

### **Children aged 3-5**

Preschool-aged children should be active throughout the day to enhance growth and development. Adults caring for children this age should encourage play and aim for at least 3 hours per day.



### **Youth aged 6-17**

Should get at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity to attain the most health benefits from physical activity. Most activities can be aerobic, like walking, running, or anything that makes the heart beat faster. They also need activities that make their muscles and bones strong, like climbing on playground equipment, playing basketball, and jumping rope.

\*Key guideline – move more sit less. New evidence shows a strong relationship between increased sedentary behavior and increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and all-cause mortality.



### **Adults**

The recommended amount of physical activity to attain the most health benefits is 150-300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking or fast dancing, each week. Adults also need muscle-strengthening activity, like lifting weights or doing push-ups, at least 2 days a week. Any amount of physical activity has some health benefits. Americans can benefit from small amounts of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity throughout the day.



### **New Evidence**

New evidence shows that physical activity can help manage more health conditions that Americans already have. Examples include decrease pain for those with osteoarthritis, reduce disease progression for hypertension and type 2 diabetes, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improve cognition for those with dementia, multiple sclerosis, ADHD, and Parkinson's disease. Other evidence shows that physical activity has immediate health benefits. Physical activity can reduce anxiety and blood pressure, improve quality of sleep and insulin sensitivity.



### **Benefits**

Meeting these recommendations consistently over time can lead to even more long-term health benefits. For youth, physical activity can help improve cognition, bone health, fitness, heart health, and reduce the risk of depression. For adults, physical activity helps prevent 8 types of cancer, reduces the risk of dementia, all-cause mortality, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, depression, improves bone health and overall quality of life. For older adults, physical activity also lowers the risk of falls and injuries from falls. For pregnant women, physical activity reduces the risk of postpartum depression. For all groups, physical activity reduces the risk of excessive weight gain and helps people maintain a healthy weight.



## Safety Tips

- Start slowly. Little by little, build up your activities and how hard you work at them.
- Use safety equipment. For example, wear a helmet for bike riding and the right shoes for walking or jogging.
- Don't hold your breath during strength exercises.
- Always bend forward from the hips not the waist.
- Be sure to drink plenty of fluids when you are doing activities, even if you don't feel thirsty.



## Additional Resources

American Council on Exercise  
1-888-825-3636  
[www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
1-800-232-4636  
1-888-232-6348  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

President's Council on sports, Fitness & Nutrition  
1-240-276-9567  
[www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

Medline Plus  
National Library of Medicine  
[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

# Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

