

Exercise to Improve Your Health

Staying active is an important part of maintaining your overall health. Moderate exercise for 30 minutes a day four to five times a week will help you maintain an appropriate weight, decrease stress, keep your blood pressure at a healthy level, and manage or even ward off symptoms of depression.

What qualifies as moderate exercise? Some common activities include:

- ▶ Walking
- ▶ Dancing
- ▶ Gardening
- ▶ Doing housework

While moderate exercise is helpful, more vigorous exercise will improve the fitness benefit you get from your workouts.

Examples of higher intensity exercise include:

- ▶ Brisk walking, running, or jogging
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Bicycling
- ▶ Aerobics
- ▶ Cross-country skiing

If you don't have time to exercise for a full 30 minutes, fitting three 10-minute exercise sessions into your day will give you the same benefit.

One great way to get more exercise is to incorporate it into your daily activities. Some examples:



- ▶ Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- ▶ Find an indoor space to walk or run when the weather gets bad (many shopping malls have early hours for walkers)
- ▶ Walk to appointments close to your home or workplace
- ▶ Watch TV or listen to music while you exercise
- ▶ Combine physical activity with social time by taking walks or exercise classes with a friend or family member
- ▶ Plan vacations around activities you enjoy, such as bicycling or hiking

Short-term goals like “dropping a jeans size” or “losing ten pounds” may help get you started with an exercise program. As time goes on, you may find it more effective to shift your focus onto the day-to-day benefits to your health and wellbeing.

For more suggestions on how to incorporate healthy changes into your daily routine, contact LifeMatters. Help is available 24/7/365.

Source: Wellness Library Health Ink and Vitality Communications

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