

# MyActivity Pyramid

Adults

Being physically active is important for health. Being active means moving our bodies.

## Why be physically active? It:

- Improves self-esteem, well-being, mood and sleep
- Helps build and maintain bones, muscles and joints
- Builds muscle strength
- Helps flexibility and posture
- Helps manage weight
- Lowers risk of heart disease, colon cancer and type 2 diabetes
- Helps control blood pressure

## Did you know?

- Some activity is better than none.
- The more you do, the better you'll feel.



**There are several different types of physical activity.** They are all important for different reasons.

- **Aerobic** activity improves heart and lung fitness (e.g., brisk walking, jogging, and swimming).
- **Resistance, strength building and weight-bearing** activities help build and maintain bones and muscles (e.g., carrying a child, lifting weights and walking).
- **Flexibility** improves balance, which reduces risk of injuries (e.g., gentle stretching, dancing, yoga and martial arts).

*See the chart on the back for more details.*



**Note:** Although physical activity is safe for most individuals, if you are unsure if you are ready for activity, ask your health care provider. Also, if you experience pain, pressure, dizziness or joint pain while exercising, you should stop and talk to your health care provider.

## Warm-up

Before being physically active, it is a good idea to do a warm-up activity. Warming up prepares the body for physical activity and may prevent injuries.

- A warm-up activity increases your heart rate.
- One easy warm-up is to walk in place for five minutes.
- The five minutes spent doing a warm-up counts toward your 150 minutes each week.

## Cool-down

A cool-down activity is what you do after your workout. It's a very important part of being active.

- A cool-down activity helps your muscles recover and gets blood to all parts of your body.
- The cool-down often consists of the same exercises used in the warm-up.
  - For example, a cool-down can be a five-minute walk.

# How much activity do I need?

LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES	AEROBIC ACTIVITY	STRENGTH & FLEXIBILITY	INACTIVITY
As often as possible	2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., brisk walking) every week <b>OR</b> 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., jogging or running) every week <b>OR</b> A combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity	At least 2 times each week	Limit 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pick an activity you like and that fits your life.</li> <li>■ Some physical activity is better than none.</li> <li>■ Biking, yard work, household chores</li> </ul>	<p><b>Moderate-intensity activity:</b> You can talk while you do it, but you can't sing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Walking briskly (3 miles per hour)</li> <li>■ Ballroom dancing</li> <li>■ Bicycling</li> <li>■ Water aerobics</li> <li>■ Gardening/yard work</li> </ul> <p><b>Vigorous-intensity activity:</b> You can only say a few words without stopping to catch your breath.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Running/jogging (5 miles per hour)</li> <li>■ Bicycling (10 miles per hour or faster)</li> <li>■ Swimming laps</li> <li>■ Competitive sports (basketball, soccer, volleyball)</li> <li>■ Aerobic dancing</li> <li>■ Heavy yard work, like chopping wood</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strength</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Includes all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)</li> <li>■ Perform 8 to 12 repetitions per set (1 to 2 sets)</li> </ul> <p><b>Flexibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Perform flexibility activities at least 2 days each week for at least 10 minutes each day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Screen time (TV, computer, video games)</li> <li>■ Sitting longer than 60 minutes</li> </ul>



## 10 minutes at a time is fine

Although 150 minutes each week sounds like a lot of time, remember that you don't have to do it all at once. It is best to spread your activity out during the week. You can break it into smaller chunks of time during the day as long as you're doing your activity moderately or vigorously for at least 10 minutes at a time. Try going for a 10-minute brisk walk, three times a day, five days a week. This will give you a total of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity.

