

Older Adult Activity: An Overview

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KEY POINTS

- If you are 65 or older, you need aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and balance activities each week.
- You can add regular physical activity into your life in a variety of ways.
- People benefit from physical activity throughout life, including as they age.



Recommendations

Every week, adults 65 and older need:

- Aerobic physical activity that includes:
 - At least **150 minutes** at moderate intensity. This could be 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
 - Or 75 minutes at vigorous intensity.
 - Or an equivalent combination at moderate and vigorous intensity.
- At least **2 days** of activities that strengthen muscles.
- Activities to improve balance.

See what counts as aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and balance activities. Also, see how to tell if aerobic physical activity is moderate or vigorous.

If you have trouble meeting these recommendations, be as physically active as your abilities and conditions allow. **Remember that some physical activity is better than none at all.** Your health benefits will also increase with the more physical activity that you do.

What you can do

Keep these tips in mind as you add physical activity to your life as an older adult.

[Adding Physical Activity as an Older Adult](#)



There are many ways to meet physical activity recommendations.

Sample weekly schedules

Here are some ways to meet the physical activity recommendations each week.

Example 1



Moderate-intensity aerobic activity such as brisk walking for 150 minutes (for example, 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week)

AND



Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms).

PLUS



Balance activities such as walking heel-to-toe or standing from a sitting position.

Example 2



Vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (such as jogging or running) for 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) every week

AND



Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms).

PLUS



Balance activities such as walking heel-to-toe or standing from a sitting position.

Example 3



An equivalent mix of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity

AND



Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms).

PLUS



Balance activities such as walking heel-to-toe or standing from a sitting position.

Benefits

Physical activity can prevent or delay many of the health problems that seem to come with age. It also helps your muscles grow stronger so you can keep doing your day-to-day activities without becoming dependent on others. For more information, see:

- [Physical activity health benefits for adults 65 or older](#)
- [Physical activity and cancer](#)

- [Physical activity boosts brain health](#)
- How physical activity can support physical and mental health, from the [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition](#) PDF
- CDC Podcast:
 - English: [The Importance of Physical Activity for Older Adults](#)
 - Spanish: [La importancia de la actividad física para los adultos mayores](#)

Resources

[Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults](#) is a 2002 resource with exercises to increase muscle strength, maintain bone integrity, and improve balance, coordination, and mobility.

[Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report: Implementation Strategies for Older Adults](#): Strategies to increase physical activity among older adults.



SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP)