

Ways to Be Physically Active

Get Started With Physical Activity

1

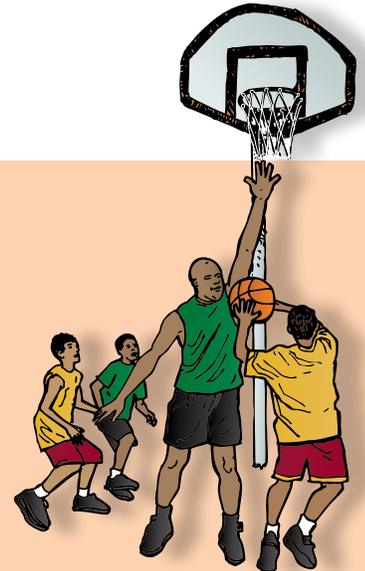
Talk With A Doctor

Be sure to talk with a doctor before you start a physical activity program if you have had a heart attack or your high blood pressure is not controlled.

2

Start Slowly

- Begin at a level that is comfortable. Add activities over time.
- Choose the number of days, types of activities, and times that fit your schedule.
- Warm up and cool down each time you are physically active. Warmups get your muscles ready and the cool down lets your heart rate slowly return to normal.



Think about ways to stay active once you start. Some ideas include:

- Get active with a friend.
- Choose your favorite activities.
- Do activities in short chunks of time.

3

Find Ways to Feel Motivated

Reap the benefits of physical activity by:

- Being healthier.
- Increasing your chances of living longer.
- Sleeping better.
- Reducing stress.



4

Mix It Up

Do a mix of aerobic and strengthening activities each week.

- Aerobic activities make your heart beat faster.
- Strengthening activities make your muscles work harder than normal.

Do Aerobic and Strengthening Activities Each Week

Aerobic With Moderate Effort

(make your heart beat faster)

Examples:

- Walking briskly
- General gardening (raking, trimming shrubs)
- Dancing (ballroom and line dancing)
- Biking on level ground or with few hills
- Sports where you catch and throw (baseball, softball, volleyball)
- Using your manual wheelchair

How often? Weekly for at least 2 hours and 30 minutes.

How long? At least 10 minutes at a time.

You can also mix these with vigorous activities.



OR

Aerobic With Vigorous Effort

(make your heart beat faster)

In general, 15 minutes of vigorous activity provides the same benefits as 30 minutes of moderate activity. Examples:

- Sports with a lot of running (soccer, basketball)
- Race walking, jogging, or running
- Biking faster than 10 miles per hour
- Fast dancing
- Heavy gardening (digging, hoeing)

How often? Weekly for at least 1 hour and 15 minutes.

How long? At least 10 minutes at a time.

You can also mix these with moderate activities.



Strengthening

(make your muscles do more work than usual)

This includes:

- Lifting weights
- Push-ups and sit-ups
- Heavy gardening (digging, shoveling)

Do at least 2 days each week



Which aerobic and strengthening activities will you do?

Start by doing what you can, and then look for ways to do more. If you have not been active for a while, start out slowly. After several weeks or months, build up your activities—do them longer and more often.

This month I will: _____



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National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



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