

Get Moving



Moving can make us feel better.

Most of us are in the habit of sitting a good part of the day – a habit that is not good for us. Our bodies are meant to move, and when we stay active we can improve our mood, health and quality of life.

We don't have to be serious athletes to reap the benefits of physical activity. By starting new habits and adding physical activity into our day in small ways, we can feel better. It helps to have a goal, then commit to small steps to get there.

Try these ideas:

- Always use the stairs
- Lift light weights or jog in place while watching TV
- Bike or walk instead of driving
- Walk your dog
- Get off the bus a few stops early and walk

Helpful Tip

Set a goal: It helps to have a goal, and then commit to small steps to get there.

Benefits of physical activity include:

Attitude: Physical activity helps us feel better, which can boost our outlook and confidence to deal with challenges during the day.

Emotional balance: Being stressed or having feelings of anxiety can make us want to scream or act out in some way. Physical activity is a great way to cool off and sort through problems.

Energy: By switching from inactive to active, we get our heart rate up, we breathe deeper, and we perk up our energy level. More energy helps us deal with the demands of home, work and other duties.

Feel better: Doing different types of physical activities can build strong muscles, bones, and healthy joints so we feel good all day long. Being active can also boost endorphins, a chemical in the brain that makes us feel happy.

Mental alertness: Physical activity tunes up our mental reflexes so we can process information better.

Safety: A “well-tuned” body helps us be ready for the unexpected, as well as recover quickly from accidents, injuries, and illnesses.

Sleep: An active day sets the stage for a good night's sleep.

Weight control: Physical activities that burn calories and turn up our metabolism can play a bigger role than diet in weight loss.

For more information on the different types of physical activities, [click here](#).

Sometimes it's hard to stick to an activity program. We need to keep in mind that when we slip, we need to get back on track as soon as we can. What counts in the long run is that we move more and feel better. By adopting a slow but steady approach to exercise we can be happier and healthier.

How to get started:

1. **Set a goal.** It helps to have a fitness goal, and then commit to small steps to get there.
2. **Begin slowly.** For example, decide to take a ten-minute walk on three days this week, and then increase the time or number of days, as you are able.
3. **Record your progress.** Use a calendar, log sheet, website or phone app to keep track of your activity. This is a great way to stay on track.
4. **Choose activities that you enjoy.** If you push yourself to do things you don't enjoy, it will make it hard to get excited about physical activity.
5. **Have a back-up plan.** For example, have an indoor activity plan for bad weather days.
6. **Get support from family and friends.** People who care about you can encourage and help you reach your goals.

Resources:

There are lots of great resources to motivate and help us!

[American Council on Exercise](#)

[Exercise is Medicine](#)

[Let's Move: America's Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids](#)

[Shape Up America](#)

[US Dept. of Health & Human Services – National Institutes of Health “We Can”](#)



It is very important to talk with a doctor about depressive symptoms you or your loved one are having. This website is not intended to replace a visit to a doctor.