

## *It's Never Too Late to Become Physically Active!*

Choosing to become more physically active is not always easy. This brochure explains the benefits of physical activity, and how simple changes can become part of your daily routine, leading you down the road to wellness. Even small improvements in activity can have significant health benefits.

You can start out slowly and work your way up to a higher level of activity. With a little creativity and planning, even the person with the busiest schedule can make room for physical activity.

Remember, the best time for physical activity is whenever it is the most convenient for you.

The key is to choose physical activity that is as convenient as possible for your particular lifestyle.

Try these tips to fit more physical activity into your life:

- When going to work or the store, park in the furthest parking spot.
- Go for a brisk walk at lunch or break.

*The material contained in this brochure is for general information only and is not intended to provide specific medical advice or recommendations for any individual. Your physician or other health care professional must be consulted for advice with regard to your individual situation.*

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator whenever possible.
- Wake up 30 minutes earlier. Walk on your treadmill or take a brisk walk around the neighborhood.
- Perform home chores indoors and out at a fast pace to get your heart pumping.
- Take a quick walk after work. Exercising before dinner may suppress your appetite, helping to reduce your total daily calorie intake.
- Take the dog for a walk.
- Aim to build up to about 30 minutes of continuous activity.
- Increase physical activity while watching TV. Use hand weights, ride a stationary bike or do some stretching.
- Schedule regular family walks or games of basketball or catch. Encouraging your children to be active now can help build good habits that may carry into adulthood.



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## HOW CAN I STAY MOTIVATED?

Identifying what personally keeps you from staying motivated can be the first step to resolving the obstacle. Here are a few tips:

<b>LACK OF TIME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try walking or riding your bike to work or shopping, organizing school activities around physical activity, walking the dog, or exercising while you watch TV.</li> <li>• Make time for physical activity. For example, take fitness breaks instead of taking coffee breaks: walk, jog, or swim during your lunch hour.</li> <li>• Select activities requiring minimal time, such as walking, jogging, or stair climbing.</li> <li>• There are 1,440 minutes in every day....schedule 30 of them for physical activity.</li> <li>• Write it on your calendar. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule.</li> </ul>
<b>LACK OF ENERGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule physical activity for times in the day when you feel most energetic.</li> <li>• Convince yourself that if you give it a chance, physical activity really will increase your energy level. It's been proven!</li> </ul>
<b>LACK OF MOTIVATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find an exercise partner to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars, or join an exercise group or class. This will lessen the chances of neglecting your workout.</li> <li>• Set achievable goals. The more you accomplish your goals the more likely you are to sustain them.</li> <li>• Reward yourself for a job well done. Make sure the rewards are positive and help you stay on track with your fitness goals.</li> </ul>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a jump rope in your suitcase and jump rope.</li> <li>• Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels.</li> <li>• Stay in places with swimming pools or exercise facilities.</li> <li>• Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.</li> </ul>
<b>FAMILY OBLIGATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has small children. Or, hire a babysitter and look at the cost as a worthwhile investment in your physical and mental health.</li> <li>• Exercise with the kids-go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids (there are several on the market) and exercise together. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.</li> <li>• Jump rope, do calisthenics, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids are busy playing or sleeping. Or, exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).</li> <li>• Encourage exercise facilities to provide child care services.</li> </ul>

## SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

With a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week, you can:

- Increase energy
- Help control and/or maintain weight
- Improve your muscle tone
- Reduce stress
- Improve sleep
- Reduce your risk for cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, osteoporosis, and stroke
- Improve balance and flexibility
- Manage existing chronic health conditions