



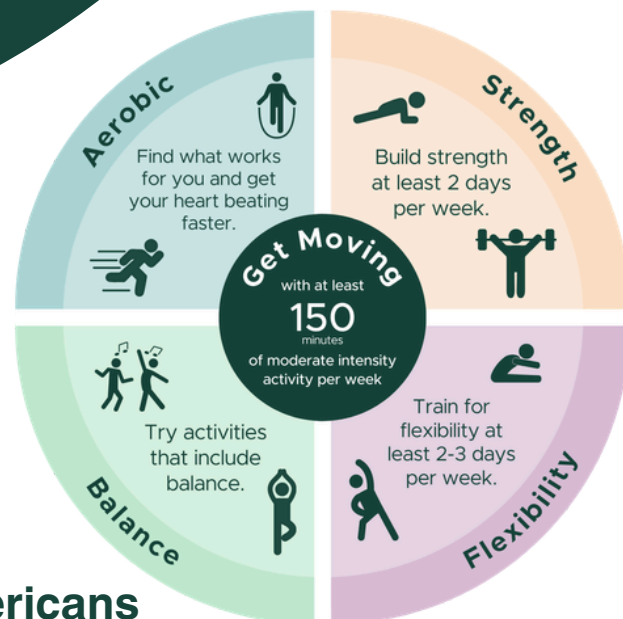
# Get Moving

## Physical Activity Guide



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# Get Moving

## Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

### Why Physical Activity Matters

- Improves overall health and fitness
- Reduces the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer
- Boosts mental health and mood
- Enhances sleep quality and energy levels

### How Much Physical Activity Do You Need?

#### Preschool Children (3-5 years):

- Should be physically active throughout the day, aiming for at least 3 hours of activity (light, moderate, and vigorous) spread across the day
- Encourage active play that promotes movement

#### Children and Teens (6-17 years):

- Get 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day
- Include muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities at least 3 times a week

#### Adults:

- Aim for at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week (like brisk walking or biking)
- OR 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity (like running or swimming)
- PLUS muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week

#### Older Adults (65+ years):

- Follow adult guidelines as ability allows
- Include balance exercises to prevent falls, like yoga or tai chi
- Stay as physically active as possible, adjusting physical activity based on fitness level and chronic conditions

## Types of Physical Activities

### Aerobic Activities



Walking  
Dancing  
Swimming

### Strengthening



Weight lifting  
Gardening  
Bodyweight exercises

### Balance & Flexibility



Stretching  
Tai chi  
Gymnastics

## How to Get Started: Simple Tips for Being Active Every Day



### Start Small

- Begin with 10-15 minutes of daily activity, then gradually increase
- Take the stairs, walk instead of driving short distances



### Make It Fun!

- Choose activities you enjoy, like dancing, hiking, or swimming
- Invite friends or family to stay active together



### Break It Up

- You don't have to do all 30 minutes at once! Break it into 10-minute chunks throughout the day



### Set Goals

- Track your progress with a fitness app or journal
- Celebrate small milestones



### Stay Safe

- Warm up before exercise, cool down after
- Drink plenty of water
- Listen to your body, and don't push too hard

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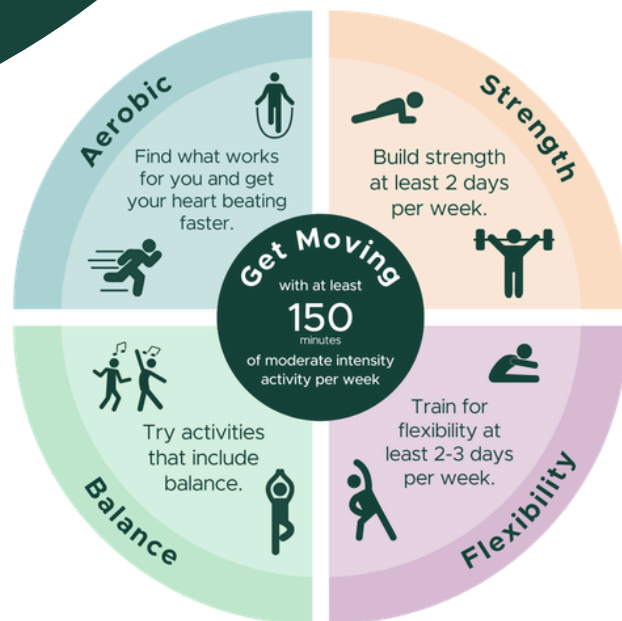


### Tips for Older Adults

- If starting exercise after being inactive, begin at a light intensity and progress gradually
- Incorporate activities that improve balance, such as standing on one foot or heel-to-toe walks
- Work with a healthcare provider if you have chronic conditions to find appropriate exercises

### Learn More

For more information, visit: [health.gov/moveyourway](https://health.gov/moveyourway)



# Get Moving

## Physical Activity vs. Exercise: What's the Difference?

### What is Physical Activity?

#### Definition

Physical activity is any movement that involves spending energy. This includes everyday activities like walking the dog, gardening, cleaning, and even playing with your kids.

#### Examples of Physical Activity:



Walking or biking to work



Household chores



Taking the stairs instead of the elevator



Playing sports

#### Key Message

Physical activity is essential for overall health. Even small movements count towards your daily total!

## What is Exercise?

### Definition

Exercise is a subcategory of physical activity. It is movement that is planned, structured, and repetitive, with the intention to improve or maintain physical fitness.

### Examples of Exercise:



Going for a run



Strength training at the gym



Following a workout routine



Attending a yoga or fitness class

### Key Message

Exercise targets specific areas of fitness, such as heart and lung endurance, muscle strength, and flexibility.

## How are they similar?

Both physical activity and exercise contribute to:

- Improving overall well-being
- Boosting mental health
- Improving balance
- Helping with weight control

### Key Message

Whether you're moving casually or engaging in a workout routine, both contribute to your overall health!

## Building Physical Activity and Exercise into Your Daily Life

### How Much Do You Need?

Adults should aim for at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week, which includes any daily movements like walking, gardening, or even dancing, or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week, such as running, aerobic classes, or cycling. Including a variety of moderate and vigorous-intensity movement can help keep physical activity interesting and fun.

#### Key Message

Remember, it's about moving more throughout the day! Try moving in a variety of ways that support your heart, lungs, bones, and muscles.

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## Benefits of Physical Activity and Exercise

### Physical Activity

- Boosts overall energy
- Helps maintain weight
- Reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease







### Exercise

- Improves fitness levels
- Strengthens muscles and bones
- Enhances cardiovascular health



Both physical activity and exercise offer mental health benefits, such as reducing stress and anxiety, improving mood, and increasing overall well-being.

## Tips for adding more movement to your day

-  Make it fun: Play a sport you enjoy or join a fitness class with friends.
-  Mix it up: Include both physical activity (walking, chores) and exercise (workouts) in your routine.
-  Set small goals: Start with 10-15 minutes of movement and gradually increase.
-  Make it social: Find friends you can chat with while being active. You can also help each other keep your physical activity goals on track.
-  Give your eyes a break: Reduce screen time with planned physical activity breaks.
-  Be adventurous: Try something new!

### Learn More

For more information, visit: [health.gov/moveyourway](https://health.gov/moveyourway)



# Get Moving

## Boost Your Health with Aerobic Activity!

### What is Aerobic Activity?

#### Definition

Aerobic activity, also known as ‘cardio,’ is any activity that gets your heart rate up and makes you breathe faster. It's great for improving your heart and lung health.

Examples of Aerobic Activities:

- Walking briskly
- Running or jogging
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Playing sports like soccer or basketball

#### Key Message

Aerobic activity can be anything that makes your heart beat faster. Find what works for you and enjoy moving more!

## How Much Aerobic Activity Do You Need?



### Preschool Children (3-5 years):

- Encourage active play throughout the day. Aim for 3 hours of movement, spread across various activities, like running, playing tag, or biking.



### Children and Teens (6-17 years):

- 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day.
- Include vigorous-intensity activities like running or sports at least 3 days a week.



### Adults:

- Moderate-intensity aerobic activity: Aim for 150-300 minutes per week (like brisk walking).
- Vigorous-intensity aerobic activity: Aim for 75-150 minutes per week (like running or swimming).
- Mix moderate and vigorous activities to reach your weekly goal.



### Older Adults (65+ years):

- Follow adult recommendations as much as possible.
- Include activities that improve balance and prevent falls (like walking, swimming, or tai chi).

### Key Message

Moving more is important at every age. Aerobic activity keeps your heart, lungs, and body healthy!

## What Counts as Moderate vs. Vigorous Activity?

**Moderate Activity:** You're moving fast enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, but you can still talk.

### Examples:



Brisk walking



Riding a bike on flat ground



Pushing a lawnmower

**Vigorous Activity:** You're breathing hard, and it's tough to say more than a few words without stopping for a breath.

### Examples:



Recreational sports



Swimming laps



Aerobic dancing

### Key Message

You can mix moderate and vigorous activities. Every bit of movement adds up! Listen to your body - what may be moderate for some, may feel vigorous to others.

## Tips for Starting Aerobic Activity



**Start Small:** Begin with just 10 minutes of aerobic activity per day, then slowly build up.



**Find What You Enjoy:** Choose activities that you like, whether it is walking, dancing, swimming, or biking.



**Break It Up:** You don't have to do it all at once! Try doing three 10-minute sessions spread throughout the day.



**Make it Social:** Invite friends, family, or coworkers to join you for a walk or bike ride.



**Set Goals:** Track your minutes and gradually aim for more. Small goals lead to big results.



**Remember:** Every move counts! Even a 10-minute brisk walk is a great way to get started.

## Aerobic Activity by Age Group

**Children (3-5 years):** Keep it fun! Play tag, jump, dance, or ride bikes. Encourage movement all day long.



**Children and Teens (6-17 years):** Include activities that make their hearts beat faster at least 3 days a week. Sports, running, swimming, or riding bikes are great options.

**Adults (18-64 years):** Find ways to incorporate moderate or vigorous aerobic activities into your weekly routine. Consider walking during breaks, biking to work, or joining a fitness class.



**Older Adults (65+ years):** Try to meet the same guidelines as younger adults, but make adjustments based on your fitness level. Add balance exercises to stay steady on your feet.



It's never too late to start! Any activity is better than none, and every step counts toward better health.

## Staying Safe While Being Active



**Warm Up and Cool Down:** Stretch or walk slowly before and after aerobic activities.



**Stay Hydrated:** Drink water before, during, and after exercise.



**Listen to Your Body:** If something hurts, slow down or stop. It's important to ease into new activities.



**Wear Comfortable Shoes:** Make sure you have supportive footwear that matches your activity.



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Have fun and stay safe! Always listen to your body and move at your own pace.

# Get Moving

## Strengthen Your Muscles and Bones for a Healthier You!



### What are muscle and bone strengthening activities?

#### Definitions

**Muscle-strengthening activities** include any kind of movement where you push, pull, or move against some kind of resistance.

Examples of Muscle-Strengthening Activities:

- Lifting weights & Bodyweight exercises (like push-ups & squats)
- Using resistance bands
- Pilates
- Heavy gardening (digging or lifting)

**Bone-strengthening activities** apply force and pressure to your bones, promoting bone growth and strength. These activities are often weight-bearing and can overlap with muscle-strengthening.

Examples of Bone-Strengthening Activities:

- Jumping rope
- Running or Hiking
- Dancing
- Tennis or Basketball

#### Key Message

Muscle and bone-strengthening activities are essential for maintaining a strong body and reducing the risk of injury, especially as we age.

## How Much Muscle and Bone Strengthening Do You Need?



### Preschool Children (3-5 years):

- Encourage fun, active play that strengthens muscles and bones, like climbing, jumping, or playing with toys that require pulling or lifting.



### Children and Teens (6-17 years):

- Include muscle-strengthening activities at least 3 days per week (like gymnastics, climbing, or lifting).
- Include bone-strengthening activities at least 3 days per week (like running, jumping, or sports like basketball).



### Adults:

- Perform muscle-strengthening activities that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, arms) at least 2 days per week.
- Bone-strengthening activities like running or jumping can be included in your aerobic activities.



### Older Adults (65+ years):

- Include muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week. Adjust exercises based on your fitness level and include
- balance exercises to prevent falls.

### Key Message

Strengthening your muscles and bones at every age helps you stay healthy, independent, and active!

## Benefits of Muscle and Bone Strengthening

- Stronger muscles help with daily activities like lifting, carrying, and climbing stairs
- Stronger bones reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures
- Helps improve posture and balance, reducing the likelihood of falls
- Builds endurance and makes everyday tasks easier

### Key Message

Adding strength training to your routine leads to better health, more energy, and less risk of injury!

## Tips for Starting Strengthening Activities



**Start with bodyweight exercises:** Floor or wall push-ups, lunges, squats, planks, or seated leg raises are great ways to begin.



**Use resistance bands or light weights:** Gradually increase the weight or resistance as you get stronger.



**Incorporate strength activities into everyday life:** Carry groceries, lift heavy objects, or do chores that require physical effort.



**Mix it up:** Try a variety of activities like weightlifting or Pilates to keep things interesting and work different muscle groups.



**Tip:** Strength training doesn't have to happen in a gym. You can do it at home with minimal equipment!

## Muscle and Bone Strengthening by Age Group

**Children (3-5 years):** Play games that involve climbing, running, or jumping.



**Children and Teens (6-17 years):**

Include bodyweight exercises, gymnastics, or sports at least 3 days a week to build muscle and strengthen bones.

**Adults (18-64 years):** Include strength training in your routine at least 2 days a week. Try lifting weights, using resistance bands, or doing bodyweight exercises like push-ups or squats.



**Older Adults (65+ years):**

Include muscle-strengthening exercises at least 2 days a week. Use light weights or bodyweight exercises and include balance training to reduce the risk of falls.



It's never too late to start! Any activity is better than none, and every step counts toward better health.

## Staying Safe with Strength Training



**Warm Up and Cool Down:** Always perform a warm up, such as some aerobic exercise before strength training. Be sure to cool down, such as stretching, following strength training.



**Use Proper Form:** Focus on your form to avoid injury. Start slow and learn the proper technique.



**Increase Intensity Gradually:** Start with light weights or bodyweight and slowly add more weight or resistance as you get stronger.



**Rest Between Sessions:** Give your muscles time to recover. Especially when you are just beginning, rest at least 48 hours between strength workouts.

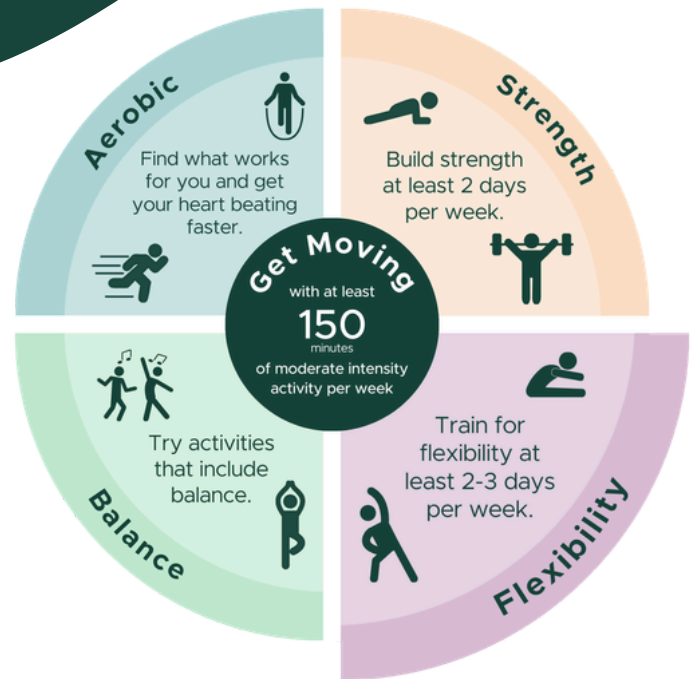
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**Remember:** Strength training doesn't have to be intense! Start at your own pace and gradually build strength.

# Get Moving

## Improve Your Flexibility for Better Health!



### What is Flexibility?

#### Definition

Flexibility refers to the ability of your joints to move through their full range of motion. Stretching and flexibility exercises keep your muscles and joints limber, improve posture, and reduce the risk of injury.

Examples of Flexibility Activities:

- Stretching exercises (e.g., hamstring stretch, quad stretch)
- Yoga
- Pilates
- Tai Chi
- Dynamic stretches (moving through your full range of motion) like arm circles or leg swings before a workout

#### Key Message

Flexibility is an important component of overall fitness. Stretching regularly helps maintain mobility, improves posture, and reduces stiffness.

## How Much Flexibility Training Do You Need?



Preschool Children (3-5 years):

- Encourage natural movements like bending, reaching, and stretching during active play and games.



Children and Teens (6-17 years):

- Include stretching and flexibility activities daily, especially after being active or playing sports.



Adults:

- Aim to do flexibility activities at least 2-3 days per week.
- Hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds and repeat it 2-4 times, focusing on all major muscle groups.
- Consider adding stretching to the end of your workouts, after muscles are warmed up.



Older Adults (65+ years):

- Incorporate flexibility exercises 2-3 times per week. Focus on stretches that improve range of motion, balance, and mobility, which are important for daily activities and reducing the risk of falls.

### Key Message

Flexibility training is beneficial at all ages and can easily be included in your daily routine!

## Benefits of Flexibility Training

- **Increases range of motion:** Improves your ability to move your joints freely and comfortably.
- **Reduces muscle tension:** Stretching helps relieve tightness and soreness in muscles.
- **Improves posture:** Flexibility exercises can reduce slouching and correct imbalances in the body.
- **Decreases the risk of injury:** Flexible muscles and joints are less prone to injury during physical activities.
- **Promotes relaxation:** Stretching can relieve stress and help you unwind.

### Key Message

Regular stretching and flexibility exercises help keep your body in top shape, prevent injury, and improve your quality of life!

## How to Get Started with Flexibility Exercises



**Warm Up First:** Do a light warm-up (like walking or gentle jogging) before stretching to avoid injury.



**Start Slow:** If you're new to flexibility exercises, begin with basic stretches for major muscle groups like the legs, back, shoulders, and hips.



**Hold Each Stretch:** Hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds without bouncing, and repeat each stretch 2-4 times.



**Breathe Deeply:** Focus on breathing deeply as you stretch to relax and improve your range of motion.



**Incorporate into Daily Life:** Stretch while watching TV, after a walk, or before bed to make it a regular part of your routine.



**Tip:** Flexibility exercises are easy to do anywhere, and they don't require special equipment!

## Flexibility Activities by Age Group

**Children (3-5 years):** Encourage playful movements like reaching, bending, and stretching during active play or games.



**Children and Teens (6-17 years):** Encourage regular stretching, especially after sports and other physical activities. Activities like gymnastics, dancing, and yoga help with flexibility.

**Adults (18-64 years):** Include flexibility exercises at least 2-3 times per week, focusing on stretching all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, and shoulders). Yoga and Pilates are great options.



**Older Adults (65+ years):** Regular stretching helps improve mobility and balance, reducing the risk of falls. Try incorporating balance and flexibility exercises like yoga or Tai Chi at least 2-3 times per week.

### Key Message

Flexibility is important for everyone, from kids to older adults. Stretching regularly helps keep your muscles and joints limber and healthy.

## Safety Tips for Flexibility Training



**Avoid Overstretching:** Stretch gently to the point of mild discomfort, but never push into pain.



**Hold, Don't Bounce:** Hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds without bouncing, which can lead to injury.



**Stay Consistent:** Flexibility improves with regular practice, so aim to stretch several times per week.



**Use Proper Technique:** Focus on controlled movements and maintaining good form.



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**Remember:** Always stretch gently and mindfully to avoid injury and improve your flexibility gradually over time.

# Get Moving

## Improve Your Balance and Stability: Stay Steady, Stay Safe!



### What Are Balance and Stability Exercises?

#### Definition

Balance and stability activities help improve your ability to control and maintain your body's position, whether you are at rest or in motion. These activities are especially important for older adults to help reduce the risk of falls.

Examples of Balance and Stability Activities:

- Standing on one leg
- Heel-to-toe walking
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Strengthening exercises for the legs and core (e.g. leg raises, seated, crunches, or planks)

#### Key Message

Balance and stability exercises can help you stay steady on your feet and reduce the risk of falls, keeping you independent and active.

## How Much Balance and Stability Training Do You Need?



### Children and Teens (6-17 years):

- While balance is not a major focus at younger ages, activities like gymnastics, martial arts, or sports that involve quick movements and coordination can help improve balance.



### Adults:

- Incorporate balance and stability exercises into your weekly routine, especially if you have any issues with balance or coordination. Strengthening exercises that focus on the legs and core can improve balance.



### Older Adults (65+ years):

- Engage in balance exercises at least 2-3 days a week.
- Include activities that strengthen the legs, core, and muscles used for walking and standing.

### Key Message

Balance exercises are important for older adults to prevent falls, but they benefit everyone! Improving your balance makes daily activities easier and safer.

## Benefits of Balance and Stability Exercises

- Improves coordination: Better control over body movements and posture.
- Reduces the risk of falls: Particularly important for older adults to maintain independence.
- Increases core strength: Strong core muscles help support your body and improve balance.
- Enhances mobility: Improved balance allows for easier walking, standing, and climbing stairs.
- Supports mental focus: Balance exercises often require concentration, improving mind-body connection.

### Key Message

Adding balance exercises to your routine can help you feel more confident in your movements and reduce the risk of injury.

## How to Get Started with Balance and Stability Exercises



**Stand on One Leg:** Using a sturdy chair or countertop for support, try standing on one leg for 10-15 seconds. Switch legs and repeat.



**Heel-to-Toe Walk:** Walk in a straight line, placing the heel of one foot directly in front of the toes of the other. Do this for 10 steps.



**Tai Chi or Yoga:** Join a class or follow a video to improve balance and coordination through controlled movements.



**Sit-to-Stand:** Practice standing up from a chair without using your hands. This strengthens your legs and improves balance.



**Toe and Heel Raises:** While standing, rise up on your toes, hold, and then rock back onto your heels. This strengthens your calves and improves stability.



Tip: Start small and hold onto something stable if you're just getting started with balance exercises!

## Balance and Stability by Age Group



### **Children and Teens (6-17 years):**

Balance can be improved through activities that involve coordination and agility, such as playing sports, martial arts, or dancing.

**Adults (18-64 years):** Add balance exercises to your strength training or aerobic workouts. Strengthening the core and lower body helps improve balance.



### **Older Adults (65+ years):**

Incorporate balance exercises 2-3 times a week. Tai Chi, yoga, or simple standing leg exercises are great options. Focus on exercises that strengthen the legs, core, and muscles used for walking.



### Key Message

Balance exercises can be done at any age. They are especially important for older adults to prevent falls and maintain independence.

## Staying Safe While Improving Balance



**Use a Stable Surface:** Hold onto a chair, countertop, or wall when starting out.



**Wear Proper Shoes:** Shoes with good support and non-slip soles can help prevent falls.



**Start Slow:** Focus on basic balance exercises, like standing on one leg or heel-to-toe walking, before moving on to more advanced movements.



**Practice Regularly:** Consistent practice is key to improving balance. Aim for several short sessions each week.



**Consult a Doctor:** If you have concerns about your balance, speak with your healthcare provider before starting new exercises.



**Safety first!** Always have something stable to hold onto when practicing balance exercises, and progress at your own pace.







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