



**Get Moving!**

Do You Need a Prod/a Jolt?

## Table of Contents

3 .....	Welcome
4 .....	Introduction
5 .....	Your Fitness Level
6 .....	First Steps to Active Health
7, 8 .....	Getting Started
9, 10 .....	Step 1- Cardio-respiratory Activities
11-13 .....	Step 2- Flexibility Activities
14, 15 .....	Step 3- Strengthening Activities
16-18 .....	Step 4- Balancing Activities
19. ....	How to Stay Motivated
20, 21 .....	Tips for Success
22, 23 .....	Safety Tips

# Welcome!

**Physical activity (anything that gets the body moving) is necessary for health and well-being.**

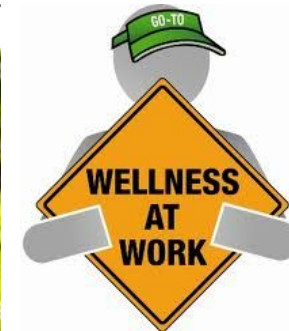
**It has gained national attention; it is the compliment to a good diet--for everyone.**

**First of all, consider your ultimate goal in everyday living -- to maintain your independence!**

**Begin by thinking about reducing or limiting the amount of time you sit each day.**

**Walk about the house (avoid the kitchen, though) every hour if your are prone to sitting a lot.**

**Here you are going to receive guidance on beneficial activity . . .**



**What Exercise Activity are You Doing Each Week?  
How Many Minutes Do You Invest in Regular Exercise?**

**Is Your Exercise Aerobic, of Moderate or of Vigorous Intensity?**

For most people, light daily activities such as shopping, cooking, or doing the laundry falls under light exercise. Why? Your body isn't working hard enough to get your heart rate up.

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

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

**Vigorous-intensity aerobic 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. It is approximately twice as challenging as moderate intensity exercise, such as jogging, swimming laps, riding a bike on rough terrain or hills.



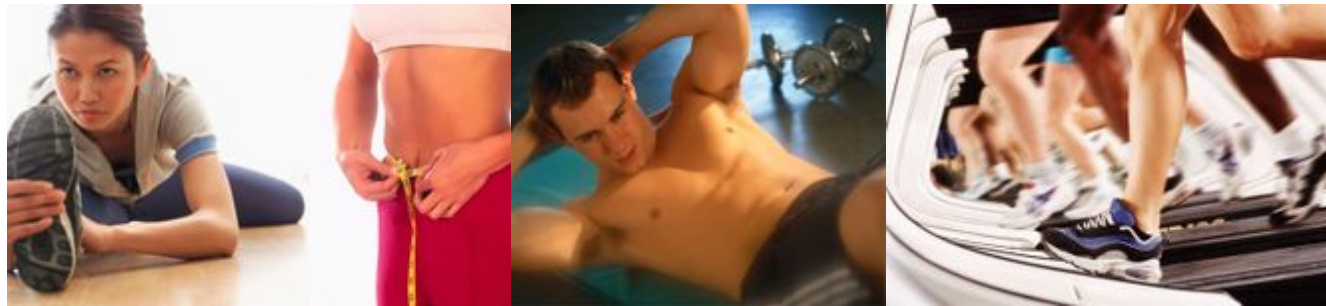
## What Is Your Fitness Level?

If you want to get serious, go here - [Mayo Clinic](#)

**Find out with this online [Cooper test calculator](#), then come back**

The Centers for Disease Control ([CDC](#)) provides us with guidelines about frequency and duration of exercise. Those are the minimum guidelines. With your health care provider's approval you should challenge your body incrementally to gain the strength and agility you are capable of.

The American Council on Exercise ([ACE](#)) provides two walking toolkits, [Walk this Way!](#) and [Walk the Talk!](#), "as part of its commitment to support the U.S. Surgeon General's landmark national call to action to promote walking and walkable communities. The toolkits contain a variety of resources designed to help create a culture of health that values and supports walking as a fundamental physical activity." Download it today!



Once your physician has said it's OK to start a physical activity program, you are ready to begin the First Step to Active Health program.

## FirstSteps to Active Health



is an excellent Physical Activity program for building and maintaining flexibility and strength.

Here is how you can set your best foot forward . . .

### Getting Started

Increasing your physical activity level can be relatively easy, if you know how. One easy way is to incorporate physical activity into your normal routines like walking rather than driving, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or parking the car further away from the store. There are several steps to getting started with a more structured physical activity program.

Download the **First Step Assessment Form** from the [Documents List](#) on LivingSmart website and review the functional task checklist.

Keep track of your activity using an **ACTIVITY LOG** (PDF)



## Getting Started . . .

1. While it is generally not necessary to see a health care provider before beginning every-day physical activities that are of light or moderate intensity, we encourage you to talk with your health care provider about your health and exercise as part of your regular visits.
2. Test your physical limitations with the First Step Assessment Form (previous page) and review the functional task checklist. Mark those tasks that you have relative difficulty performing. Next, check the activities that are very important for your daily living.
3. Set your goals. Once you have identified your limitations, you can determine which physical activities are most important for you to perform. Your goals should be based on your limitations noted above as well as your own preferences. You should write your goals down on the chart by listing at least 5 of the specific functional tasks you need to improve. Once you have your goals listed, you need to give yourself a reasonable timetable for achieving them.
4. Develop your physical activity program. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends the following components of any exercise program, particularly for older adults:
  - o Incorporate moderate activities for a goal of 30 minutes, at least 4 days per week
  - o Include warm-up & cool down with each workout
  - o Perform strengthening activities at least 2 days per week
  - o Incorporate balance activities into daily activities



Thus, a well-rounded physical activity program includes aerobic, flexibility, strengthening, and balance activities. The First Step to Active Health program addresses each of these areas, to improve specific functional tasks among older adults by providing a simple 4-step routine to increase physical activity.

Begin with Step 1, Cardiorespiratory/Aerobic activities. Once you are comfortable with activities in Step 1, begin adding some activities from Step 2, Flexibility. As your physical activity routine becomes more consistent, add activities from Step 3 and then Step 4 to your routine. Some people may start and quickly work through all four steps; others may only be able to do one or two steps. While it's ideal to be able to complete each of these components on a weekly basis, simply doing any type of physical activity is better than none!

Read the SAFETY REMINDERS on pp. 22 & 23 of this ebook before starting any physical activity.

Now proceed to Step 1 . . .



## Step 1: Cardio-Respiratory Activities



**WHY:** To improve functional activities such as being able to walk further, faster, or uphill without fatigue or shortness of breath, or to maintain endurance for daily activities and independence. To improve efficiency of the cardiorespiratory system, improve endurance, and decrease in disease & mortality. Cardiorespiratory fitness is one of the most important controllable risk factors in death and chronic disease.

**WHAT:** Use of large muscle groups over prolonged periods in activities that are rhythmic and aerobic in nature. It's most important to do something you enjoy. Walking, hiking, running, stair climbing, swimming, cycling, rowing, dancing, skating, and skiing. Use Borg's Rating of Perceived Exertion Scale below, use a 12-13, "somewhat hard" activity to determine moderate exercise intensity. Those taking heart medication such as beta-blockers should use the exertion scale rather than their heart rate. Start slowly and progress intensity and duration slowly.

**WHEN:** 3-5 (most) days of the week.

### **Rate your exertion level:**

6-7 - No exertion at all; 8 - Extremely light; 9-10 - Very light; 11-12 - Light; 13-14 - Somewhat hard; 15-16 - Hard (heavy); 17-18 - Very hard; 19 - Extremely hard; 20 - Maximal exertion

Reprinted with *permission from G. Borg, 1998, Borg's Perceived Exertion and Pain Scales, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 47.*

## Cardio-Respiratory Activities, cont'd.

**WHERE TO START:** (depends on initial fitness level) Begin 2 times per week at 10-15 minutes of a fun, low-level aerobic activity with exertion level of 12-13 ("somewhat hard"). Some research suggests that taking 10,000 steps a day is equivalent to roughly 30 minutes of physical activity per day. Wearing a pedometer can help tell you how many steps you take throughout the day. Therefore, you can choose a more structured program like swimming for 30 minutes or try to incorporate more walking into your daily routines using a pedometer.

**HOW TO PROGRESS:** Begin cardio-respiratory activities for 10-15 minutes for 3 days a week. Progress by increasing frequency per week (from 3 to 5), then gradually increase duration for workout from 5 to 10 minutes per week, then progress intensity each week (to maintain exertion level 12-13 "somewhat hard"). As your endurance improves, you will notice you will be able to do more activity at the same intensity.

**GOAL:** The goal for healthy adults is to attain a maintenance phase, exercising 4-5 days per week (exertion level 13, "somewhat hard"), for 30 minutes a day, or 10,000 steps most days of the week.

**WHEN TO MOVE TO STEP 2:** Begin adding flexibility and stretching exercises as soon as possible into your cardio-respiratory exercises as part of your warm-up and cool-down.

**LIST OF AEROBIC ACTIVITIES:** Walking, hiking, stair climbing, swimming, cycling, rowing, dancing, skating, skiing, jogging. (Running is not recommended as the first activity for people who are just becoming active; walking and hiking are more appropriate activities to start.)

## STEP 2: FLEXIBILITY ACTIVITIES

**WHY:** Improves range of motion for activities of daily living, such as combing hair, getting dressed, or picking up objects from the floor. Stretching may also prevent pain or injury.

**WHAT:** Muscular flexibility activities include stretching of major muscle and/or tendon groups to improve muscle length and flexibility.

**WHEN:** Stretching activities are typically performed before and after exercises such as aerobic activities or strength training. Stretching should be performed a minimum of 2-3 days/week

Visit [Theraband.com](http://Theraband.com) to see the numerous stretching and strengthening exercises possible with their stretch bands and other equipment.



## Flexibility Activities, cont'd.

**WHERE TO START:** Begin with 5 to 10 stretches of the upper and lower body. Use either static (hold without bouncing) or contract-relax techniques (stretch the muscle, contract muscle against resistance for 6 seconds, and stretch again); Hold stretch in a position of mild discomfort for 10-30 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times for each stretch. Be sure to continue breathing while holding stretches.

**HOW TO PROGRESS:** Begin your routine by choosing stretches based on needs (for example, someone with functional limitations in the upper body will perform more upper body stretches). Add other stretches as needed.

**GOAL:** Perform stretching activities at least 2 to 3 days per week, preferably before and after each aerobic or strengthening activity routine.

**WHEN TO MOVE INTO STEP 3:** Integrate a strengthening program into your weekly routine once regular cardiorespiratory and flexibility activities are performed.



## Flexibility Activities, cont'd.

### **RECOMMENDED STRETCHING ACTIVITIES:**

- *Neck Retraction or **Chin Tuck Stretch***: Sit in a chair with your back straight and shoulders pulled back. Gently tuck your chin inward and apply light pressure with your fingers. You should feel a stretch in the back of your neck.
- *Fingers-to-toes Stretch*: Stand erect with arms raised, reaching for the sky; in one smooth action slowly roll arms, shoulders and upper back forward while also slowly flexing knees and hips lower toward floor until fingers touch toes, then straighten legs again, and enjoy back stretching in a curve.

*The Following stretches are done with a Band:*

- Hamstrings
- Calf Stretch
- Pectoral Stretch
- Side Bends
- Trunk Rotation

**WHEN TO MOVE INTO STEP 3:** Integrate a strengthening program into your weekly routine once regular cardiorespiratory and flexibility activities are performed.

## STEP 3: STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

**WHY:** Strengthening activities improve or maintain muscle & bone mass, improve balance & reduce fall risk, improve cardiovascular endurance, and improve functional ability, such as lifting objects, getting out of a chair, carrying groceries, or opening jars. Older adults have more potential gain from strengthening than any other mode of exercise.

**WHAT:** Use large muscle groups (arms, shoulders, chest, abdomen, back, hips, and legs), against resistance of body weight or external resistance (weights, machines, elastic bands). Be sure to balance the strength of opposite muscle groups (for example, strengthen both the front and back of the shoulder).

**WHEN:** 2-3 days of the week (don't strength train on consecutive days)

**WHEN TO MOVE TO STEP 4:** Once you feel comfortable with strengthening activities, begin to incorporate balance activities into your daily routines (next Step) as soon as possible and begin a specific balance program during the week.



## Strengthening Activities, cont'd.

**WHERE TO START:** Choose strengthening activities based on needs (for example, someone with less upper body strength may require more upper body exercises) Start with 2-3 strengthening activities for each area: the upper body, lower body, and back. Perform 1 set of 10 repetitions at a resistance that makes you tired at the last repetition, but be sure to maintain proper form! Alternately, use the [Exertion Scale](#) to maintain your intensity at a level between 12 and 14.

Rest for two minutes between exercises. Maintain normal breathing patterns, breathing once with each repetition. Soreness is to be expected with any type of activity that is not familiar, but it should pass.

**HOW TO PROGRESS:** Progress by increasing repetitions to 15 per exercise, then increase from 1 to 2 sets of each exercise. Increase resistance to allow fatigue with last repetition, or to maintain Exertion level at 12-14. As your strength improves, you will notice you will be able to do more activity at the same intensity. You must progressively increase resistance to increase strength.

**GOAL:** The goal for healthy older adults is to perform strengthening activities 2-3 days per week for 1-2 sets of 8-10 exercises for 10-15 repetitions to fatigue.

### RECOMMENDED STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

- **Upper Body:** Biceps, Triceps, Chest Press, Overhead Reach, Grip (for lifting, carrying, & reaching)
- **Back:** Seated Row, Pull Down, Back Pull, Upright Row (for posture, lifting and pulling)
- **Lower Body:** Hip Lift, Leg Press, Chair Squat, Dorsiflexion (for gait, balance, and mobility)

## STEP 4: BALANCING ACTIVITIES

**WHY:** Improve balance, postural stability, & gait; reduce risk and fear of falls.

**WHAT:** Balance training activities involve maintaining standing and postural stability under a variety of conditions, including static (stationary) and dynamic (moving) balance.

**WHEN:** Recommend incorporating balance into everyday activities, as well as performing a 2-3x/wk specific program.





## Balancing Activities, cont'd.

**WHERE TO START:** Incorporate balance training in daily activities such as standing on one foot while doing dishes or brushing teeth. Begin 5 balance-specific activities, 2 times per week with one set of each activity for 10-15 seconds each. Choose activities based on needs (someone with extremely poor balance should not perform exercises alone).

**HOW TO PROGRESS:** Progress by increasing the time of each activity to 30 seconds, then by increasing to 2-3 sets of each activity. Gradually increase the challenge of the activity by standing with one foot in front of the other, or on one leg, change the surface you stand on, (foam surface), perform dynamic movements (tandem walk, pivot turn, backward & side-step), and reduce sensory input (close eyes). Progress program to 8-10 balance-specific activities for 2-3 sets of 15-30 seconds.

**GOAL:** The goal for healthy adults is to perform balance activities 2-3 days per week for 2-3 sets of 8-10 specific activities for 15-30 seconds.

### RECOMMENDED BALANCE ACTIVITIES

- 1-Leg Standing -- Lift foot to stand on one leg. Repeat on other leg. Use a sturdy chair for support as needed.
- Side Kick -- Extend your knee and kick out to the side. Repeat on other leg. Use a sturdy chair for support as needed.
- Back Kick with Band -- Loop center of band around one ankle and stabilize other end under your foot. Kick band backward, keeping your knee straight. Use a sturdy chair for support as needed.
- Tandem Stand / Walk
- Standing knee band
- Standing hip raise
- Standing kick
- 1-leg stand on foam
- Side kick with band

## More Resources:

A Video Library About Exercise for Strength and Balance

[Senior Exercises Online](#)

[A Pinterest page](#) of many exercise videos, and

There are many more downloadable resources about activity recordkeeping on the LivingSmart website.

## How to Progress in Your Activity Program

Once your physical activity program has been set, you need to learn how to progress the activities. Progression is the key to improving fitness. In general, increase the length or number of the activities before increasing the intensity. Follow the progression guidelines in each of the steps noted above for specific recommendations.

- Increase the number of times per week the activity is performed
- Increase the length or number of the activity/ exercise (time, sets, repetitions)
- Increase the level of the activity (noted by more resistance, or heart rate)

Track your progress by maintaining a physical activity log. Be sure and bring it back to your healthcare professional when you return for your follow-up.

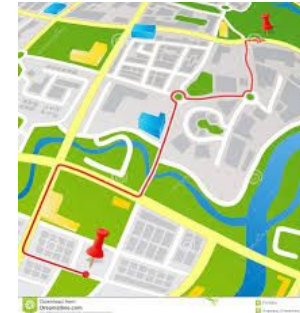
## How to Stay Motivated

- Moderation is the key; start gradually with enjoyable activities and progress slowly
- Maintain activity logs to record achievements
- Try to do workouts about the same time of day
- Make activity part of your daily life
- Reward yourself for reaching your first goal
- Review your goals with your activity logs on a regular basis.
- Revise your goals as you progress your activities
- Exercise with a partner or in groups where possible
- Ask your family & friends to support your physical activity commitment



### **Create a Walking Itinerary**

- Print a street map of your neighborhood (or any imaginary location) from Google Earth, or any map program
- Mark goal posts on it for each leg of the itinerary
- Walk, marking from post to post on your map toward an end-point of your journey.
- Alternate plan: If you are not in a safe neighborhood for walking, join a YMCA or local health club gym and use their treadmill. There you can challenge yourself with elevations as if you were hiking.



### **Treadmill Advice**

If/When you use a treadmill, focus on your exercise; do not allow the music or voice from your device to distract you, or the TV program on the little monitor, either. Don't zone out in a book. Be always conscious of what you are doing and ready to correct any wrong move you may make. Individuals have suffered serious accidents at any speed on the treadmill by losing their balance or reaching for something or weaving off the belt or walking out the back. Overuse can cause inflammation of the joints in the hips, bursitis, or tendinitis, altering their gait unnaturally.

## Exercise Tips

- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and shoes with good support
- Be sure and perform warm-up and cool-down activities such as stretching with every session.
- Start slowly and progress slowly as recommended by your healthcare providers.
- Monitor the intensity of your activity as recommended by your healthcare providers.
- Be sure and drink plenty of fluids, particularly if you sweat during your activity.
- Remember to maintain proper posture and form with each activity. Don't take shortcuts to finish the activity.



## Safety Tips to Avoid Injury While Exercising

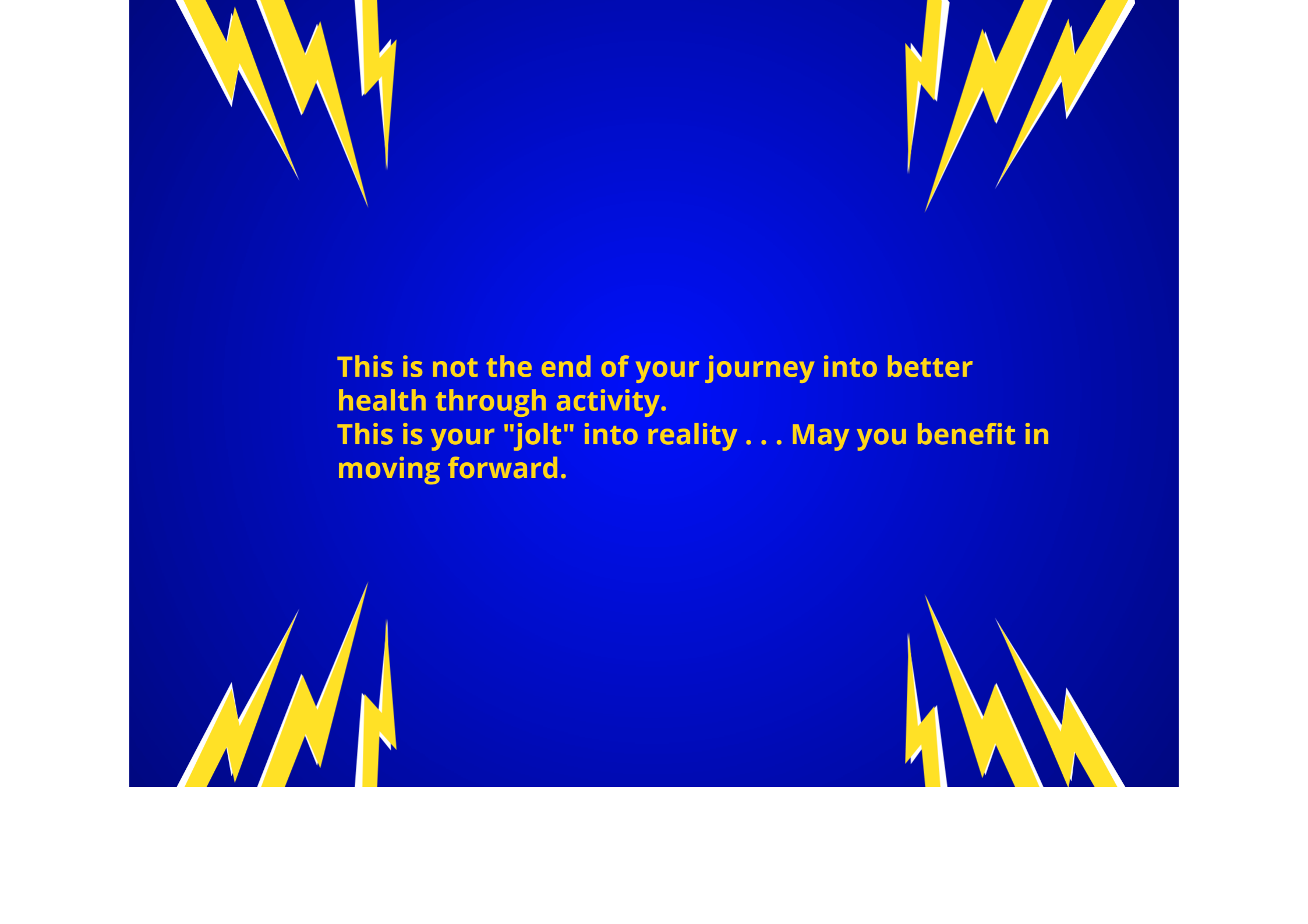
Once your doctor gives you the go-ahead to exercise, the tips below can help you avoid injuries:

1. Take five to 10 minutes to warm up and cool down properly.
2. Plan to start slowly and boost your activity level gradually unless you are already exercising frequently and vigorously.
3. Be aware that training too hard or too often can cause overuse injuries like stress fractures, stiff or sore joints and muscles, and inflamed tendons and ligaments. Sports prompting repetitive wear and tear on certain parts of your body — such as swimming (shoulders), jogging (knees, ankles, and feet), tennis (elbows) — are often overuse culprits, too. A mix of different kinds of activities and sufficient rest is safer.
4. Listen to your body. Hold off on exercise when you're sick or feeling very fatigued. Cut back if you cannot finish an exercise session, feel faint after exercise or fatigued during the day, or suffer persistent aches and pains in joints after exercising.
5. If you stop exercising for a while, drop back to a lower level of exercise initially. If you're doing strength training, for example, lift lighter weights or do fewer reps or sets.
6. For most people, simply drinking plenty of water is sufficient. But if you're working out especially hard or doing a marathon or triathlon, choose drinks that replace fluids plus essential electrolytes.

## **Safety Tips, cont'd.**

7. Choose clothes and shoes designed for your type of exercise. Replace shoes every six months as cushioning wears out.
8. For strength training, good form is essential. Initially use no weight, or very light weights, when learning the exercises. Never sacrifice good form by hurrying to finish reps or sets, or struggling to lift heavier weights.
9. Exercising vigorously in hot, humid conditions can lead to serious overheating and dehydration. Slow your pace when the temperature rises above 70°F. On days when the thermometer is expected to reach 80°F, exercise during cooler morning or evening hours or at an air-conditioned gym. Watch for signs of overheating, such as headache, dizziness, nausea, faintness, cramps, or palpitations.
10. Dress properly for cold-weather workouts to avoid hypothermia. Depending on the temperature, wear layers you can peel off as you warm up. Don't forget gloves.

Delayed muscle soreness that starts 12 to 24 hours after a workout and gradually abates is a normal response to taxing your muscles. By contrast, persistent or intense muscle pain that starts during a workout or right afterward, or muscle soreness that persists more than one to two weeks, merits a call to your doctor for advice.

The image features a solid blue background with four stylized yellow lightning bolts, one in each corner. The bolts are jagged and point towards the center of the page. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

**This is not the end of your journey into better health through activity.  
This is your "jolt" into reality . . . May you benefit in moving forward.**



