**#MoveWithHeart and Celebrate American Heart Month**

If you’re looking for some easy ways to take better charge of your health this year, here’s one: get up and move. Not only does physical activity help improve your overall health, it protects your heart, too, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). To make the point, and mark American Heart Month this February, NHLBI is promoting a #MoveWithHeart message. Here are some facts—and some “get-moving” tips and resources—NHLBI says should to inspire you to sit less, and **move more.**

**Why Move More Everyday**

[Heart disease](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/cad) is a leading cause of death among Hispanics/Latinos in the United States, but fortunately adding more physical activity to your daily routine can help your heart *and* improve your overall health. Think about it: **Being sedentary or inactive makes you nearly twice as likely to develop heart disease than if you’re active.**

Being active can:

* Strengthen your heart (even if you have heart disease)
* Improve blood flow
* Lower your blood pressure and cholesterol levels
* Give you more stamina and help you cope with stress
* Help you control your weight
* Help you quit smoking

Many types of activity can help your heart, whether it’s taking a dance class or taking a walk. The bottom line for you and your family: Get up and get moving!

For more information about [the benefits of physical activity](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-spanish/health-topics/temas/phys/benefits), visit the NHLBI website.

**How heart disease affects Hispanics/Latinos**

Overall, nearly 9 percent of Hispanics/Latinos in the United States have heart disease. But the prevalence of the disease is twice as high for those born in the United States than for those not born here.

About 23 percent of Hispanics/Latinos have [high blood pressure](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-spanish/health-topics/temas/hbp), a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. The average age for having a stroke among Hispanics/Latinos is 67—among non-Hispanic whites, it is 80.

Yet, even though physical activity can help lower blood pressure, only 16 percent of Hispanics/Latinos get enough physical activity, based on national guidelines. But by moving more, you can help change those numbers. Just start gradually, and increase slowly.

**How much is enough?**

As little as 60 minutes a week of physical activity helps your heart. For major health benefits, aim for at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) a week. That might include walking with your kids or taking a swim class with your friend or family member. If you want the same health benefits in less time, try for 75 minutes a week of activities such as playing a full game of soccer, taking a Zumba class, or working out to a fun YouTube fitness video.

It’s up to you how you reach your own personal targets. For example, 30 minutes of physical activity 5 times a week is one option if you’re aiming for 150 minutes a week.

Can’t carve out that much time at once? Don’t chuck your goal, chunk it! **Try 10 minutes a few times a day, for example.**

You’ll know your workout counts if:

* Your heart is beating faster
* You’re breathing harder
* You break a sweat

Remember: more activity means a bigger boost to your health, so try to **stay active between workouts.** Here are some ideas:

* Take the stairs.
* Stand up when you change television channels.
* When you hear good music, don’t just sit there, dance!
* Stand up during meetings, or better yet, suggest a walking meeting.
* Park in the farthest space from your destination.
* Get off the bus one stop early.

You can find [recommendations for children, older people, and pregnant women](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-spanish/health-topics/temas/phys/recommendations) on NHLBI’s website as well as more [information about heart-healthy physical activity](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-spanish/health-topics/temas/phys).

**When to check with your doctor**

If you have a chronic health condition such as heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, or other symptoms, talk with your doctor first. [Learn more about risks of physical activity for certain groups on NHLBI’s website.](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/phys/risks)

Getting regular physical activity can mean fewer doctor visits, hospitalizations, and medicines. Choosing to **move more** every chance you get is one of the best choices you and your family can make.

**Learn more**

[Healthy Hearts, Healthy Homes (NHLBI)](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/heartdisease.pdf)

[Hispanics and Stroke](https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/docs/hispanics_stroke_factsheet.pdf) (CDC)

[*The Heart Truth® for Women. The Heart Truth for Latinas: Take Action to Protect Your Heart*](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/hearttruth/downloads/pdf/2014.07.17_THTforLatinasEnglish_508Factsheet.pdf) (NHLBI)