

Guide to Safe and Effective Physical Activity and Exercise for the Aging Adult

In view of the evidence for the benefits of exercise, and the disability and mortality related to a *lack* of exercise, it may be more important to get permission NOT to exercise!

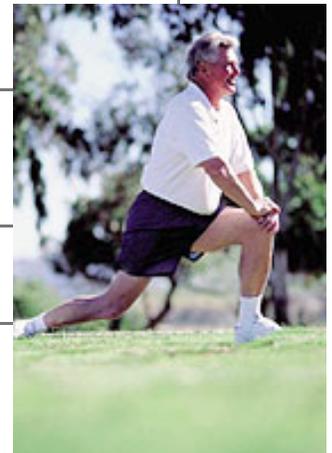


How Much Should I Exercise?

If you have not been active, start with 10 minutes at a time, a couple times each day. Slowly increase the time until you are exercising 30 minutes, 3-5 times per week.



Exercise Possibilities	Goals to strive for
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing general physical activity: take the stairs, park further away, walk to the mailbox, walk through all the aisles of the store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 days per week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerobic activities: brisk walking, biking, swimming, water exercise, dancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-5 days per week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening activities: weight training, using resistance bands and tubes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 times per week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility activities: stretching exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 times per week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balance activities: dancing, Tai Chi, lower body strengthening exercises, balance-challenging exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-7 days per week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional activities: standing from a chair several times, wall slides, stair climbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most days of the week



DON'T GIVE UP. EVERY EFFORT IS A SUCCESS!

Exercising: Safety and Benefits. . .

Exercise should not be so hard that it:

- Makes your joints hurt for more than 2 hours after activity.
- Makes you feel nauseous.
- Makes you extremely fatigued at the end of the day.



Inactivity Increases the Risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Depression
- Colon cancer
- Osteoporosis
- More stress
- Less energy
- Poor quality of life
- Falls and fractures
- Inability to care for yourself
- Premature disability
- Weight gain



Other Considerations:

- If you have chest pain, uncontrolled high blood pressure, or have heart problems, see your healthcare provider first.
- It is likely okay for you to exercise if you start slowly with a simple activity like walking or basic strengthening. Then, gradually increase the intensity over time. You should not have pain with your exercise.
- **For a more individualized program, get an exercise prescription from your physical therapist.**



More Section on Geriatrics consumer information is available at: www.geriatricspt.org (click "Consumers"), or call 800/999-2782 x8174

APTA consumer information

www.apta.org/consumer

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

800/999-APTA

Find a Physical Therapist Near You

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