

NUTRITION

On Your Own

Self-Paced Lesson

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Be Active, Feel Great

Ideas for Activities You and Your Family Will Enjoy

Physical activity can improve fitness, flexibility, and muscle tone, and help you maintain a healthy weight, which are important benefits for everyone. Most people will tell you that they simply feel better after exercising because they know they have done something good for themselves.

Several things can prevent us from exercising like bad weather, concerns about safety, limited time and money, and lack of transportation and child care. But let's think about ways to work around these road blocks. For example, an idea for a rainy day is to stay home and use an exercise video. If no one is able to look after your baby, take a brisk walk with your baby in the stroller. And, if safety is a concern try walking in a public place, like a mall, or walk with friends.

Physical activity does not just mean activities such as jogging, swimming, or going to an aerobics class. It also includes walking the dog, taking the kids to the park, raking leaves, dancing to the radio, or parking your car farther away and walking more. Some of these activities are not as intense as structured exercise, but they do offer health benefits, and they help you build an active lifestyle. A good plan is to pick one or two exercises you enjoy (brisk walking, jogging, biking, swimming, etc.) and make a commitment to walk, dance, play, and simply keep moving more as part of an active lifestyle.



IN THIS LESSON, WE'LL ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- **Why is physical activity important and how can it help me and my family?**
- **What exercises can I do at home, work, and play?**
- **How can I help my family become more active?**

How can physical activity help you? Write down one reason.

Here are some more reasons to exercise:

- Live longer
- Feel better
- Increase sense of well-being
- Sleep well
- Move around easily
- Have stronger muscles and bones
- Be a healthy weight
- Set a good example for your child
- Be with friends or meet new people
- Enjoy yourself and have fun

Next, complete the activity on page 2 for personalized activity tips. ▶

FOLLOW THE FLOW CHART AND FIND TIPS FOR YOUR PERSONAL STYLE



Let's start.

First,
do you exercise
3 to 5 times per week for
20 to 60 minutes per session?

YES

NO

*Was there a
time in your
life when you felt more
healthy or in shape?*

*Would you
like to
exercise more than
you do now?*

NO

YES

YES

NO

Read on ...

**“The More You Exercise
the Better You Feel”**

Go to this section for tips
on encouraging others to
follow your lead.

Read on ...

“Make It a Habit”

Go to this section for
tips on how to increase
physical activity in your life.

Read on ...

“Getting Started”

Go to this section for
encouraging tips on how
to make physical activity
part of your life.



Getting Started

Lack of energy, motivation and time can make it tough to exercise. But exercise is one of the best ways to get more energy. Physical activity is not only important, but necessary. Exercise will help you feel better, sleep better and have less stress. So, start moving. Choose activities that you enjoy and can do regularly. Every little bit adds up and doing something, no matter how small it may seem, helps. Check out this list of tips on how to get started and see what kind of activities you can include in your daily routine.

How to Get Started:

Put on your sneakers! Instead of telling yourself you will exercise then waiting until you feel like it, start with a much easier commitment. You are much more likely to exercise if you simply put on your sneakers instead of thinking about exercising.

Ask for encouragement. Creating a group exercise with friends will build support and help you make physical activity part of your normal routine. It is a great way to have fun and keep fit.

Set small, realistic goals. This can be the hardest because we tend to overestimate our abilities. First, get used to moving. You will get better results if you start small and are gentle and patient with yourself.

Here are some simple ideas to add to your family's weekly routine.

At Home:

- Cut back on watching TV. One day a week, skip TV, and dance to music instead.
- Play with your child – tumble in the leaves, splash in a puddle, or play tag or frisbee.
- Walk your child to or from school.
- Push your child in a stroller.
- Encourage your family to help with vacuuming, dusting, raking leaves, washing the car, and other chores around your home. Even everyday activities can keep your family moving and active.

At Work:

- Get off the bus or subway one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a coworker to go with you.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park towards the back of the parking lot and walk to your office.
- Stretch at your desk.
- Do calf raises or walk in place while talking on the phone.

At Play:

- Invite friends over for walking, skating, or biking. You can also play racquetball, tennis, basketball, softball, or soccer with your friends.
- Walk around the field or climb the bleachers while your children play baseball or football.
- Play with your children. Try hopscotch, frisbee, or tag. Go to a local playground and join your children while they play or create your own workout routine at the park while they play.
- Walk at work during breaks or lunch.
- Make sure that everyone in your family has a favorite activity to do regularly. Allow a different family member to select a physical activity each week to make it fun for everyone and change up your routine.

Now that you have some ideas you can include in your family's weekly routine, go to page 6 and complete the final activity.

Make it a Habit

Remember the good feeling you have after walking or dancing? Being active not only helps you feel good, but it promotes good health and helps prevent unwanted weight gain. Try to schedule workouts as you would any other important activity and remember to incorporate physical activity throughout your day. Be creative. You can take a walk while your children play at the park, take the stairs instead of the elevator or do jumping jacks or exercises with handheld weights or other objects while you watch TV. To be ready for exercise any time, keep some comfortable clothes and a pair of walking or running shoes in the car or at work. Adults and children need activity, so get your whole family up and moving – the more physical activity partners, the easier it is to make physical activity a habit. Try to set a goal and work up to 20-60 minutes of exercise 3-5 times a week.



Here are some ideas for getting more activity into your family's weekly routine.

At Home:

- Cut back on watching TV. One day a week, skip TV, and dance to music instead.
- Play with your child – tumble in the leaves, splash in a puddle, or play tag or frisbee.
- Walk your child to or from school.
- Push your child in a stroller.
- Encourage your family to help with vacuuming, dusting, raking leaves, washing the car, and other chores around your home. Even everyday activities can keep your family moving and active.

At Work:

- Get off the bus or subway one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a coworker to go with you.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park towards the back of the parking lot and walk to your office.
- Do calf raises or walk in place while talking on the phone.
- Take part in an exercise program at work.
- Join the office softball team or walking group.

At Play:

- Play with your children. Try hopscotch, frisbee, or tag. Go to a local playground and join your children while they play or create your own workout routine at the park while they play.
- Walk at work during breaks or lunch.
- Invite friends over for walking, yoga, or another activity. It is a great way to have fun and keep fit. Creating a group exercise with friends will build support and help you make physical activity part of your normal routine.
- Join a local physical activity group, like dancing. Many cities have free dance groups for the whole family. Take the kids, and have a fun evening.
- Make sure that everyone in your family has a favorite activity to do regularly. Allow a different family member to select a physical activity each week to make it fun for everyone and change up your routine.

Now that you have some ideas you can include in your family's weekly routine, go to page 6 and complete the final activity.



The More You Exercise, The Better You Feel

As you have already seen, exercise and physical activity are a great way to feel better, gain health benefits, and have fun. Since you already exercise regularly, use your influence to get your whole family up and moving. The more physical activity partners you have, the more committed to physical activity you will be.

Keep It Interesting

Try something different on alternate days. Swim, take a yoga class, garden, or lift weights. To stay motivated, set an achievable exercise goal, then reward yourself when you reach your goal – a new pair of shoes, a night out, whatever works to motivate you.

Here are some ideas to help you put more activity in your family's weekly routine.

At Home:

- Cut back on watching TV. One day a week, skip TV, and dance to music instead.
- Play with your child – tumble in the leaves, splash in a puddle, or play tag or frisbee.
- Walk your child to or from school.
- Plant and care for a vegetable or flower garden.
- Push your child in a stroller.
- Exercise to a video.
- Encourage your family to help with vacuuming, dusting, raking leaves, washing the car, and other chores around your home. Even everyday activities can keep your family moving and active.

At Work:

- Get off the bus or subway one stop early and walk or skate the rest of the way.
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. And ask a coworker to go with you.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park towards the back of the parking lot and walk.

- Stretch at your desk.
- Do calf raises or walk in place while talking on the phone.
- Join an exercise program at work.
- Form or join an office softball team or walking group.

At Play:

- Plan activities as a family, such as hiking, biking, walking, skating, dancing, and swimming. If your child sees you regularly participating in activities you enjoy, he will learn that physical activity is fun and important.
- Climb stairs whenever possible. In shopping malls, use the stairs, not the escalator. In tall buildings, get off the elevator one or two floors early and take the stairs the rest of the way.
- Walk around the field or climb the bleachers while your children play baseball or football.
- Invite friends over for walking, yoga, or another activity. It is a great way to have fun and keep fit. Creating a group exercise with friends will build support and help you make physical activity part of your normal routine.
- Join a local exercise group. Many cities have free dance groups for the whole family. Take your children, and enjoy your time together.
- Make sure that everyone in your family has a favorite activity to do regularly. Allow a different family member to select a physical activity each week to make it fun for everyone and change up your routine.

Now that you have some ideas, go to page 6 and complete the final activity.



Get Moving, Feel Great

Check Your Knowledge

How can physical activity help me and my family?

1. _____
2. _____

What exercise can I do at home? _____

At work? _____

At play? _____

How can I get my family more active?
