

# Physical Activity

## Physical activity

helps to burn calories, increase the heart rate, and keep blood flowing at a healthy rate. Daily exercise, a healthy diet, not smoking, and a healthy body weight help to maintain good vascular health.

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports the following benefits of physical activity:

- Maintains healthy weight
- Reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease; can lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels
- Reduces the risk for type 2 diabetes; can help control glucose levels
- Reduces the risk of colon and breast cancer
- Strengthens bones and muscles - can increase or build muscle mass and strength; can slow the loss of bone density that comes with age; can help with arthritis and other joint conditions
- Can keep thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp
- Reduces the symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Improves the ability to complete daily activities and prevent falls for older adults
- Increases the chances of living longer by reducing the risk of dying from leading causes of death: heart disease and some cancers.

One hundred fifty minutes of physical activity per week is recommended for adults ages 18 to 64. The activity can occur in a combination of moderate intensity aerobics and strength training. It is recommended to continue the activity for at least 10 minutes at a time.

## Moderate-intensity aerobic activities

that increase the heart rate and break a sweat include:

- Walking briskly - a 15-minute mile
- Riding a bicycle at a casual pace - slower than 10 miles/hr
- Water aerobics
- Ballroom dancing
- Playing doubles tennis
- Actively playing with children
- Mowing the lawn
- Gardening, raking, or bagging leaves
- Light snow shoveling



## Please call with any questions:

Surgical Care Associates  
4003 Kresge Way  
Suite 300  
Louisville, KY 40207  
Phone: 502-897-5139

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### Vigorous-intensity aerobic activities

that increase the heart rate, break a sweat, and limit talking due to catching one's breath include:

- Race walking, jogging, or running
- Hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack
- Riding a bicycle fast or riding hills - more than 10 miles/hr
- Swimming laps
- Playing singles tennis
- Rollerblading / inline skating at a brisk pace
- Playing basketball, football, soccer, etc.
- Cross-country skiing
- Jumping rope
- Aerobic dancing
- Heavy gardening - continuous digging and hoeing

### Twice weekly muscle-strengthening activities

are also recommended.

- Sit ups, push ups
- Weight lifting
- Heavy gardening such as digging and shoveling
- Yoga

The lack of regular physical activity results in 250,000 deaths annually according to a 2003 report in the medical journal, *Circulation*. Persons who are least physically fit have a mortality risk 4.5 times higher than physically fit persons.

A regular exercise routine may reduce the risk of stroke, the fourth leading cause of death in America according to the CDC's *2010 National Vital Statistics Report*. In 2010, 137,000 Americans died of stroke.

To fit physical activity into your daily schedule:

- Select enjoyable activities
- Work out with a friend
- Encourage family members to participate
- Measure progress through a daily exercise journal.

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