

# How much physical activity do I need?



## What is PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

**The 2005 USDA Dietary Guidelines tell us that physical activity means movement of the body that uses energy.**

**Walking, gardening, climbing the stairs, playing soccer, or dancing are all good examples of being physically active.**

Physical activity can help you mentally as well as physically! Do you know why? Your muscles, your heart, and other parts of your body grow stronger and more efficient when they are called on regularly when you are physically active. Regular exercise can help prevent heart disease, normalize blood pressure, regulate blood sugar, prevent bone loss, and promote weight loss. It can also help people manage their stress, feel better about themselves, and provide pleasure and enjoyment!

## **How Much Physical Activity Do I Need?**

**The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans say:**

30 minutes most days of the week for health benefits

60 minutes to prevent weight gain

60–90 minutes to maintain weight loss

To maintain a healthy weight, balance your calories with physical activity.



**Here are some suggestions for activities to get you moving:**

- ✓ Get active for 10 minutes 3 times a day everyday
- ✓ Get off the bus one or two stops early and walk the rest of the way
- ✓ March in place during TV commercials
- ✓ Park your car a block or two away and walk
- ✓ Use the stairs instead of the elevator
- ✓ Rake the leaves
- ✓ Take a walk after dinner instead of watching TV
- ✓ Moving any part of your body—even for a short time—can make you healthier
- ✓ Walk the dog
- ✓ Take 2-3 minute walking breaks throughout the day
- ✓ Put away the TV remote control—get up to change the channel
- ✓ Walk while you talk on a cordless phone
- ✓ Plan your errands around town so they are walking distance from each other, i.e. post office, library, cleaners, pharmacy
- ✓ Walk with a friend at lunchtime for 10 minutes
- ✓ Walk to the store and home instead of driving
- ✓ Dance to some of your favorite songs or radio station
- ✓ Garden in the yard or clean a room

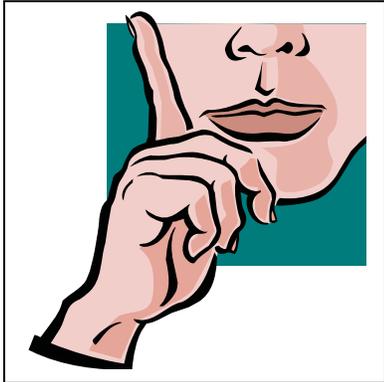
## Regular physical activity means doing something active most if not all days of the week!



If you are over 40 or have health problems check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.

Experts advise that people with chronic diseases, such as a heart condition, arthritis, diabetes, or high blood pressure, should talk to their doctor about what types and amounts of physical activity are appropriate.

(Source: <http://www.cdc.gov>)



## Think about your physical activity level.

Generally, how much physical activity do you get every day?

Minutes per day = \_\_\_\_\_

**Why is being physically active beneficial to you?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**List several things you do now for physical activity:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**List one or two new things you are willing to try in the next week that will add movement into your life:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_