

Employee Worksheet

Physical Activity Tips

Fit & Fun Families

Add Strength and Flexibility to Your Week!
Physical activity does more than balance calories!

What?

What is a healthy plan for physical activity?
The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend:

1. Activities of moderate or vigorous intensity (aerobic activities) for cardiovascular-cardiorespiratory health and a healthy weight.
2. Stretching exercises for flexibility.
3. Resistance exercises or calisthenics for muscle strength and endurance.

Statistics

More than 50% of American adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits.

BRFSS 2005

How Much?

For the best health benefits, how much time should we plan to be physically active?
Leading experts and health agencies recommend:

Moderate or Vigorous Activity (Aerobic)

- For health benefits, at least 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week.
- To prevent weight gain, 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity most days of the week.
- To sustain weight loss: At least 60 to 90 minutes daily, of moderate-intensity physical activity. Some people may need to consult with a healthcare provider before participating in this level of activity.

2005 Dietary Guidelines
www.health.gov/DIETARYGUIDELINES/dga2005/document/html/chapter4.htm

Stretching*

- Every day for flexibility.

Strength Training*

- 2-3 times per week with one day between strengthening exercises to rest muscles.

**The American College of Sports Medicine and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
(1) http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing_stronger/FAQs.htm
(2) http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/recommendations/older_adults.htm



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What?

When developing a physical activity plan, first thoughts typically turn to aerobic activities such as walking, gardening, swimming, dancing, tennis, basketball and other sports. However, for a well balanced plan, a focus on stretching and strengthening is just as important!

Consider the following stretching and strengthening activities. Place a checkmark by those you choose now, or would choose in the future.

Stretching

- Simple arm, leg, and body stretches.
- Yoga.
- Tai Chi.
- Pilates.

Strengthening

- Carrying laundry or groceries.
- Working in the yard.
- Washing the car.
- Scrubbing the floor.
- Chair exercises.
- Stretch bands.
- Stationary bikes or steppers.
- Weights.

Tips for Stretching

- First, warm up your muscles by walking while gently pumping arms.
- Hold each stretch for 30 seconds.
- Don't bounce. Bouncing can tear muscle.
- Breathe normally (do not hold your breath).
- Focus on a pain-free stretch. If you feel pain, you've gone too far.
- Stretch both sides of your body.

Mayo Clinic, Focus on Flexibility
www.mayoclinic.com



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How?

Focus on flexibility and strength

Think of ways you can make sure you are including stretching and strengthening activities in your week.

Consider the following ideas and come up with some of your own:

- While you are on the phone...try a simple stretch. For example:
 - Sit upright in a chair.
 - As if reaching to pick an apple out of a tree, stretch your arms up, one at a time, as high as you comfortably can.
 - Repeat 10 times, alternating sides.
- Before you play...work in a few shoulder stretches. For example:
 - Sit or stand tall.
 - Lift your shoulders as high as you comfortably can.
 - Bring them forward.
 - Push them down.
 - Pull your shoulders back, and then return to the starting position.
 - Repeat in the opposite direction.
 - Repeat three to five times.
- Join a Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, or weight training class at a community center, Family YMCA, or health club.
- Instead of a coffee break, take a yoga break.
- For every 60 minutes of sitting at a desk or computer, take a 5 minute “mini break” to stretch or do some other activity.
- As a “mini break”, use water bottles, a resistance band, or small hand weights to do a few muscle strengthening sets.
- Check with a health educator or personal fitness guide for resources and suggestions.

Write your ideas to add stretching and strengthening activities to your week:



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Resources

Web sites

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *General Physical Activities, Defined by Level of Intensity*

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/pdf/PA_Intensity_table_2_1.pdf

In accordance with CDC and American College of Sports Medicine guidelines, this PDF provides a listing of physical activities defined by level of intensity.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Physical Activity for Everyone: Making Physical Activity a Part of Your Life: Risks to Being Active*

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/life/risks.htm>

It is always a good idea to consult with your physician before planning a physical activity program. This Web page answers questions and gives recommendations to reduce risk.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults!*

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing_stronger/index.htm

This strength-training program was developed by experts at Tufts University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is an exercise program based upon sound scientific research involving strengthening exercises - exercises that have been shown to increase the strength of muscles, maintain the integrity of bones, and improve balance, coordination, and mobility.

Mayo Clinic: *Balance, Stretching, and Strength Training*

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/SM00103>

This Web address provides helpful articles, slide shows, videos, and Q & A.

Women's Heart Foundation: *Stretching Exercises for Women*

http://www.womensheartfoundation.org/content/Exercise/stretching_exercise.asp

This Web page provides suggestions and diagrams for simple stretches.

Books

Office Yoga, Simple Stretches for Busy People. Zeer, Darrin, Chronicle Books LLC, February 2000.

Stretching in the Office. Anderson, Bob, Shelter Publications, Inc., March 2002.

