

Increasing Lifestyle Activity

Enjoy the benefits of regular activity. Being active can do lots for your health. Many diseases can be avoided by keeping yourself active during your life. Regular activity can:

- Give you more energy and improve your mood.
- Firm your muscles and reduce body fat.
- Lower your weight.
- Reduce stress, anxiety and feeling down.
- Lower your risk of long term illnesses like heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Try to get 30 minutes of exercise 3 days a week. You don't have to work out hard in a gym to get the benefits of exercise. Daily chores like walking, climbing stairs, and house cleaning are as good for you as going to the gym. Use your quiet time to become more active. It won't require any extra time out of your day. You can do small amounts that add up to 30 minutes a day instead of doing it all at one time.

Be more active at home. Spend time usually spent in front of the TV being more active. Activities that you can do at home include sweeping, gardening, raking leaves and window washing.

- Walk your dog instead of letting him out in the yard.
- Take activity breaks during TV commercials.
- Make several trips upstairs throughout the day rather than piling things on the steps for a later trip.
- Walk around your neighborhood.

Be more active at work. If your job involves mostly sitting, make an effort to get up and walk throughout the day.

- Park your car at the far end of the parking lot and walk.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator several times a day.
- Take a 10-minute walk at lunch.

Do resistance training (also called strength training).

- If your doctor says you are healthy enough, build up your muscles 3 times a week.
- This includes things like lifting weights or doing sit-ups, push-ups and leg lifts.
- Use resistance bands
- Building muscle makes you stronger, boosts your metabolism and can help keep your bones healthy. You don't need to join a gym. You can try lifting things like canned food, milk jugs or water bottles.

Be more active during your down time. Get you and your family involved in more activities that require you to move instead of sit.

- Plan outings like hiking, biking or dancing.
- Join a park walking club or program in your area.
- Take up basketball or baseball.
- Go swimming at the public pool.
- Take classes in dance, yoga, tai chi or water aerobics.
- Play games like soccer, volleyball or badminton in which the family can all play.

Plan exercise into your day

- Set easy goals to increase your exercise. Start slow to avoid injury.
- Start with 10 minutes a day and work up to a goal of 30 minutes a day.
- Plan specific activities you will do each day and write them on your calendar. List the type of activity and the length of time you plan to do it.

Source:

Get Started Safely American Diabetes Association

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/fitness/get-started-safely/>

Accessed 1/12/15