

Employee Tip Sheet

Active Play Every Day

Fit & Fun Families

Simple Activity Everyday.

There are **simple, easy ways** to incorporate activity into your day. Research shows that **starting a more active lifestyle now**, no matter what your fitness level, can make you healthier and improve your quality of life.* Physical activity does not need to be strenuous to be beneficial; people of all ages benefit from participating in regular, physical activity.

Why?

Experts say it's **never too late to start** an active lifestyle. Take the opportunity to be active every day. The Surgeon General recommends at least 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

Regular physical activity:

- Substantially reduces the risk of dying of coronary heart disease.
- Decreases the risk for stroke, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure.
- Helps to control weight.
- Contributes to healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Helps to relieve the pain of arthritis.
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Is associated with fewer hospitalizations, physician visits, and medications.

How?

Who ever said physical activity is all work and no play? In fact, it can be just the opposite. Do fun simple physical activities you enjoy and look forward to. Do physical activity for enjoyment and watch the health benefits follow!

- Create small goals to have **activity every day**.
- Use the action ideas for work and home to make small changes.
- Track your progress and goals.
- Celebrate your healthy changes and share your good ideas with others.

* As always, please be sure to check with your physician before starting an exercise program.

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Take Action: *Put Health in Motion!*

What You Can Do at Home:

- Start with small, specific goals such as walking 10 minutes a day, three days a week and slowly build up from there.
- Increase the amount of time you can walk, versus sit or drive.
- Whenever possible increase activity and be active. Some ideas include:
 - Park a bit farther from the store entrance.
 - In bad weather, walk around a mall.
 - Rake the leaves or wash the car.
 - Visit museums, the zoo, or an aquarium. You and can walk for hours and not realize it.
 - Take a walk after dinner instead of watching TV.
 - Play with your children or pets before or after work.
 - Walk while doing errands.
 - Dance to music.
- Every small amount of activity counts and adds up!
- Log your progress on the 5-A-Day healthy eating and physical activity diary.

What You Can Do at Work:

Goal: To include activity throughout the work day.

- Fit in exercise/activity whenever you can. Even small amounts of physical activity can improve your health. Any amount of exercise is better than none. Try to take frequent work breaks to stretch, take the steps or walk. Think of what would be most interesting to you and what best fits your schedule*
- Take a walk break during the day. Even 20 minutes can make a difference in your energy level, plus it gives you time to clear your head. If you walk with a friend or colleague, it also gives you time to socialize. Make a personal visit to a colleague rather than phoning, instant messaging or e-mailing. Or just use the amount of time you spend walking to help you set your goals.

* Always check with your physician before starting an exercise program.

Try these activities to add more movement to your daily work life.

Keep a list of ideas handy at a desk, work station or in a locker.

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Make sure the stairs are well lit.
- Get off the bus one stop early if you are in an area safe for walking.
- Park the car farther away from entrances.
- Take a short walk around the block with friends and coworkers.

This message brought to you by CIGNA HealthCare and the Healthy Kids Challenge.
Working to make healthy eating and physical activity a regular part of your life at home and at work.

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Challenge #1: **Think Like a Kid**

Children naturally love to “play” and run around. Without even thinking they run and jump and play. As adults we forget how **fun** this used to be – Whoever said physical activity is all work and no play? Think like a kid again and challenge yourself to make activity into a game. Try to do as many activities that remind you of how fun it was to be a child. Run through rain puddles, dance to music, jump rope, play basketball, run around with your pets. Be creative as long as it lifts your spirit and gets you moving! Add to the list of ideas (Use the Personal Fitness Goals and Activities Employee Worksheet) and share good ideas with coworkers.

Challenge #2: **Form a Walking Club**

Form a walking group.

- Get your colleagues to join you for some lunch time or after work fun.
- Encourage every one to join.
- Pack your sneakers in a bag.
- Chart your course and measure your steps with a pedometer.
- Remember: Everyone is free to walk at their own pace and distance.
- Ask colleagues for input and creative suggestions for walking paths.

Resources:

- The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.
www.fitness.gov/
- Physical Activity topics from the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/index.htm
 - The importance of Physical Activity.
 - Recommendations for Physical Activity.
 - Measuring Physical Activity Intensity.
 - Getting Started.
 - Making Physical Activity Part of your Life.
 - Components of Physical Fitness.
 - Physical Activity Terms.
 - Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults.
 - Physical Activity Links.
- This site gives physical activity information and recommendations for all ages.
www.healthierus.gov/exercise.html
- The Weight-Control Information Network Healthy eating and Physical Activity across your life span Better Health and You Tips for Adults – An information service from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), National Institutes of Health (NIH).
win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/better_health.htm

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*Fit & Fun
Families*

Personal Fitness Goals and Activities

Post a handy list of personal fitness ideas and goals at your desk or in your locker.

Example: This week I will take the stairs instead of the elevator.

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