



# Spring

## INTO ACTION

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### Adults Ages 18–64

Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. You need to do two types of physical activity each week to improve your health: aerobic and muscle strengthening.

#### Adults need at least:

- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity (such as brisk walking) every week, and muscle-strengthening activities two or more days a week that work all major muscle groups: legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms.  
OR
- 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity (such as jogging or running) every week, and muscle-strengthening activities two or more days a week that work all major muscle groups: legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms.  
OR
- An equivalent mix of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity, and muscle-strengthening activities two or more days a week that work all major muscle groups: legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms.

#### *10 minutes at a time is fine*

We know 150 minutes a week sounds like a lot of time, but you don't have to do it all at once. It's best to spread your activity out during the week, plus you can break it up into smaller chunks during the day, as long as you're doing your activity at a moderate or vigorous pace for at least 10 minutes at a time.

#### *Give it a try*

Try going for a brisk 10-minute walk three times a day, five days a week. This will give you a total of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity.

#### Aerobic activity—what counts?

**Aerobic activity**, or “cardio,” gets you breathing harder and your heart beating faster.

Whether you're pushing a lawnmower, taking a dance class or biking to the store, all types of activities count — as long as you're doing them at a moderate or vigorous intensity for at least 10 minutes at a time.

**Intensity** is how hard your body is working during aerobic activity.

#### *How do you know if you're doing light, moderate, or vigorous intensity activities?*

For most people, light daily activities such as shopping, cooking or doing the laundry don't count because your body isn't working hard enough to get your heart rate up.



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**Moderate-intensity aerobic activity** means you're working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. One way to tell is you'll be able to talk, but not sing the words to a song. Here are some examples of moderate-intensity activities:

- Walking fast
- Doing water aerobics
- Riding a bike on level ground or with few hills
- Playing doubles tennis
- Pushing a lawnmower

#### *Build up over time*

If you want to do more vigorous activities, slowly replace those that take moderate effort, like brisk walking, with more vigorous activities, like jogging.

**Vigorous-intensity activity** means you're breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate has gone up quite a bit. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath. Here are some examples of activities that require vigorous effort:

- Jogging or running
- Swimming laps
- Riding a bike fast or on hills
- Playing singles tennis
- Playing basketball

You can do moderate or vigorous-intensity activity, or a mix of the two each week. A rule of thumb is that one minute of vigorous-intensity activity is about the same as two minutes of moderate-intensity activity.

Some people like to do vigorous activities because they get about the same health benefits in half the time. If you haven't been very active lately, increase your activity level slowly. You need to feel comfortable doing moderate-intensity activities before you move on to more vigorous ones.



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#### Muscle-strengthening activities – what counts?

Besides aerobic activity, you need to do things to strengthen your muscles at least two days a week. These activities should work all the major muscle groups of your body.

Muscle-strengthening activities need to be done to the point where it's hard for you to complete another repetition without help. A repetition is one complete movement of an activity, such as lifting a weight or doing a sit-up. Try to do eight to 12 repetitions per activity; that count as one set. Try to do at least one set of muscle-strengthening activities. To gain even more benefits, do two or three sets.

You can do activities that strengthen your muscles on the same or different days that you do aerobic activity. Just keep in mind that muscle-strengthening activities don't count toward your aerobic activity total.

There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether at home or the gym. You may want to try the following:

- Lifting weights
- Working with resistance bands
- Doing exercises that use your body weight for resistance (such as push-ups or sit-ups)
- Heavy gardening (such as digging or shoveling)
- Yoga

