

# Physical Fitness and Sports



Along with healthy eating, physical activity increases your chances of living longer. Exercise can also help:

- Control your blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight
- Lower your “bad” cholesterol and raise your “good” cholesterol
- Prevent heart disease, colorectal and breast cancer, and type 2 diabetes

And that’s not all. Being more active can:

- Be fun
- Help you look your best
- Improve your sleep
- Make your bones, muscles, and joints stronger
- Lower your chances of becoming depressed
- Reduce falls and arthritis pain
- Help you feel better about yourself

For adults, most health benefits come with at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking. Extra benefits occur with more physical activity. Both aerobic (endurance) and muscle-strengthening (resistance) physical activity are helpful.

Children need 60 minutes of play with moderate to vigorous activity every day. If this sounds like a lot, consider that eight to 18 year olds spend an average of 7.5 hours a day sitting. This includes using computers, video games, cell phones and watching TV and movies.

## MAKE EXERCISE FUN

No matter what shape you are in, you can find activities that you enjoy. If you think of exercise as a chore that you have to do, it can be harder to stick with it.

- Choose activities you enjoy and look forward to. Do ones you enjoyed as a child.
- Set up a walking program with a friend, family member, or coworker you enjoy being with.
- Wear a pedometer to track your steps. Aim for a goal of 10,000 steps a day.
- Enjoy a sunny day and fresh air with outdoor activities.
- Play outdoors with your children and grandchildren.
- Use fitness facilities at your work.

