

23 Indoor Activities for Heart-Healthy Kids



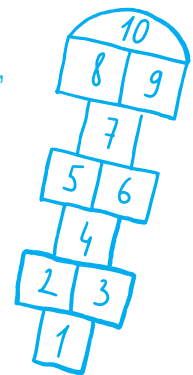
To keep kids healthy, you need to keep them moving. In fact, the American Heart Association recommends children ages 6 to 17 get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Toddlers and preschoolers need even more.

Here are ideas for days when the weather doesn't cooperate. These activities are heart-healthy, fun – and indoors.

Younger kids

TIP: For younger children, it's all about fun. Rather than “exercise,” think “active play.” If their cheeks are pink, they're breathing faster and they've broken a sweat, they're getting the physical activity they need.

- Have a dance party or march to music.
- Set up a furniture obstacle course through the house.
- Create a timed indoor scavenger hunt.
- Mark a hopscotch course on the carpet or floor using masking tape.
- Hold animal races: Hop like a frog; squat and waddle like a duck; scurry like a crab.
- Bounce a balloon back and forth, keeping it aloft as long as possible. (*Note: Balloons are a choking hazard for children under age 8.*)
- Play indoor “hockey” with a pool noodle or child's hockey stick, a balloon and a laundry basket or box on its side to serve as a net.
- Set up space for other sports indoors, like a soccer ball or indoor basketball hoop.
- Bring back classic games like tag, Duck Duck Goose, and Simon Says.
- Play Follow the Leader, using energetic movements like jumping jacks and running in place.



(cont.)

Older kids

TIP: As children get older, the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day should include muscle-building activities (like push-ups) and bone-strengthening activities (like running or jumping), in addition to aerobic activity.



- Set up fitness stations throughout the house: push-ups in the living room, crunches in the kitchen, planking in the hallway, and a stair-climb on the stairs.
- Clear some space for hula-hooping and jumping rope.
- Follow a fitness video, app or video game.
- Install a pull-up bar or set up an area for weights.

Indoor-activity destinations for all ages

Want to start a new family health regiment, or just find a physical activity for your child that isn't based out of your living room? Try one of these options.



- Join a gym.
- Check out your community center for open gyms, indoor playgrounds and low-cost classes.
- Ask about open swim times and activities at public indoor pools.
- Sign your child up for dance classes, martial arts or another indoor sport.
- Find an indoor basketball court or running track.
- Take a long walk inside the local mall.
- Head to a roller skating rink or ice skating rink.
- Try out an indoor ropes course or climbing wall.
- Go bowling.

Don't have a whole hour?

If 60 minutes a day still sounds like a lot of time to keep your child moving, don't worry. All that activity doesn't need to happen at once. Try for 10- or 20-minute bursts instead, and switch up the activities to see what your child likes best.