



# Physical Activity

## Your Guide to Healthier Living Through an Active Lifestyle

Physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. It can help improve your physical and mental health while reducing your risk of illnesses like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, depression, and stroke. This guide will help answer questions you may have and suggest the right kind of physical activity for you.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### How do I start?

Choose an activity that fits into your day-to-day life. Aerobic activities are those that make your heart beat faster and strengthening activities are those that make your muscles do more work than usual.

#### Why should I be physically active?


Physical activity can make you feel stronger and more alive, and it's a fun thing to do with your family or friends. It also helps improve your health.

#### How often should I be physically active?

It's best to spread your activity throughout the week and be active at least three days a week. See the guidelines on the back of this page for more information.

#### How do I build up my weekly physical activity?

When you're active, work toward pushing yourself a little more each time. When you're comfortable, you can move to higher-intensity activities.

**Only 1 in 5 adults get the recommended amount of physical activity<sup>1</sup>.** 

1. CDC, [cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/facts.htm](https://cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/facts.htm)

# Types of Physical Activities

## Aerobic Activities

- Over time, gradually increase the amount of physical activity you do. The more time you're able to spend being active, the more health benefits you'll gain.
- Remain physically active for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- If able, combine moderate and vigorous activities throughout the week.

## Muscle Strengthening Activities

- Aim to make muscle strengthening activities a priority at least 2 days a week.
- Include all major muscle groups in your activities, including legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, and arms.
- Exercises for each muscle group should be repeated 8-12 times per session.

## Moderate vs. Vigorous Activity

You should do at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate activities or 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous activities per week. Here are some ways you can fit that time into your day-to-day life:

Moderate Activities	Vigorous Activities
"I can talk while I'm active, but can't sing."	"I can only say a few words without having to catch my breath."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ballroom and line dancing</li><li>• Biking on level ground with few hills</li><li>• Canoeing</li><li>• General gardening</li><li>• Sports where you catch and throw</li><li>• Tennis (doubles)</li><li>• Using your manual wheelchair</li><li>• Walking at a brisk pace</li><li>• Water aerobics</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aerobic dance</li><li>• Biking faster than 10 mph, or uphill</li><li>• Fast dancing</li><li>• Heavy gardening</li><li>• Hiking uphill</li><li>• Jumping rope</li><li>• Martial arts</li><li>• Sports with frequent running</li><li>• Swimming fast or swimming laps</li></ul>

[health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/fs\\_adult.pdf](https://health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/fs_adult.pdf)

For tools, tips, and information on healthy living, go to [ahealthyme.com/login](https://ahealthyme.com/login) to sign up for an account today.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

ATTENTION: If you don't speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call Member Services at the number on your ID Card (TTY: 711). ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia con el idioma. Llame al número de Servicio al Cliente que figura en su tarjeta de identificación (TTY: 711). ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, são-lhe disponibilizados gratuitamente serviços de assistência de idiomas. Telefone para os Serviços aos Membros, através do número no seu cartão ID (TTY: 711).

© Registered Marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ® Registered Mark of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts HMO, Inc. © 2017 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts HMO Blue, Inc.

175776M

(9/17)



MASSACHUSETTS