

Physical Activity Basics

Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. Every week adults need 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity and 2 days of muscle strengthening activity, according to the current CDC guidelines.

The 150 minutes does not have to be done all at once. You can break it down to whatever fits your lifestyle. For example, this could be 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Moderate-intensity Aerobic Activity

While engaging in physical activity, if your breathing and heart rate are noticeably faster but you can still carry on a conversation, then more than likely the activity is moderately intense.

Examples:

- Walking briskly
- Light yard work
- Light snow shoveling
- Actively playing with children
- Biking at a casual pace



Vigorous-intensity Aerobic Activity

While engaging in physical activity, if your heart rate is increased significantly and you are breathing too hard to have a conversation, then more than likely the activity is vigorously intense.

Examples:

- Jogging/running
- Swimming laps
- Rollerblading/inline skating at a brisk pace
- Cross-country skiing
- Most competitive sports
- Jumping rope



Daily Activities

Routine physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health.

- Look for ways to reduce time sitting and increase time moving.
- Set aside specific times to make physical activity part of your daily or weekly routine.
- Start with activities, locations, and times you enjoy.
- Try activities with others in your household for motivation and mutual encouragement.
- Start slowly and work your way up to more time or more challenging activities.
- Use free apps and websites to find fun ways to be physically active or new places to put some variety in your activity routine.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, September 19). *Losing weight*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved January 12, 2023, from https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/index.html

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). *Food diary*. National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. Retrieved January 12, 2023, from https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/eat/diaryint.htm

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**Losing weight takes
commitment & a plan!**



Successful healthy weight loss is about a lifestyle with healthy eating patterns, regular physical activity, and stress management.

Medications taken for different conditions can make it more difficult to lose weight. Once you have reached a healthy weight, consistent healthy eating and physical activity will help maintain health long term.

Losing weight takes commitment and may not be easy. Before starting, it is essential to approach any necessary changes with self-compassion and think about your levels of motivation and readiness to make those changes. A physically and emotionally supportive environment can assist you with achieving your goals.

Getting Started

Losing weight takes commitment and a straightforward plan. Getting started means changing your lifestyle to eat healthy foods, have routine physical activity, get adequate sleep, and manage stress.

Let's get started!

Make a commitment.

▶ Making the decision to lose weight and change your lifestyle is a big deal. The first step in your new journey is to make a commitment to yourself to make the change.

Writing down your reasons for wanting to lose weight can assist you with sticking to your commitment. Post these reasons where they serve as a daily reminder of why you want to make this change.

▶ Evaluate where you are.

At your next doctor's visit, have them assess your height, weight, and any weight-related risk factors you may have. Make follow-up appointments to monitor changes in your weight or any related health concerns.

▶ Establish realistic goals.

Set short-term, realistic goals that you can accomplish and be sure to reward yourself for your efforts along the way.

▶ Identify resources for information and support.

Find a family member or friend who will support your weight loss efforts. Creating lifestyle changes can be simpler when you have someone to talk to and support you.

▶ Monitor your progress.

Revisit goals you set for yourself and assess your progress often. Determine which parts of your plan are working and which ones parts need to be adjusted.

Food Diary/Activity Tracker

Keeping a record of your daily food intake and activities will help you stay on track when trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight and activity levels. Also, it assists your physician with checking your progress and to determine if any adjustments are needed.



Improve Your Eating Habits

- ✓ **REFLECT** on all of your specific eating habits, both bad and good, and your common triggers for unhealthy eating.
- ✓ **REPLACE** your unhealthy eating habits with healthier ones.
- ✓ **REINFORCE** your new, healthier eating habits.

▶ Make a list of your eating and drinking habits.

For a few days, keep a food and beverage diary with the time of day you ate or drank each item. Write down everything including sugary drinks and alcohol. This will help you determine what your habits are. It is also good to note how you were feeling when you ate, particularly if you were eating when not hungry.

▶ Take note of habits on your list that may be leading you to overeat.

Some eating habits that can lead to weight gain are:

- Eating too fast
- Eating when not hungry
- Eating while standing up
- Always eating dessert
- Skipping meals



▶ Replace unhealthy habits with healthy ones.

What does this mean? While reflecting on your eating habits, you may notice that you eat too fast. To curb this habit, try putting your fork down between bites. Also, try minimizing distractions around you while eating. Distractions can keep you from paying attention to how fast and how much you are eating.

▶ Plan meals ahead of time.

Planning out your meals will ensure you are eating a healthy, well-balanced meal.

▶ Support your new habits and be patient.

Habits take time to develop. If you find yourself engaging in an unhealthy habit, stop and evaluate what caused you to do so. Do not be hard on yourself if you do backtrack once or twice, one mistake does not erase all the progress you have made.