Empowering Women for Wellness

Starting to Exercise

There are many options when you start exercising, and there is no best exercise. All types of exercise can improve your health, so find an activity you enjoy and stick to it. The most important thing will be to commit to a routine of movement and work on progressing. It is important to "start low and go slow" first. You may need to consider a backup plan for days when weather is not good or your schedule changes.

Frequency | First increase how often you exercise. Try to do something every day- that way if you miss one or two days you will still have reached the goal of 5. You may only do 5 minutes, but that's okay!

Duration | Then work on increasing how long you exercise, working up to 30 minutes, and eventually 60 minutes a day.

Intensity | As you get more fit, increase how hard you work out by going faster, going up hills, adding weights or doing intervals.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

- We should all move more and sit less throughout the day.
- All adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate – intensity exercise a week. 300 minutes a week is ideal for health benefits. 300 minutes a week has also been shown to help people who lose weight keep it off long term. If you are doing vigorous exercise, shorter amount of times are acceptable.
- Resistance training should be done at least 2 days a week. This can be done with weights, bands, or body weight.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1 = Hardly any effort. **3** = Could maintain for hours. **5** = Breathing heavily. Can hold short conversation.

8 = Fairly uncomfortable, short of breath. Can only say a few words at time, about 5-10 minutes.

10 = Max intensity. Can only do for 1-2 minutes.

Light-intensity | walking slowly, household chores (2-3/ 10 intensity)

Moderate-intensity | walking briskly, raking the yard, playing tennis, biking (5-6/ 10 intensity)

Vigorous-intensity | jogging or running, shoveling snow, strenuous fitness class (7-8 /10 intensity)

Warmups and Cools Downs (these count towards your minutes!)

Warmup | Make sure to take 5-10 minutes when you begin to get some light aerobic exercise (like walking, jogging, stretching) in to gradually increase heart rate to prime your muscles for the workout.

Cool Down | Once your workout is complete, try to stretch for 5-10 minutes focusing on muscles used the most during the workout. This will help with post-workout soreness and reduce the risk for injury

Don't know where to start? Go for a walk!

Walking is the most popular form of exercise, and a great way to get in your daily movement. Start by walking a comfortable distance; establish a personal baseline by walking at a speed and for a length of time that is easily tolerated. A Fitbit/Apple watch/ step counter is a great way to track your progress. Try to increase your baseline distance by 10 percent or 500 steps more each week.

Exercise Apps

- *SUBSCRIPTION BASED* - Strava (track your walks), Sweat (low impact program), Peloton App, Beach body.
- *FREE* - Map My Fitness, Nike Training Club, Down Dog, YouTube

---

Do I need to change what I eat or drink?

When we start to exercise our bodies will need more water. Try to drink a glass of water before activity, drink little sips during activity, and drink another glass after your activity. Remember to drink at least 64 oz of water per day (avoid sports drinks which have lots of sugar).

Hunger can increase from exercise, so jumping into intense exercise at the same time you change your diet can be hard. You may need to have a plan for a snack before or after you work out - this can be a great time for a protein bar or shake. You do not need energy bars or drinks unless you are doing hours of exercise at a time.

Try to participate in moderate intensity exercise most days of the week (4+ days) for 30 minutes or more. Make it a habit of your daily routine. It becomes much easier to motivate yourself to go as it becomes part of your daily routine. The goal is to increase movement to every day of the week for about 1 hour or 300 minutes per week. People who do this are more likely to keep weight off. BUT this amount of exercise is recommended for all adults to live longer and healthier.

What's normal during exercise?

If you are breathless, fatigued, and sweating then you have worked hard enough to get some benefit from your exercise. Do not push yourself past that limit.

Soreness when you begin to exercise is normal and should decrease as you continue to exercise. If the soreness is so bad that you cannot walk up a flight of stairs or lift light objects or complete normal living activities throughout your day, then you may have pushed your body too hard. Take a slight step back on the intensity of your exercise if you experience this. Remember to stretch after your exercise. This will help with stiffness you may experience.

Warning signs that you have pushed too far:

Sudden chest pain, chest pain or pressure, inability to catch your breath, dizziness, faintness, palpitations, uncomfortable heart racing, or feel very weak. If this occurs STOP and seek medical care immediately.

The National Weight Control Registry. NWCR Facts. Retrieved from: http://www.nwcr.ws/Research/ default.htm

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018). Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition. Retrieved from: https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/ Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf