

Move it or LOSE it

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Move it or Lose it...

A sedentary life style is one of the largest risk factors for cardiovascular and other diseases, yet too few of us make daily exercise a priority. The key to fitting in fitness is making it a priority and making it convenient. This lesson will help you share ideas, provide tips and discuss strategies for adding regular exercise to your daily routine.

The aging process causes physical changes in the body. When it comes to physical performance (the ability to do physical activities) our abilities peak during the late teens and early 20s. By the mid-20s the ability to function physically starts to decrease. You might experience more feelings of tiredness, muscle weakness, and feel less able to work hard during activities that need endurance, such as cleaning or yard work. So it is great news to hear that regular physical activity can help to slow and reduce these changes to keep you active and healthy for a lifetime. Physical activity provides many benefits. These benefits become much more important as the body ages.

WHY Exercise:

- More energy
- Mood monitor – reduces feelings of stress
- Sleep better
- Perform better – clears your head so you are more refreshed and can concentrate better
- Enhances Self Esteem

& Of course, there are also potential physical benefits:

- Weight
- Heart Health
- Cholesterol Count
- Cancer Check – reduces risk of some cancers
- Help with Hypertension
- Blood Sugar Balance
- Bone Benefit

“Based on what we know now, everyone can find time to include more activity in their day. The key is to think of small ways to get the body moving, which will add up to big dividends in terms of better health.”

Dr. C. Everett Koop – former U.S. Surgeon General

As busy people, it is good to know that physical activity does not have to be strenuous, formal or time-consuming to be good for you. For

example, any physical activity burns calories, so even short sessions of informal activity can add up to pounds lost over time.

To begin your program, just put one foot in front of the other and gradually build up to 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most days of the week. (Modest intensity activities include walking, dancing, housework, and golfing—pretty much any activity that involves moving the large muscles in your arms and legs. Even every day activities count and can add up to real health and fitness benefits.

What Kind of Activities should I be doing?

Older adults can benefit from physical activity in three areas.

- Endurance activity
- Resistance training
- Balance and flexibility training

Endurance

Endurance activities increase the heart rate for an extended period of time. They can improve heart health.

Endurance activity might include:

- Walking. (if time permits, use walking dvd from FNP program)
- Bicycling, either stationary or outdoor.
- Dancing.
- Vigorous cleaning – mopping, vacuuming, scrubbing.
- Group exercise – chair aerobics, aquatics, low impact aerobics.
- Climbing stairs
- Vigorous yard work – lawn mowing, raking, pruning

Endurance activity burns calories, which can help in weight loss and weight maintenance. Maintaining a healthy weight and BMI can reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Weight-bearing endurance activity can improve bone health by increasing bone density and reducing losses in bone mass. Weight-bearing activities are those in which you are on your feet, or bearing the weight of your body. For example, walking would be weight-bearing, but cycling would not. The action of the foot or arm working or pounding against a force strengthens the bone by causing new bone tissue to form. Examples of weight-bearing activity from the list above would include:

- Walking
- Dancing
- Low impact aerobics
- Climbing stairs

You should get 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, preferably all days, of the week. Begin with low intensity activities and very gradually work up to moderate intensity activity. At a low intensity level you should be able to carry on a full conversation without being out of breath. At moderate intensity, you should still be able to talk to someone, but the increase in your breathing and heart rate begins to make it difficult to carry on a comfortable conversation.

It is important to warm up for about 5 minutes before starting an endurance activity. You can do this by simply marching. Also, the cool down period becomes much more important as you get older. The risk of blood pooling in the legs which could result in a drop in blood pressure and feelings of dizziness increases in older adults. Increasing your cool down time to 10 to 15 minutes can reduce this risk.

Resistance

As the body ages, lean body mass (muscle mass) is lost each year. Once in your mid-50s this decrease can be as much as 1% a year. This loss of lean body mass is called sarcopenia.

Resistance training is working the muscles against a force. This force can be a weight, an exercise band, or your own body weight. Regular resistance training can have the following benefits in relation to aging:

- Increased muscle strength and endurance.
- Reduced risk of falls.
- Improvement in overall ability to move, or mobility.
- Ability to perform normal, daily activities more easily.
- Ability to extend years of living on your own without assistance. For safe resistance training:
 - Focus on a well-balanced routine of 8 to 10 exercises that work each of the major muscle groups.
 - Resistance training should be done at least two times a week. At least 48 hours of rest should be taken between sessions.
 - Begin with at least one set of 10 to 15 repetitions.
 - Sessions should be no longer than 20 to 30 minutes.

In addition, daily activities such as cleaning, gardening, and walking may keep your muscles strong.

Balance and Flexibility

Balance and flexibility is very important to maintain overall function and to perform daily activities. When combined with activities that build muscle strength, balance and flexibility training can reduce the risk of falling. Falling and the injuries that can result from falls can force older adults to be dependent on others for their care and normal daily activities. Other types of activities such as endurance exercise and resistance training can result in improvements in balance and flexibility;

however, activities that focus specifically on balance and flexibility can also help you improve these areas and gain benefits.

Balance exercises may include:

- Standing with feet together.
- Standing with feet apart.
- Standing on one leg.
- Standing with feet together and raising onto your toes.
- Walking on a straight line.
- Walking heel-to-toe.

These activities can be made harder by closing your eyes, but be sure you have support, such as a sturdy chair, within reach. Aging and decreased use can cause joints, and what is connected to them (muscle, tendons, etc.), to become tight. This can make movements such as bending, reaching, and even walking painful. Flexibility is defined as the ability of joints to move through their full range of motion. By working to maintain flexibility throughout aging, you can make everyday movement easier and less painful. If you are new to physical activity, flexibility training may be the best place to start.

Here are a few tips:

- Be sure the body is warmed up before stretching.
- Stretch each of the major muscle groups.
- Focus on static stretches, those in which you slowly ease into the movement and hold.
- Hold each stretch for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Perform each stretch at least 4 times.
- Stretching should be performed 2 to 3 days a week.
- If it hurts, stop! Stretch only to mild discomfort, not pain.

Once you get into the habit of including everyday aerobic activities, muscle endurance and stretching in your workweek regardless of where you are, you will find yourself seeking opportunities for exercise—even when you're out of town.

Here are some tips for taking your fitness on the road.

- Walk around the airport while waiting for a flight instead of heading to the nearest newspaper stand or restaurant.
- Walk instead of riding on moving airport walkways.
- Take advantage of hotel facilities. Many hotels have on-site fitness rooms, video collections that may include fitness tapes, or will bring fitness equipment to your room. Others can arrange discounted workouts at nearby health clubs.

- If you belong to a health club, ask if it has sister clubs that you can visit while you travel.
- Chart a workout course in your hotel. Walk the length of the hotel's hallways, using the stairs to climb from one floor to the next. Note where the fire exits are. (Before getting started, check on which floors you can exit the stairwell.)
- Explore new cities on foot. For example, go on an early morning or between-meeting walk. Consult with hotel staff who can help you chart a safe and scenic course.
- Check with the concierge on a safe walk to a nearby restaurant.
- Pack light hand and ankle weights, a jump rope or a resistant elastic band for quick, hotel room workouts.
- Do a few minutes of stretching exercises before going to sleep.

The first step is the hardest in becoming more active, but after a few weeks, your fitness routine will become a habit that you'll look forward to during the day. However, at times you will need extra encouragement to keep motivated.

- * Start off on the right foot by only choosing activities that you actually enjoy.
- * Engage in a wide variety of activities to keep workouts interesting.
- * Work out with a friend, family member or co-worker. Encourage each other to walk that extra block even on busy mornings.
- * Set realistic short- and long-term goals and chart progress every step of the way.
- * Reward yourself when you meet fitness goals. For example, treat yourself to a massage, new pair of sneakers or clothes.
- * Set aside a particular time to work out during the day so that physical activity becomes a natural part of your routine.
- * Vary the location in which you work out. Instead of walking toward the same park every day, do an about face, and check out the scenery in the other direction.
- Cut yourself some slack. If you fall off the fitness bandwagon, just climb back on again. The benefits will be waiting for you.

Additional Tips for finding time for physical activity:

- Wake up early. Get up 30 minutes earlier than you normally do and use the extra time to walk on your treadmill or take a brisk walk around the neighborhood. Some research suggests that people who exercise in the morning are more likely than are others to stick with it. If you're too stiff in the morning, however, wait to exercise until later in the day.
- Make household chores count. Mop the floor, scrub the bathtub or do other housework at a pace fast enough to get your heart

pumping. Outdoor work counts, too. Mowing the lawn with a push mower is a great way to burn calories. Raking and hoeing strengthen your arms and back, and digging works your arms and legs.

- Be active while watching TV. Use hand weights, ride a stationary bike or do a stretching routine during your favorite shows. Get off the couch to change the channel or to adjust the volume.
- Involve the whole family. Take group walks before or after dinner. Play catch. Ride your bikes. It's best to build up to about 30 minutes of continuous activity, but you can exercise in shorter bursts, too.
- Get your dog into the act. Take daily walks with Fido or Fluffy. If you don't have a dog, borrow one. An enthusiastic dog may give the motivation you need to lace up your walking shoes.

Make Exercise an Escape

Sometimes being at home can be a distraction. If you prefer to get your exercise away from home, you might:

- Get Social. You may do better with the encouragement of others. Try a dance club, hiking group or golf league.
- Join a team. Sign up for softball, soccer or volleyball through your work or through your local parks and recreation department.
- Join a Fitness Club. Sign up for a group exercise class at a nearby fitness club. The cost may be an incentive to stick with it.
- Plan active outings. Make a date with a friend to hike in a local park, or take a family trip to the zoo.
- Be active while running errands. When you go to the mall or grocery store, park toward the back of the lot and walk the extra distance. If you have a little extra time, walk inside for a lap or two before you start shopping. Keep a pair of walking shoes in your car so that you're ready when you find a few minutes for exercise.

Work out at Work

To fit in more physical activity while you're on the job:

- Make the most of your commute. Walk or bike to work. If you ride the bus, get off a few blocks early and walk the rest of the way.
- Take the stairs whenever you can. If you have a meeting on another floor, get off the elevator a few floors early and use the stairs. Better yet, skip the elevator entirely.
- Take fitness breaks. Rather than hanging out in the lounge with coffee or a snack, take a short walk.
- Start a lunchtime walking group with your co-workers. The regular routine and the support of your co-workers may help you stick with the program.

- Schedule physical activity as you would any other appointment during the day. Don't change your exercise plans for every interruption that comes along. Remind yourself that physical activity is important too.
- If you travel for work, plan ahead. Bring your jump-rope or choose a hotel that has fitness facilities. If you're stuck in an airport waiting for a plane, grab your bags and take a walk.

There is no single best way to fit physical activity into your day. Your lifestyle, job and family responsibilities will point to the most convenient time and place for fitness. Do what works for you—and make daily physical activity a habit you keep.

“Not enough time” is the primary excuse for remaining inactive. You Do Have Time! (You have the same amount as the people who DO find time to exercise—24 hours every day!) Five or ten minutes isn't going to affect anything. If it is, you are in serious need of some time management consulting. **“Too Tired”** is the second most common excuse. Sitting all day will make you feel tired and sluggish. A little physical activity will blast oxygen to your brain and muscles, thus revitalizing you. Also, it is one of the best ways to combat excessive stress and anxiety—our bodies were designed to use physical activity as a response to stress (fight or flight).

For any of the other excuses you come up with, just remember, they are only that. Acknowledge them for what they are—and do it anyway. Think of how important it is to your health that you add this crucial physical activity into your lifestyle.

Think Physical Activity, Not Exercise

Do you find yourself making excuses for not exercising? Here are some tips to make it a more enjoyable experience.

If you find that you say to yourself “I hate to exercise”. That's o.k. Many (or most) sedentary people feel this way. If that's the way you feel then don't exercise. All you really are trying to do is increase your physical activity. You must change your attitude if you are to succeed. Don't think exercise, think physical activity. And when you think of physical activity, think of a fun recreational activity that just happens to include moving your body.

How to Stick With Your Physical Activity Plan

Hopefully you have found a few ways to add a little more physical activity to your lifestyle. Now you need to come up with a few ways to make sure that you do them.

The Contract – Personal trainers love to use contracts to get clients to commit to their plans. Doing the same, may be useful for you to target the type and amount of physical activity to be done in a certain time frame, with a reward for compliance.

First brainstorm physical activities that you might like to try. Come up with a minimum number of sessions you would like to perform in a month. Next agree on a healthful reward (go to the movies, buy a new family game, go out for a healthy dinner, etc.) Then fill out the contract and have each family member (or just yourself) sign it. Post it in a visible place.

Planning Ahead – Get organized. Do whatever you can ahead of time. Planning ahead helps to overcome the tendency to put off the activity when the time comes to actually do it. Place your walking shoes and socks in your doorway so that you will have to either trip over them or put them on when you get home. Have air in your bicycle tires and water in your bottle.

Just keep reminding yourself “if I do not move it, I will lose it (muscle mass and energy levels that is)” when thinking of ways to add physical activity into your life. Also keep in mind that brief bouts of strength training and stretching can be done while listening to music or watching TV. The mental and physical relaxation you feel afterwards should be a good motivator to continue to do these activities.

Move it or Lose it!!

Tips and Suggestions for Busy People

Benefits of Exercise that Interests Me?

What will likely happen to me if I don't exercise?

Barriers or Obstacles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Strategies to Overcome Barriers

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

VISUALIZE

Exercise

Cardiovascular: 30-60 minutes accumulated per day, 4-7 days per week at a moderate intensity

What are my options and what do I like (or might like)?

Resistance: 2 sets of 12-15 reps, for all major muscle groups

What movements should I do?

Flexibility: Stretch the major muscle groups for 15-30 seconds after exercising.

What stretches can I do?

My Personal Game Plan

I will

I will