a current one.**

- **How often do you participate in physical activity of at least moderate intensity?**
- **How active is your job or your school day?**
- **How active are you during lunch or breaks?**
- **What do you usually do before or after school or work?**
- **What kind of activity do you typically do on a weekend?**
- **How often do you do active indoor chores such as scrubbing the tub, painting, washing windows, or carrying heavy bags of garbage?**
- **How often do you do active outdoor chores such as moving the grass, washing and waxing the car, gardening, raking leaves, or caring for large animals?**

- **Reward yourself.** Whether you realize it or not, you've made some big steps toward getting active. Pat yourself on the back for the effort it's taken to come this far.

**ACTION STEP**

**Give yourself an appropriate reward for the progress you've made. (Remember not to use food as a reward.) How about tickets to a movie or sporting event? Or, get yourself some new workout clothes or athletic shoes—these items may spur you on even more.**

- **Develop a long-term vision. Keep in mind the activity level you ultimately want to achieve. Build on your successes month by month.**

**ACTION STEP**

- **Look up the recommended amount of physical activity for your age. (See p.XX).**
- **Think about the steps you would take to get to that level. Consider what some of your short-term goals might be along the way.**

***Stage 4: Taking Action***

**When you get to this stage, you've already accomplished two key things:**

- **You've decided that you want to change.**
- **You've made some preliminary moves toward an active lifestyle including:**
  - **Assessing your time.**
  - **Reviewing your current activity.**
  - **Building your support network.**

**Now you're ready to take action. The following steps will help you transform your wish list into reality.**

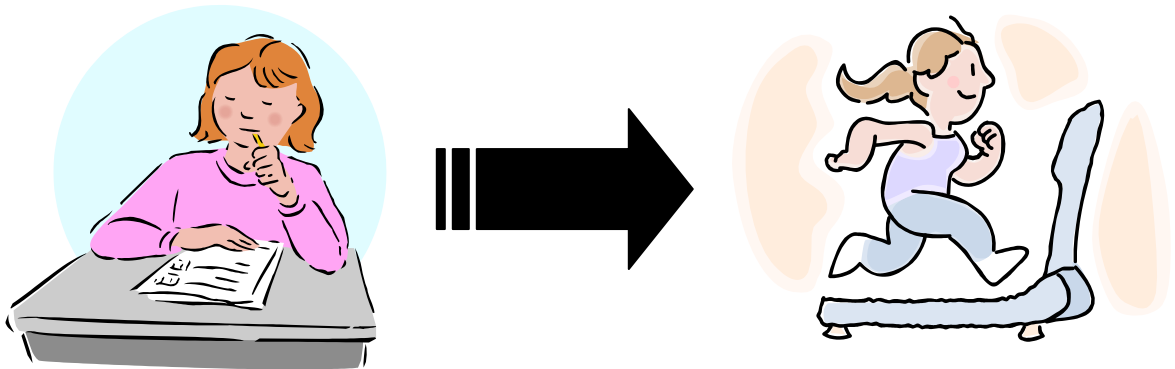
- **Make change a priority. Like the old saying goes, "If there's a will, there's a way." When you're committed to getting more active, you'll find a way to put physical at the top of your to-do list. When you can make this leap, you'll know you're on the road to success.**

**ACTION STEP**

- **Choose one area of your life where you can add to your level of physical activity (work or school; lunch or break time; weekdays before or after work/school; weekends; active chores).**
  - **Promise yourself that you WILL address that area this week**
- **Schedule the time. You've thought about the areas in your life where you might be able to work in more activity. Now it's time to get specific. If carving out a large stretch of time is a problem, look for ways to accumulate several smaller chunks of 15 to 20 minutes each.**

**ACTION STEP**

- **Find at least three slots within the next week that you can devote to activity.**
- **Mark these times on your calendar.**



- **Build an action plan. You have everything in place for activity: your support network, your priorities, and your time. Now it's time for action. But first you'll need a plan. This is where you turn your good intentions into doable goals.**

**ACTION STEP**

- **Review the time slots you identified, the areas you want to address, and the goals you set down.**
- **Remember the attributes of a doable goal: realistic, attainable, measurable, personally important.**
- **Construct a goal that fits these requirements. For example, "I will walk the dog for 20 minutes, four times a week, after dinner."**

**SIDEBAR**

***Creating goals***

**Goals are a way to keep yourself moving forward. They let you break down a huge task into doable chunks. Here are things to keep in mind when choosing a goal:**

- **Set small, specific goals rather than large general ones. For example, make your goal "I will use the elevator rather than the stairs at least once a week," rather than "I will get more activity this month."**
- **When you've achieved one goal, you can build on it with other goals. For example, if you've succeeded at walking once a week, make your goal to walk twice a week."**
- **Continue adding goals until you are at the activity level you desire.**

**END SIDEBAR**

**SIDEBAR**

***Your RAMP to a Successful Goal***

**You have the highest chance of success if your goals are:**

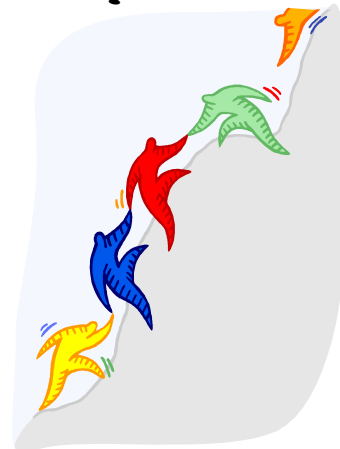
- **Realistic**. It must be something you can actually do.
- **Attainable**. It must be a level you can reach.
- **Measurable**. You must have a way to determine if you've met your goal.
- **Personally important**. The change must be something you care about.

**END SIDEBAR**

- **Make use of your support system.** Turn to the people around you for encouragement and motivation. Plan activities that you can do with friends or family members. (*Hint: It's harder to skip exercise if you have someone else counting on you. Use this to your advantage!*) Also, make simple changes in your home, work, or school environment to support your activity goals. For example, have several pairs of comfortable walking shoes and put them in handy places. This lets you fit in a walk without having to do a lot of planning. Also, keep a bag of exercise clothes ready to go so that nothing stands in the way when you want to get active.

**ACTION STEP**

- **Ask two people in your support network to join you in some type of physical activity. Schedule a time within the next 2 weeks to do these activities.**
- **Make one change in your environment to make activity more convenient.**



- **Monitor your progress.** Tracking your physical activity can help you see how far you've come. It also lets you know which areas still need work. This knowledge will help you build on your goals and get you closer to the ultimate aim—a healthy level of physical activity.

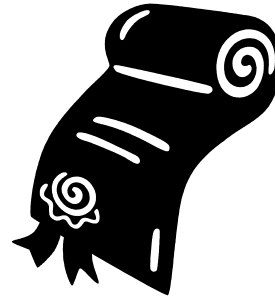
**ACTION STEP**

- **Keep an activity log of your daily activity.**
- **Assess your activity at the end of Week 1. If you've met your goal, build on that goal in Week 2. For example, if you succeeded in walking for 20 minutes twice during the first week, try to walk 20 minutes, three times during the following week.**
- **If you didn't meet your original goal, try again in Week 2.**

- **Reward yourself.** Rewards are important at every step along the way. Setting measurable goals and tracking your progress makes it easy to see your achievements.

**ACTION STEP**

- Review your goals for this week. Did you meet them?
- If yes, you deserve a treat—how about a massage or a new CD?



- **Don't rush change.** Getting active after a long spell of inactivity is a big change. It will take time for this new behavior to take hold. You probably feel excited by your accomplishments so far. This energy is a good motivator, but moving too fast can derail your efforts.

**ACTION STEP**

Review the tips below. Keep these points in mind as you progress with your activity program.

- **Aim for balance.** The time you're devoting to activity may have taken away from other areas of your life. Even though physical activity is giving you more energy, don't try to do everything. It's easy to get "burned out." This could make you give up your active lifestyle.
- **Be realistic.** Increase your activity level at a steady pace. Pushing your body too much can lead to an injury. Starting your exercise program over again after you've been sidelined is doubly hard.
- **Remain positive.** Don't berate yourself if you suffer a setback or don't progress fast enough. Feel proud of your successes so far. Focus on your commitment to building on your accomplishments.



- **Keep focused on your long-term vision.** Keep your ultimate activity goal in mind as you build on your success week by week.

**ACTION STEP**

- Do you remember the amount of physical activity that is recommended for your age group? If not, re-read the guidelines. (See p. XX)
- Plan future goals that will help you build up to this level.

### ***Stage 5: Maintaining Your Progress***

**You've accomplished your long-term goal; you're at your recommended activity level. You have a lot to be proud of. But, your job isn't done. Your challenge now is to keep up the good work. The following steps will help you improve your chances for success.**

- **Plan for setbacks.** Every road to change has its ups and downs. That's to be expected. Small setbacks don't have to spell failure. For example, a bout of flu, a vacation, an injury, an extra-busy week, or a stretch of bad weather can upset your routine. You have a much better chance of returning to your activity program if you're prepared for difficulties.

#### **ACTION STEP**

- **Make a list of all the events that could potentially disrupt your activity plans.**
- **Come up with alternatives so you can maintain your activity level. For example, work out to an aerobics video when the weather is bad rather than taking your usual walk. When traveling, bring your walking shoes and exercise clothes with you and take advantage of exercise opportunities on the road.**



- **Avoid overconfidence.** Your activity routine is in place. You never have to worry about being a couch-potato again. Right? Not so fast. Old behaviors have a way of creeping back when you let your guard down. Beware of attitudes that could undermine all your hard work

#### **ACTION STEP**

- **Repeat this sentence to yourself three times out loud: "Minor slips will happen."**
- **Watch for thoughts such as:**
  - **"I've got nothing to worry about."**
  - **"Nothing will stop me from including activity in my day."**
  - **"I'm safe. My friends and family won't let me quit."**
  - **"I've only missed a few days. I'll start back soon."**
- **Think about how hard it was to get where you are now and what it would be like to have to start over again.**



- **Stay focused on the positive. Remind yourself how much you are gaining from increasing your activity level. Use this awareness to help you when you're feeling discouraged or have a set back.**

**ACTION STEP**

- **Make a list of all ways exercise is helping you personally. For example: helping control your weight, giving you more energy, etc.**
- **Keep this list with your exercise log and add to it as you experience other benefits.**
- **Review your list if you feel your motivation is slipping.**



- **Mentor others. You relied on the support of people around you to make this the change to an active lifestyle. Now it's your turn to be a role model. You'll feel good and it will help you stay on track.**

**ACTION STEP**

**Look for opportunities to share the skills you've learned with someone who's just starting out.**

## **Building a physical activity program**

**There are two components of regular physical activity. One portion comes from the informal activity you do in the course of daily living. At the other end of the spectrum is exercise or fitness training. This is regular, structured activity designed to improve specific aspects of your physical fitness. To get the full health benefits of physical activity, you'll need to have regular exercise in addition to your daily casual activity.**



## **Adding activity to your day**

**Incorporating more activity into your daily life is a great place to start your physical activity program, particularly if you've been inactive for a while. With a little creativity, you'll find plenty of opportunities to expand this type of activity. (Remember, every little bit helps.)**

**Here are some suggestions to get you started.**

- **Use leg power—walk, cycle, jog, or skate to school, work, or the store.**
- **Park the car farther away from your destination.**
- **Get on or off the bus several blocks away.**
- **Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.**
- **Take PE class or get involved in intramural or interscholastic sports.**
- **Play active games with your friends, siblings, or pets. If you find it hard to be active at the end of the day, try activity in the morning before school or work.**
- **Help with gardening or home repair.**
- **Get a pedometer to measure the number of steps you take. Keep track of the steps you take in a day (2000 steps = 1 mile). Once you know how many steps you average, try adding 2000 more steps every day.**
- **Avoid labor-saving devices. Turn off the self-propel option on your lawn mower or vacuum cleaner.**
- **Take a couple of extra laps around the mall when you go shopping.**
- **Turn “TV-time” into “exercise-time.” For example, work out with hand weights, use an exercise machine such as a stationary bicycle, treadmill, or stairclimber, or do some stretches.**
- **Turn on your favorite music and dance.**
- **Keep comfortable walking or running shoes in handy places—your car, at work, in your locker at school. You'll be ready for activity wherever you go!**
- **Organize a group of friends for a regular Saturday morning walk.**
- **Turn off the TV and do anything on this list.**

## **SIDEBAR**

### ***The Foundations of Fitness***

**A well-balanced exercise program addresses all the components of physical fitness. These are:**

- **Cardio-respiratory capacity.** This is the ability of your heart and lungs to get oxygen rich blood to your muscles when they're working hard.
- **Muscle strength.** The ability of your muscles to exert force.
- **Muscle endurance.** The ability of your muscles to work without getting tired.
- **Flexibility.** The amount of movement you have in your joints.
- **Body composition.** The amounts of muscle, fat, bone, and other elements that make up your body.

### **END SIDEBAR**

### **Exercise basics**

**Exercise refers to a structured activity program that improves your all-around physical fitness level. A good exercise program includes:**

- **Aerobic activity.** Involves repetitive movements of the large muscle groups in your arms and legs. It builds your heart and lung capacity and improves your muscle endurance. Examples include:
  - Walking.
  - Swimming.
  - Jogging.
  - Cycling.
- **Strength training.** Works muscles against resistance. It strengthens muscles and bones and increases your lean muscle mass. Examples include:
  - Weight training with machines.
  - Using free weights.
  - Elastic band workouts.
- **Flexibility exercises.** Lengthens and strengthens muscle fibers. It improves motion around the joints and helps protect you from injury.
  - Stretching exercises.
  - Yoga.
  - Pilates.



**The exercise plan described below includes all three of these components. You can follow this program on your own—you don't need special facilities or equipment. However, you can mix and match other types of aerobic, strengthening, and flexibility exercises to create your own program. (See *Mixing it up: the benefits of cross-training*, p. XX). Whatever you choose, keep in mind that a successful exercise plan should reflect your personal interests and your fitness**

**level. (For information on other exercise opportunities such as aerobics classes, yoga, team sports, and fitness clubs, see *Community Resources* p.XX)**

## **SIDEBAR**

### ***When you've been inactive....***

**If it's been a while since you got any regular physical activity, you'll need to take it slow. Here are some tips for getting started.**

- **Begin with moderate-intensity activities you enjoy. Choosing activities you like increases the odds that you'll stick with them.**
- **Gradually build up the time spent doing the activity by adding a few minutes every few days. Do this until you can comfortably perform the minimum amount of activity recommended for your age.**
- **When you can easily do the minimum amount of activity you can begin doing more. Slowly work up to longer periods or a higher intensity of activity. Or, you can do both.**
- **Vary your activities. This will make your activity efforts more interesting and broaden the range of benefits you'll get.**
- **Try out activities you've never done before.**
- **Be sure to reward your efforts. Getting started is a big step.**

## **END SIDEBAR**

### **Aerobic exercise: walking**

**Walking is a good way to start your exercise program. After all, it's something you already know how to do. It's easy to begin a walking program even when you've been inactive. All you need to get going is a good pair of shoes, comfortable clothes, and the motivation to stick with it. Remember to set up walking plans for all different kinds of weather so rain never becomes an excuse!**

### ***Getting started with a walking plan***

**A walking plan can be adapted to fit a range of fitness levels and exercise goals. See if either of the two beginner plans below suits your needs.**

#### **➤ Easy-Start Plan**

**The *Easy Start* plan will get you going slowly and let you advance as you feel ready. It's a great way to begin if you've been inactive for a while.**

- **Start out slow and easy, especially if you're new to walking.**
- **Walk for 10 minutes on the first day—that's it. Resist the urge to overdo it.**
- **Take a 10-minute walk at least 3 times that week.**
- **Try walking for 10 minutes, 5 times the following week.**
- **If this feels good to you, you can try adding 5 minutes to your daily walking time.**
- **Walk for 15 minutes on at least 5 days in the next week.**

- **Add another 5 minutes to your daily walk the following week if you feel ready. Or, walk an additional day during that week.**
- **Continue adding 5 minutes to the length of your walks each week, (or as you feel ready) until you are walking for the length of time desired.**

➤ **12-Week Get-going Plan**

**If your goal is to reach 60 minutes of walking daily, this easy-to-follow schedule will get you there by the end of 12 weeks. This plan calls for walking on all days of the week, but it alternates shorter and longer walks. Once your walking habit is established, you can add in another activity, such as weight training, on the days with shorter walks. (Don't feel bound to the 12-week deadline if you're feeling particularly tired or sore one week. Maintain your same schedule for an additional week before moving to the next level.)**

<b><i>Week</i></b>	<b><i>Sun</i></b>	<b><i>Mon</i></b>	<b><i>Tue</i></b>	<b><i>Wed</i></b>	<b><i>Thu</i></b>	<b><i>Fri</i></b>	<b><i>Sat</i></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>35 min</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>25 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>	<b>30 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>50 min</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>60 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>60 min</b>	<b>40 min</b>	<b>60 min</b>

***Guidelines for good walking***

**The following guidelines will help you get the greatest benefit from your walking routine.**

- **Include a warm up, cool down and stretches into your routine. Start your walk at a slow pace for 3 to 5 minutes. Stop briefly**

**and do a few warm-up stretches. (see *Basic Stretches*, p. XX)**  
**Resume at your regular pace and walk for the desired length of time. For the last few minutes of your walk, slow your pace so that you cool down gradually. Stop and stretch well.**

- **Be aware of your posture.** Imagine that you are elongating your body. Hold your head up and keep your eyes forward. Let your shoulders relax so they are down and back (not hunched). Tighten your abdominal muscles and buttocks. Use a natural stride.
- **Drink plenty of water.** Drink a glass of water before starting and another half cup for each 15 minutes that you walk.
- **Make walking a habit.** The key to a successful fitness program is getting into a habit. Try to walk daily, or at least 5 times a week. This should help you form a routine.
- **Walk at a brisk pace.** Walk fast enough to reach your target heart rate. Your breathing should be heavier than at rest, but you should not be gasping for air. You should still be able to carry on a conversation.
- **Set your goals.** When you have your walking habit is firmly in place, you can shape your program to meet your activity goals.
  - ***For general health benefits:*** Walk 30 minutes a day, most days of the week, at a moderate pace. (See “*Measuring Intensity*,” p. XX)
  - ***For cardio-respiratory fitness:*** Walk 20 to 30 minutes, 3 to 4 days a week, at a vigorous pace. (See “*Measuring Intensity*,” p. XX)
  - ***For weight loss:*** Walk 45 to 60 minutes, a minimum of 5 days a week, at a moderate pace. (See “*Measuring Intensity*,” p. XX)
- **Avoid common walking mistakes.** Pay attention to the “walking don’ts:”
  - **Don’t over stride.**
  - **Don’t move your arms too vigorously.**
  - **Don’t look at the ground.**
  - **Don’t hunch your shoulders.**
  - **Don’t carry hand weights or wear weights on your ankles.**



### ***Stepping up the pace***

**You can burn more calories and increase your level of fitness by walking faster. These tips will help you step up the pace when you're ready.**

- **Use good posture.** Walk tall, eyes forward, gazing about 20 feet ahead. Keep your chin level and your head up.
- **Keep your chest raised and your shoulders relaxed.** Your shoulders should be relaxed, down, and back—not hunched.

- **Swing your arms.** Your arms should be bent at slightly less than a 90 degree angle with your hands gently cupped. Swing your arms from front to back—not side to side. Your arms should not cross your body. Do not swing your elbows higher than your breast bone. As you swing your arms faster, your feet will follow.
- **Tighten your abs and buttocks.** Flatten your back and tilt your pelvis slightly forward as you walk.
- **Pretend you are walking along a straight line.** Resist the urge to take longer strides. To increase your pace, take smaller, faster steps.
- **Push off with your toes.** Concentrate on landing on your heel, rolling through the step, and pushing off again with your toes. Use the natural spring of your calf muscles to propel you forward.
- **Breathe naturally.** Take deep, rhythmic breaths as you walk. This will get the maximum amount of oxygen into your system. Walk at a pace fast enough to make you breathe harder, but not so fast that you are out of breath.

***What is fitness walking?***

**Fitness walking—sometimes called power walking or health walking—is much more than a stroll in the park. This type of walking is geared toward improving your heart and lung capacity. Therefore, you walk more quickly—about 4 to 5 mph—than you do for a leisurely walk. This pace will get your heart beating faster, and make you sweat and breathe heavily. You use the muscles of your upper body as well as your legs when you fitness walk. This helps tone your whole body—buttocks, thighs, abs, hips, shoulders, and upper back. Also, because you’re using your whole body, you burn more calories. This is a relatively advanced exercise and is something that should be worked up to gradually, rather than being a starting point.**

**SIDEBAR**

***Tips for Avoiding Injury***

**There’s nothing like an injury to bring your activity program to a grinding halt. Here are some things you can do to avoid this problem.**

- **Start at an easy pace.** Increase time or distance gradually.
- **Watch for signs of overexertion.** Breathlessness and muscle soreness could be danger signs.
- **Listen to your body.** Slow down or stop your activity if you are getting too tired, your heart rate is too high, or you are experiencing a lot of discomfort.
- **Use the proper equipment and clothing for the activity.**
- **Spend the first 3 to 5 minutes warming up your muscles when you begin any form of physical activity. Start slowly and gradually work up to your desired intensity. For the final 3 to 5 minutes of your exercise session, cool down by slowly decreasing**

**the intensity of your activity. Stretch the muscles you used after the activity is over. For example, before jogging, walk for 3 to 5 minutes increasing your pace to a brisk walk. After jogging, walk briskly, decreasing your pace to a slow walk over 3 to 5 minutes. Finish by stretching your legs.**

- **Drink a glass of water before you start your activity. Drink another half cup for every 15 minutes that you are physically active. Make sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day. You should get least eight to ten 8-oz. cups per day in addition to the water you drink before and during your activity session.**
- **Be aware of the signs of a heart attack. These include chest and arm pain, dizziness, lightheadedness and sweating.**
- **Consider low-impact exercise such as swimming or riding a stationary bike, particularly if walking is painful for you or your child.**

### **END SIDEBAR**

#### **Flexibility exercise: stretching**

**Stretching is critical to any good fitness routine. Stretching lengthens muscle fibers and improves motion in the joints. As part of aerobic or strength-training activities, proper stretching is a key step in avoiding injury. Despite the benefits of stretching, many people stretch incorrectly or don't stretch at all.**

#### ***Rules for stretching***

**Incorrect stretching can lead to injury. Follow these rules whenever you stretch.**

- **Always warm up your muscles before you stretch. Walking in place 5 minutes will do the trick.**
- **Never bounce as you stretch.**
- **To perform a proper stretch:**
  - **Extend your muscle to the point where you feel mild tension.**
  - **Hold the position for 10 seconds.**
  - **Increase to 30 seconds as you become more flexible.**
  - **Breathe through your nose while holding this stretch.**
  - **As the tension eases off, extend your stretch another fraction of an inch until you again feel a mild tension.**
  - **Hold this position for another 10 to 30 seconds, breathing as before.**
  - **Relax.**
- **A good stretch shouldn't hurt. If you are stretching to the point of pain, you are stretching too hard.**





### ***Basic stretches***

**There are dozens of different kinds of stretching exercises. The few basic stretches described here work well as part of a walking routine. You can also do them on their own as part of a warm up or cool down period for other aerobic activities.**

#### **Before you walk**

**The following stretches can be used as part of your warm up. Walk at a warm-up pace for 5 to 10 minutes before you begin. The faster you plan to walk, the more you need to warm up ahead of time.**

##### ➤ **Toe Stretches**

- 1) Stand on one leg and lift the other foot off the floor.**
- 2) Gently point your toe.**
- 3) Hold stretch for a few seconds.**
- 4) Next flex, your foot with your toe pointing up.**
- 5) Repeat 5 to 10 times.**

##### ➤ **Ankle Circles**

- 1) Standing, lift your right leg off the floor and gently point your toe (you may hold on to something for balance if needed).**
- 2) Rotate your right foot 10 times in a clockwise direction, then 10 times counterclockwise.**
- 3) Repeat with your other ankle.**
- 4) You can do this exercise while sitting or lying on your back with leg raised, as well.**

##### ➤ **The Twist**

- 1) Stand with your legs 2 to 3 feet apart. Your feet should be in line with your shoulders.**
- 2) Hold your arms straight out, parallel to the ground.**
- 3) Swing your arms from side to side while keeping your lower body stationary.**
- 4) Repeat several times to loosen muscles in your waist, back, and shoulders.**



##### ➤ **Arm Circles**

- 1) Hold your arms straight out to the side.**
- 2) Rotate your arms backwards in small circles. Gradually increase the size of the circles until you are making large circles.**
- 3) Stop. Rest for a few seconds.**
- 4) Hold your arms out again, and repeat circles in a forward direction.**
- 5) Repeat the process 2 or 3 times to loosen the muscles in your shoulders and upper back.**

**After you walk**

**Slow your pace to cool down during the last 5 minutes of your walk. Complete your workout with stretching. Start with your lower body and work your way up to your shoulders and neck. Here are some good after-walk stretches.**

➤ **Calf Stretch**

- 1) Stand in front of a wall with your arms outstretched.**
- 2) Put your hands on the wall. Your elbows should be straight.**
- 3) Step back 1 to 2 feet with one leg, placing it so that your heel and foot are flat on the floor.**
- 4) Hold this position for 10 to 30 seconds.**
- 5) Bend the knee of the stepped-back leg, keeping your foot and heel on the floor.**
- 6) Hold this position for 10 to 30 seconds.**
- 7) Repeat 3 to 5 times with each leg.**

➤ **Shin Stretch**

- 1) Stand holding on to a stationary object.**
- 2) Put your weight on one leg and straighten that leg.**
- 3) Place your other foot on the ground with your toes pointed and your toenails facing down.**
- 4) With the tops of your toes touching the ground, roll your foot and leg forward, from the ankle.**
- 5) Release and repeat on the other side.**
- 6) Repeat 3 to 5 times with each leg.**

➤ **Hamstring and Lower Back Stretch**

- 1) Stand with your feet together and knees slightly bent.**
- 2) Slowly bend forward from your waist. Bend only as far as is comfortable.**
- 3) Reach for the floor and hold this position for 10 to 30 second.**
- 4) Repeat 3 to 5 times.**

➤ **Outer Thigh, Buttocks, and Spine Stretch**

- 1) Lie on your back and bring your right knee toward you chest.**
- 2) Place your left hand on your right thigh (NOT the knee).**
- 3) Pull your bent leg gently toward your left side.**
- 4) Keep your shoulders, left leg, and back flat against the floor. Then repeat on the left side.**

➤ **Lower Back Stretch**

- 1) Lie on your back.**
- 2) Bend both knees and bring them toward your chest.**
- 3) Grasp the tops of your knees and pull them toward you.**
- 4) Round your lower back and lean into the stretch.**
- 5) Hold position for 10 to 30 seconds.**
- 6) Repeat 3 to 5 times.**

**Note: Lie on a soft surface to do this stretch to avoid bruising your back.**

➤ **Quadriceps Stretch**

- 1) Standing on your right foot near a wall or other stationary object.
- 2) Bend your right knee with your foot pointing toward your buttocks.
- 3) With your left hand, grasp the ankle of your right foot.
- 4) Slowing pull your leg up and back, bringing your foot toward your buttocks.
- 5) Use your free hand to balance yourself.
- 6) Hold position for 10 to 30 seconds.
- 7) Repeat with on the leg.
- 8) Repeat stretch with each legs 3 to 5 times.

➤ **Shoulder Stretch**

- 1) Standing upright, cross your left arm over your chest.
- 2) Place your right hand on the upper part your left arm (NOT the elbow).
- 3) Pull the arm tight to chest, keeping your shoulders down.
- 4) Hold for 10 to 30 seconds.
- 5) Repeat with other arm.
- 6) Repeat stretch 3 to 5 times with each arm.

➤ **Neck Stretch**

- 1) Turn your neck and look over your right shoulder. Keep your spine in an upright position.
- 2) Hold for 10 to 30 seconds.
- 3) Repeat on the left side and return facing forward.
- 4) Gently drop your head to the right so that you're your ear moves toward your shoulder.
- 5) Return your head to an upright position.
- 6) Gently drop your head forward and return to upright position, then repeat motion on the left side.

**Note: Don't extend your neck beyond its normal range or tilt your neck backward. Use smooth movements, don't jerk.**

**SIDEBAR**

***Mixing it up: the benefits of cross-training***

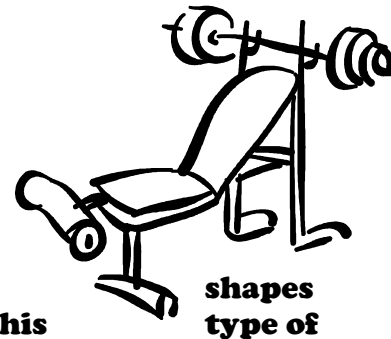
Cross-training is a good way to improve different aspects of your physical fitness. It also adds variety to your workout which helps fight boredom. For example, if your primary exercise is walking, you might try biking, swimming or another aerobic sport on some days. This allows you to rest your walking muscles while maintaining (or improving) your cardio-respiratory fitness. Also, you might want to supplement your walking program with weight training or other strengthening exercises to give your upper body a workout. Here are some ideas for cross-training activities:

- **Cycling (outdoors or stationary).**
- **Swimming.**
- **Rock climbing.**
- **Inline skating.**
- **Elliptical trainer.**
- **Stair machine.**
- **Cross country skiing (outdoors or Nordic Track machine).**
- **Hiking.**
- **Snowshoeing.**
- **Sports such as football, soccer, boxing, Frisbee, etc.**
- **Yoga.**
- **Pilates.**
- **Dance classes.**

### **END SIDEBAR**

#### **Strength training: weight exercises**

The third prong of a good exercise program is strength training. This type of exercise builds muscle tissue, which helps to increase your metabolism. Strength training also tones and your muscles making you look better. Finally, this exercise makes you stronger, which helps your performance in sports and other physical activities.



Adults and teens that have started puberty can safely lift weights. (Weight lifting for younger children isn't recommended.) There are several methods for lifting weights. Gyms and health clubs often have weight machines. You can also use free weights.

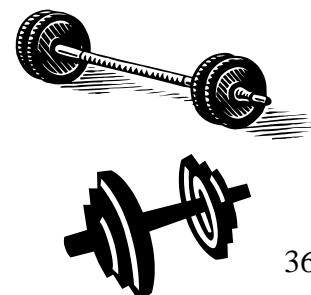
#### ***How much strength training do you need?***

Strengthening exercise works a muscle against a force (the weight) until it tires. You then let the muscle rest, so that the stressed muscle fibers will rebuild. Doing this consistently will promote the growth of new fibers. This result is a bigger muscle and a stronger you. Not letting the muscle rest between workouts can lead to injury because the body doesn't have a chance to rebuild the muscle fibers before they're stressed again. Like any form of exercise, the amount of strength training you need depends on your personal fitness goals.

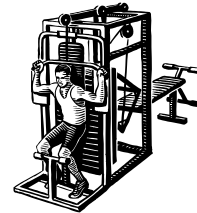
### **SIDEBAR**

#### ***Strength Training Terms***

- **Free weights:** moveable weights such as barbells and dumbbells. Exercises with free weights usually work a multiple muscles at a time.



- **Barbell:** a 4 to 6' long bar with weight plates on the ends.
- **Dumb bell:** small, hand-held weights.
- **Weight machines:** Devices designed to help you isolate and strengthen a single muscle at a time.
- **Repetitions:** the number of times you lift the weight before resting.
- **Set:** a group of reps. called reps for short.
- **Body weight exercises:** strengthening exercises that work your muscles against the weight of your own body. Examples include: sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, crunches, and lunges.
- **Resistance bands:** large elastic bands used for strength training o provide resistance to your muscles.
- **Circuit:** a series of strengthening exercise that work muscle groups in a set order.



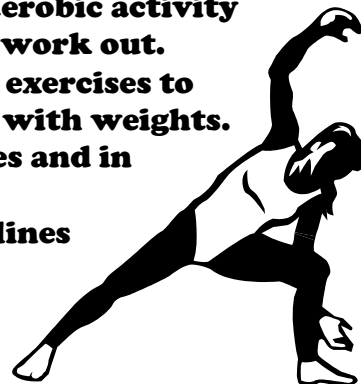
### END SIDEBAR

BASIC STRENGTH TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS			
Sessions / Week	Exercises / Session	Reps / Set	Sets / Exercise
2 to 3 (Allow 48 hours between strength training sessions)	8 to 10	8 to 12	1 to 3 (Rest

### *Getting started with weight training*

The following tips will help you do your strengthening exercises safely and effectively.

- **Warm up.** Do some form of light-intensity aerobic activity for 5 to 10 minutes at the beginning of your work out.
- **Stretch.** After your warm up, do stretching exercises to loosen the muscle groups you'll be working with weights. Also stretch between sets of weight exercises and in your cool-down period.
- **Maintain good posture.** Follow these guidelines to avoid injury and get the most out of your workout.
  - All exercises: hold your stomach tight; breathe naturally.
  - Standing exercises: keep your head up and your eyes forward.
  - Reclining exercises: look up at the ceiling when lying on your back; look down a the floor when lying on your stomach.
- **Use controlled movements.** Move through each exercise slowly.



- **Rest between sets.** When doing more than one set, rest for a minute or two (long enough to catch your breath) between sets.
- **Work up gradually.** Spend a few weeks doing body-weight exercises to build up your strength. Then move on to light weights. Make sure you have mastered proper technique before moving to heavier weights.
- **Begin with shorter sessions.** Divide your workout into three 20-minute sessions when starting out. This will help prevent you from becoming overly sore or tired. As you build up strength, you may be able to exercise all your major muscle groups in two longer (30 to 40 minutes) sessions.
- **Listen to your body.** Sore muscles—especially a couple days following your workout—are to be expected. More severe pain is a signal that something is wrong.
- **Cool down and stretch.** Do 5 to 10 minutes of light aerobic exercise after your strength training. Stretch all the muscle groups you worked.

### ***Basic Strengthening Exercises***

The beginner exercises below can be done at home with an inexpensive set of dumbbells. Before you start, make sure to get some advice about the proper use of weights from an expert such as a coach, PE teacher, or trainer at your health club.

### **[GRAPHIC: PUT IN ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING PROPER BODY POSITION FOR EACH OF THESE EXERCISES.]**

#### ➤ **Bench Press**

- 1) Lie on an exercise bench.
- 2) You should have your legs slightly apart, your knees bent, and your feet firmly on the floor.
- 3) Be sure your back is straight with your lower back pressed firmly toward the floor.
- 4) Hold a dumbbell in each hand.
- 5) With your palms facing away from your face, extend your arms above your chest
- 6) Bring the dumbbells toward each other so they almost touch above your chest. (Dumbbells should never clink together.)
- 7) Keep your elbows unlocked.
- 8) Slowly lower the dumbbells straight down to the sides of your chest with palms still facing away from your face. Your elbows should be pointing to the ground.
- 9) Don't let your arms fall to the side.
- 10) Continue lowering until your elbows are parallel to your shoulders.
- 11) Push the weights back to the starting position while flexing your chest.
- 12) Repeat for the desired number of reps.

#### ➤ **Chest Fly**

- 1) Lie on an exercise bench.

- 2) You should have your legs slightly apart, your knees bent, and your feet firmly on the floor.**
- 3) Be sure your back is straight with your lower back pressed firmly toward the floor.**
- 4) Hold a dumbbell in each hand.**
- 5) Extend your arms and bend them slightly with your palms facing each other. (Your arms should almost form an oval with the dumbbells nearly touching each other above your chest).**
- 6) Slowly lower the dumbbells out and away from each other in a semicircular motion, until they are at chest level.**
- 7) Keep your elbows bent and wrists locked straight.**
- 8) Lower in a slow controlled manner, keeping elbows bent at all times.**
- 9) Raise the dumbbells to the starting position while flexing your chest.**
- 10) Keep your elbows bent and your back straight.**
- 11) Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Bent Knee Push Up**

- 1) Lie face down with your knees bent and feet in the air.**
- 2) Place your hands a little wider than your shoulders at chest level.**
- 3) Keeping your back straight, push yourself up extending your arms.**
- 4) Do not lock your elbows.**
- 5) Hold this position while flexing your chest.**
- 6) Then slowly lower yourself until your nose touches the ground (or as far down as you can go if this is too hard).**
- 7) Your back and hips should be straight and your elbows point out.**
- 8) Push up to the beginning position.**
- 9) Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Front Shoulder Raise**

- 1) Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.**
- 2) You should have your abs tight, and your knees slightly bent.**
- 3) Your shoulders should be back, and your chest out.**
- 4) Your back should be straight with a slight forward lean.**
- 5) Hold a dumbbell in each hand in front of your thighs.**
- 6) Your palms should be facing your body and your elbows slightly bent.**
- 7) Raise one dumbbell upwards until it is a little higher than shoulder level, keeping your palms facing down. Be sure not to lock your elbows.**
- 8) Your arm will be parallel to the floor in the raised position.**
- 9) Slowly raise the other arm as you lower the first dumbbell.**
- 10) Don't swing your arms, slowly raise then lower the dumbbell.**
- 11) Alternate arms until you have completed the desired number of repetitions with each arm.**

➤ **One Arm Row**

- 1) Place your left knee and left hand on an exercise bench.
- 2) Your back should be flat and parallel to the floor. Keep your back in this position throughout the exercise.
- 3) Place your right foot firmly on the floor.
- 4) Hold a dumbbell in your right hand.
- 5) Allow your right arm hang down toward the floor.
- 6) Let the weight of the dumbbell stretch your back.
- 7) Pull the weight towards your body, raising it to your rib cage.
- 8) Your right elbow should be pointing up toward the ceiling as you lift. Do not allow your elbow to move out from your body as you lift.
- 9) Slowly return your arm to the starting position in a controlled movement.
- 10) Repeat for the desired number of reps.
- 11) Switch position and repeat exercise with your left arm.

➤ **Triceps Kickback**

- 1) Place your left knee and left hand on an exercise bench.
- 2) Your back should be flat and parallel to the floor. Keep your back in this position throughout the exercise.
- 3) Place your right foot firmly on the floor.
- 4) Hold a dumbbell in your right hand with your palms facing the side of your body.
- 5) Raise your arm so your elbow is high and your upper arm (from the shoulder to the elbow) is parallel to the floor.
- 6) Keep your upper arm stationary throughout the exercise. Do not let your elbow swing away from your body.
- 7) Extend your forearm so that your arm is straight and fully extended.
- 8) Your triceps should be contracted. (The triceps is the muscle on the back of the upper arm.)
- 9) Hold this position briefly, contracting your triceps.
- 10) Slowly return your arm to the starting position in a controlled movement.
- 11) Repeat for the desired number of reps.
- 12) Switch position and repeat exercise with your left arm.

➤ **Biceps Curl**

- 1) Stand with your back straight and your feet hip-width apart.
- 2) Do not lock your knees.
- 3) Hold a dumbbell in each hand.
- 4) Your arms should be straight down with your palms facing forward.
- 5) Keeping your elbows close to your body, use your biceps to curl the dumbbell up to chest level. (The biceps is the muscle on the front of your upper arm.)
- 6) Keep your back straight.



- 7) **Do not rock or sway your body to lift the weight. Your biceps should do all the work.**
- 8) **Your palms should now be facing your shoulders.**
- 9) **Hold this position briefly, contracting your biceps.**
- 10) **Keep your wrists straight and elbows close to your sides throughout the exercise.**
- 11) **Slowly lower the weight to the starting position in a controlled movement.**
- 12) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Concentration Curl**

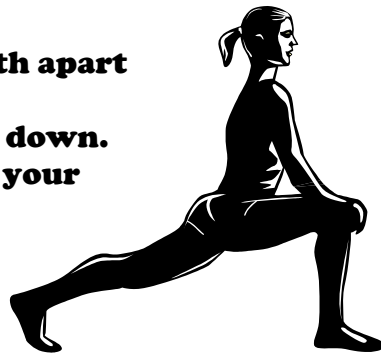
- 1) **Sit on an exercise bench.**
- 2) **Place your feet shoulder-width apart and bend your knees.**
- 3) **Hold a dumbbell in your right hand with your palm facing away from your body.**
- 4) **Bending forward, place your right arm between your legs.**
- 5) **Brace your elbow and upper arm against the inside of your right thigh.**
- 6) **Rest your left hand on your left thigh.**
- 7) **Lean slightly into your right leg, keeping your elbow braced.**
- 8) **Slowly raise the dumbbell up toward your shoulder.**
- 9) **Your wrist should be straight and your elbow should remain braced.**
- 10) **Hold the position briefly, flexing your biceps.**
- 11) **Slowly lower your arm to the starting position in a controlled movement.**
- 12) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**
- 13) **Switch positions and perform the exercise with your left arm.**

➤ **Squats**

- 1) **Stand with your arms extended by your sides.**
- 2) **Hold a dumbbell in each hand with your palms facing in.**
- 3) **Spread your feet apart a little wider than hip-width.**
- 4) **Keep your abs tight and your upper back upright.**
- 5) **Keep your lower back slightly arched in a natural curve.**
- 6) **Bending at the knees, lower your upper body into a squatting position.**
- 7) **Do not squat too low.**
- 8) **Your thighs should be parallel to the floor, with your shins almost perpendicular to the floor.**
- 9) **Be sure you are sitting back on your feet; do not allow knees to move farther forward than your toes.**
- 10) **Keep your upper back straight and your lower back slightly arched throughout the exercise.**
- 11) **Return to the standing position by forcing your hips in and your head up.**
- 12) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Lunge**

- 1) **Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and arms by your sides.**
- 2) **Your shoulders should be back and down.**
- 3) **Hold a dumbbell in each hand with your palms facing in.**
- 4) **Step forward with your right foot and plant your foot directly beneath your knee.**
- 5) **Step back about 6 inches with your left foot.**
- 6) **With your left foot in place, roll onto the ball of the foot, so that your foot is at a 90o angle to the floor.**
- 7) **Lower your front thigh until it is parallel to the floor.**
- 8) **Keep your hip at knee level, not lower.**
- 9) **Press up from the right heel to the starting position.**
- 10) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**
- 11) **Alternate feet, and repeat exercise.**



➤ **Standing Calf Raise**

- 1) **Hold a dumbbell in your right hand with your arms down and your palm facing in.**
- 2) **Stand on a step with the ball of your right foot.**
- 3) **Allow your heel and arch to extend off the step, stretching toward the floor. (You may need to hold on to the wall with your left hand for balance.)**
- 4) **Keeping your knee straight, rise as high as possible on your toes.**
- 5) **Hold this position briefly while contracting your calf.**
- 6) **Slowly return to the starting position.**
- 7) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**
- 8) **Switch legs, and repeat exercise.**

➤ **Pelvic Lifts**

- 1) **Lie with your back flat on the floor and your knees bent.**
- 2) **Your feet should be flat on the floor, about hip-width apart.**
- 3) **Place your arms on the floor with your palms facing down.**
- 4) **Slowly lift your buttocks by tilting your pelvis up.**
- 5) **Tighten your buttocks and abdomen as you lift.**
- 6) **Hold this position briefly, and squeeze your buttocks together.**
- 7) **Slowly lower yourself to the starting position.**
- 8) **Keep your back straight back throughout the exercise.**
- 9) **Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Crunches**

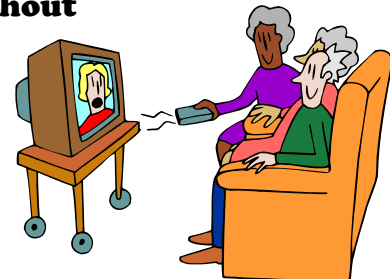
- 1) Lie with your back flat on the floor and your knees bent.**
- 2) Your feet should be flat on the floor, about hip-width apart.**
- 3) Your can be crossed on your chest, extended by your side, or cupped behind your ears.**
- 4) Breathing out, tighten your abs and lift your shoulders off the floor.**
- 5) Lift as high as you can while still keeping your lower back pressed into the floor.**
- 6) Breathing in slowly, lower yourself back to the starting position.**
- 7) Repeat for the desired number of reps.**

➤ **Oblique Crunches**

- 1) Lie flat on your back with your right knee bent and your right foot flat on the floor.**
- 2) Cross your left foot over your right knee.**
- 3) Place your left hand on the floor at your side.**
- 4) Cup your right hand behind your head.**
- 5) Lift your right shoulder off the floor toward your left side while breathing out and tighten your abs.**
- 6) Lift as high as you can while still keeping your lower back pressed into the floor.**
- 7) Hold this position briefly while contracting your obloquies. (The obloquies are the muscles that run along the front and side of the abdomen.)**
- 8) Breathing in slowly, lower yourself back to the starting position.**
- 9) Repeat for the desired number of reps.**
- 10) Switch positions and repeat exercise on the other side.**

## **Activate Your Life: turn off the TV**

**Most people have a hard time imagining life without television. But, only 50 years ago everyone lived this way—there was no TV! Reading, storytelling, conversation, games, sports, crafts, and other hobbies filled up their leisure time. Believe it or not, you too will discover plenty of fun things to do once you turn off the tube.**



### **What's wrong with TV?**

**The rate of obesity among children age 6 to 11 has doubled in the last quarter century. Among teens, the number has tripled. Over the same time period there has been a dramatic expansion in kid-targeted media. Since the 1980s, children have access to thousands more hours of**



**specialized media are including TV shows and videos, children's cable networks, video and computer games, and Internet websites. The side-by-side growth of these trends has led researchers to look for connections between the two. The sobering conclusion is that excessive screen time can have a major negative impact on children's physical development and learning abilities.**

***TV time displaces active time***

**The 5-plus hours a day the average child spends using media represents the bulk of his or her free time. Cutting back on TV won't automatically change a sedentary person into an active one. However, freeing up this large block of time provides the opportunity to explore a wider variety of hobbies and pastimes, including sports and active play.**

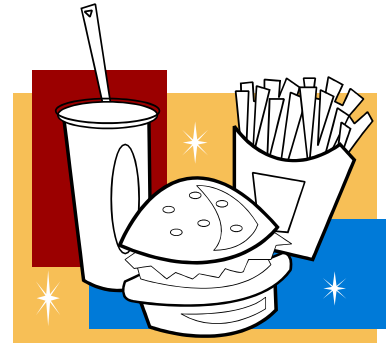
***TV watching lowers metabolism***

**TV-viewing involves sitting in one place, staring at a screen. It's the least physically active thing you can do. Research shows that TV watching actually burns fewer calories than sleeping. So, substituting just about any activity for TV-time has a favorable effect on your energy balance.**

***Food ads in TV programs encourage unhealthy choices***

**There are roughly 11 food commercials per hour on Saturday morning children's programs. This is double the amount of TV advertising 25 years ago. The bulk of these ads are for candy, sugary cereals, and fast food restaurants.**

**Commercials for fruit and vegetables are nonexistent. The family shopping cart is a direct reflection of this advertising blitz. Studies show that the more TV kids watch, the more likely they are to ask parents to buy the foods they see advertised. In addition, the use of TV characters to promote fast food and snacks--often with the promise a free toy--make these items even more irresistible to young children.**

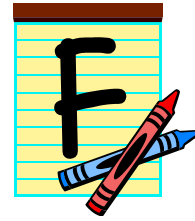


***Children overeat on snack food while watching TV***

**The barrage of junk food ads during TV shows encourages kids to snack while they watch. This unhealthy effect isn't confined only to children. Families who have meals in front of the TV tend to consume more processed meats, fast food, and soda, and eat fewer fruits and vegetables.**

***Early TV-watching affects a child's ability to learn in school***

**Young children learn through hands-on activity. Time spent in front of the TV takes away these learning opportunities. Early TV-watching also has an impact on a child's abilities in school later on. Getting used to this the rapidly changing images on the TV screen can make it hard for a child to focus on anything for more than a few seconds.**



**SIDEBAR**

***Children and TV: Just the Facts***

- **The average child watches spends 5 ½ hours a day watching TV or playing computer or video games.**
- **Children who watch more than 3 hours of TV a day are 50% more likely to become obese than children who watch less than 2 hours daily.**
- **By the time a child enters first grade, he or she has watched 5000 hours of TV.**
- **By age 16, most children will have spent 16,000 hours watching TV versus 12,000 going to school.**
- **Preschoolers spend as much time in front of the TV as they do playing outside.**
- **The typical child sees an estimated 40,000 ads a year on TV.**
- **Nearly ¾ of the ads on children's TV are for candy, cereal, and fast food.**
- **A child watching Saturday morning cartoons sees a food commercial every 5 minutes.**

**END SIDEBAR**

**What you can do**

**These tips will help you rid yourself and your family of the TV habit.**

- **Get rid of all but one television set.**
- **Put the TV in an inaccessible spot so that it takes extra work to watch a program.**
- **Have the family agree on TV-watching limits such as “no morning TV,” or “no TV before homework is done.”**
- **Set a goal of no more than 5 hours of media time a week. (You may have to cut down gradually to get to this level.)**
- **Don't eat in front of the TV.**
- **Disconnect the cable. This will limit program choices as well as save you money.**
- **Have everyone in the family make a list of things to do other than watch TV.**
- **Turn on music, the radio or listen to a book on tape instead of leaving the TV on for “background noise.”**
- **Parents, set a good example for your kids by limiting your own TV time as well.**



- **Consider putting a treadmill in front of the television. That way, you can let children “buy” television time by allowing them to watch one half hour of TV for every 15 minutes they spend on the treadmill (or stationary bike).**

<b>Guidelines for Screen-time</b>		
<b>Preschool</b>	<b>Early elementary school</b>	<b>Older kids</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No TV for children under age 2.</b></li> <li>• <b>For children over 2, no more than 30 minutes a day.</b></li> <li>• <b>The amount of TV time should be matched by time a parent spends reading to the child.</b></li> <li>• <b>Choose commercial-free, educational programs appropriate for the age group.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No more than 1 to 2 hours a day.</b></li> <li>• <b>Pre-select a few quality programs.</b></li> <li>• <b>Try to choose commercial-free programming.</b></li> <li>• <b>Avoid channel-surfing.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No more than 1 to 2 hours a day.</b></li> <li>• <b>Direct children to programs that will stimulate interest in learning (For example: documentaries and science and nature shows.)</b></li> </ul>

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