

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY for LIFE –Adults (18-64)

2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

How Much Physical Activity Should I Do?

For **all people**, some activity is better than none! Physical activity is safe for almost everyone. If you aren't limited by chronic health problems¹ you should be as active as you can be. Avoid being inactive.

Adults (ages 18-64) should do *at least*:

- 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate-intensity² aerobic activity,
OR
- 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity³ aerobic activity
OR
- Combine equal amounts of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity.
- Do aerobic activity at least 10 minutes at a time throughout the week.
- There will be more health benefits if you increase to 5 hours (300 minutes) a week of moderate intensity² aerobic activity or 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity³ aerobic activity.
- Do activities that make your arm, leg, chest, back, and shoulder muscles strong at least two days per week.

¹**People with chronic conditions** (such as diabetes, heart disease, or osteoarthritis) should talk to a health care provider about physical activity.

²**Moderate intensity activity:** breathing is harder and faster than normal, but you can still talk while you're exercising.

³**Vigorous intensity activity:** breathing is hard enough that you can't talk while exercising.

⁴**Aerobic means** "with oxygen." Exercises like walking, running, biking, swimming and dancing.

Health Benefits of Physical Activity for Adults

Lower risk of:

- Early death
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Metabolic syndrome
- Colon and breast cancers
- Lung and endometrial cancers
- Hip fracture

Added benefits:

- Better heart and lung fitness
- Better muscle fitness
- Healthier weight
- More weight loss (with diet)
- Better heart and muscle fitness
- Fewer falls
- Less depression
- Better bone density
- Better sleep quality

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Sources:

HHS, USDA (2005). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

HHS (2008). *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*.