
**WHAT IS A MODERATE AMOUNT
OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?**

As the examples listed in the box show, a moderate amount of physical activity* can be achieved in a variety of ways. People can select activities that they enjoy and that fit into their daily lives. Because amount of activity is a function of duration, intensity, and frequency, the same amount of activity can be obtained in longer sessions of moderately intense activities (such as brisk walking) as in shorter sessions of more strenuous activities (such as running):†

**EXAMPLES OF MODERATE
AMOUNTS OF ACTIVITY**

- Washing and waxing a car for 45–60 minutes
- Washing windows or floors for 45–60 minutes
- Playing volleyball for 45 minutes
- Playing touch football for 30–45 minutes
- Gardening for 30–45 minutes
- Wheeling self in wheelchair for 30–40 minutes
- Walking 1 ¾ miles in 35 minutes (20 min/mile)
- Basketball (shooting baskets) for 30 minutes
- Bicycling 5 miles in 30 minutes
- Dancing fast (social) for 30 minutes
- Pushing a stroller 1 ½ miles in 30 minutes
- Raking leaves for 30 minutes
- Walking 2 miles in 30 minutes (15 min/mile)
- Water aerobics for 30 minutes
- Swimming laps for 20 minutes
- Wheelchair basketball for 20 minutes
- Basketball (playing a game) for 15–20 minutes
- Bicycling 4 miles in 15 minutes
- Jumping rope for 15 minutes
- Running 1 ½ miles in 15 minutes (10 min/mile)
- Shoveling snow for 15 minutes
- Stairwalking for 15 minutes

Less Vigorous,
More Time



More Vigorous,
Less Time



*A moderate amount of physical activity is roughly equivalent to physical activity that uses approximately 150 Calories (kcal) of energy per day, or 1,000 Calories per week.

†Some activities can be performed at various intensities; the suggested durations correspond to expected intensity of effort.

**PRECAUTIONS FOR A
HEALTHY START**

To avoid soreness and injury, individuals contemplating an increase in physical activity should start out slowly and gradually build up to the desired amount to give the body time to adjust. People with chronic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, or obesity, or who are at high risk for these problems should first consult a physician before beginning a new program of physical activity. Also, men over age 40 and women over age 50 who plan to begin a new *vigorous* physical activity program should consult a physician first to be sure they do not have heart disease or other health problems.

Older Adults

No one is too old to enjoy the benefits of regular physical activity. Of special interest to older adults is evidence that muscle-strengthening exercises can reduce the risk of falling and fracturing bones and can improve the ability to live independently.

Parents

Parents can help their children maintain a physically active lifestyle by providing encouragement and opportunities for physical activity. Family events can include opportunities for everyone in the family to be active.

Teenagers

Regular physical activity improves strength, builds lean muscle, and decreases body fat. It can build stronger bones to last a lifetime.

Dieters

Regular physical activity burns Calories and preserves lean muscle mass. It is a key component of any weight loss effort and is important for controlling weight.

People with High Blood Pressure

Regular physical activity helps lower blood pressure.

People Feeling Anxious, Depressed, or Moody

Regular physical activity improves mood, helps relieve depression, and increases feelings of well-being.

People with Arthritis

Regular physical activity can help control joint swelling and pain. Physical activity of the type and amount recommended for health has not been shown to cause arthritis.

People with Disabilities

Regular physical activity can help people with chronic, disabling conditions improve their stamina and muscle strength and can improve psychological well-being and quality of life by increasing the ability to perform activities of daily life.

For more information contact:

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