

Keep exercise on your to-do list

We've all been taught from a young age to fit in a little regular exercise. You know it's good for you, but when your day gets busy, it's too easy to skip. When you get out of the daily habit, it's hard to pick it back up. It's true, there are real road blocks to exercising, and lack of time is just one of them. But you can get through these road blocks and fit exercise into your day – at home or at the office.

Three main ways to exercise

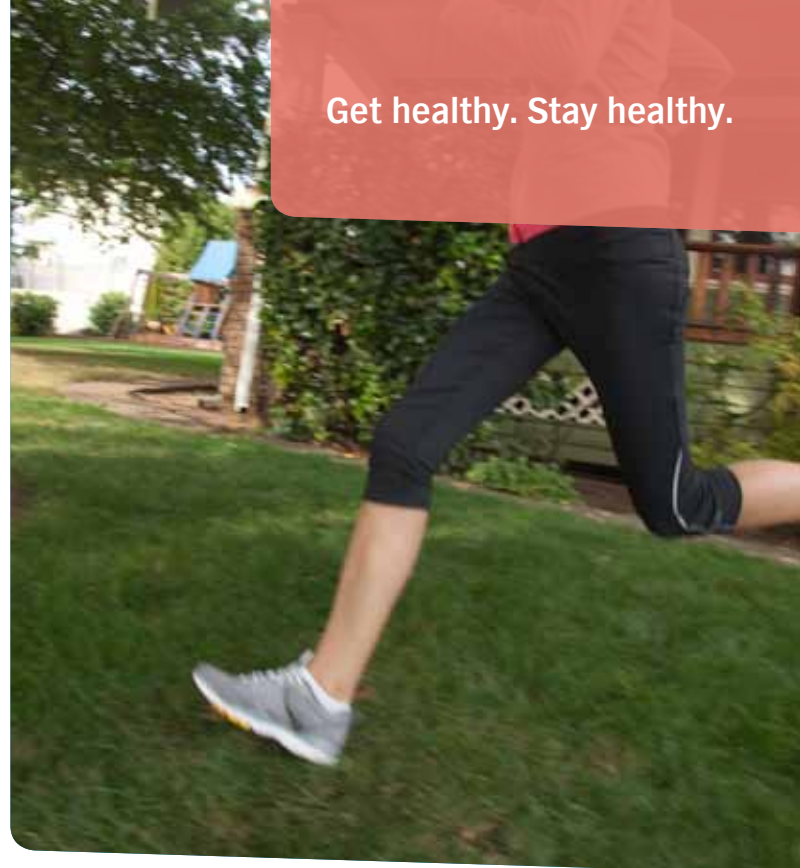
A well-balanced exercise program has three parts, including aerobic activity, resistance training and flexibility exercise.¹ Try to add a little of each to your exercise routine.

- **Aerobic activity** uses your large muscles and causes your body to use more oxygen. This kind of exercise is good for the heart, lungs and blood vessels. Brisk walking, jogging or running, and playing basketball are types of aerobic activities.
- **Resistance training**, also called strength training, firms your muscles and makes them stronger. It also helps your balance and movement. Resistance training involves lunges, chest presses and bicep curls.
- **Flexibility exercises** stretch and lengthen your muscles. They also help keep your joints limber. Yoga is just one way to stay flexible.

Working out at home

You don't need much to make a workout spot in your home – just some floor space and a few items. Here are a few tips:

- **For strength training:** Use a set of lightweight dumbbells or resistance bands. You can also use bottled water or heavy cans.
- **For resistance training:** You don't need extra things to do exercises like pushups and crunches – just yourself. Try changing up your routine. Watch DVDs from the library



Get healthy. Stay healthy.

that you trade in weekly. Or use light hand weights to work out while you're watching TV or chatting on the phone.²

- **For aerobic activity:** Try walking, jogging, running, riding a bike, playing tennis, swimming laps or playing basketball. What do you enjoy? If you like what you're doing, you're more likely to keep it up.³

It's easy to work out anywhere at home. You might even find yourself exercising while doing everyday household tasks⁴, such as:

- Washing and waxing a car
- Washing windows or floors
- Gardening
- Raking leaves
- Pushing a stroller
- Shoveling snow

Your office workout

If you work in an office, you might sit for hours on the phone or in meetings. Luckily, staying active at the office is only a matter of doing small bits of exercises throughout the day. You may not be able work out a full half-hour, but all of your small steps add up.

While on the job, try:

- Using the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walking to your co-worker's office instead of e-mailing or phoning.
- Walking to the break room and back.
- Using the stairs to the bathroom one flight up.
- Looking away from the screen each 30 minutes or so to stretch. Roll your shoulders, arch your back, stand up and stretch your legs.
- Walking at the airport while on a trip for work. Or if you're driving, pull off at a park or a rest stop and take a five-minute walk.⁶

Before and after work try:

- Parking far away from the front door.
- Looking for a spot at your job where you can walk at lunch, during breaks or after work.
- Bringing exercise clothes with you so you can walk or jog nearby.⁵

What's your reason for not working out?

Below are some excuses – and ways to beat them:

Problem: With work, family and other demands, I'm too busy to exercise.

Answer: Make staying active a priority each day. Carve the time out of your day. Try before or after work, or on lunch hour. Then put it in your day planner.

Problem: Using a treadmill or stationary bike is boring.

Answer: Try watching TV or listening to music while working out. Better yet, head outside for a walk or a bike ride, and bring a friend along.

Problem: I've never been an athlete.

Answer: You don't have to be an athlete to be active.

Yoga, hiking and planting a garden are just some things to try. Walking is a great choice because it's easy, low-cost and no training is needed.⁷ The key to staying active isn't putting in long hours at the gym. It's about making the most out of the everyday things you do. So, commit yourself to a lifetime of staying active, one day at a time.

Choose your move

Easier activities

- Hiking an easier trail
- Light gardening
- Dancing
- Playing golf
- Bicycling at a leisurely pace
- Walking 10 to 20 minutes
- Swimming

Harder activities

- Running/jogging
- Bicycling quickly
- Walking a half hour or more
- Heavy yard work
- Basketball
- Jumping rope
- Soccer

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1 National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Your Guide to Physical Activity and Your Heart, (June 2006): nhlbi.nih.gov

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Be Active Your Way: A Guide for Adults, (October 2008): healthier.us.gov

3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, How Much Activity Do Adults Need?, (December 2008): cdc.gov

4 National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Guide to Physical Activity, (August 2009): nhlbi.nih.gov

5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wise Woman Tip Sheets, (August 2009): cdc.gov

6 Michael Donovan, National Cancer Institute, Too Busy to Exercise? Simple Ways to Be More Active, (January 2008): cancer.gov

7 Weight-control Information Network, Tips to Help You Get Active, (January 2009): win.niddk.nih.gov

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