

Exercise is Medicine® Month 2017



Toolkit

www.exerciseismedicine.org



The Problem

Physical inactivity is a fast-growing public health problem and contributes to a variety of chronic diseases and health complications, including obesity, diabetes and cancer. In addition to improving a patient's overall health, increasing physical activity has proven effective in the treatment and prevention of chronic diseases. Even with all the benefits of physical activity, in the United States and many other countries, levels of inactivity are alarming. We are facing what is now referred to as an "inactivity epidemic," with tremendous costs.

- According to the World Health Organization's most recent Global Health Risks data (2004) after high blood pressure, tobacco use and high blood glucose, physical inactivity constitutes the 4th leading cause of death globally, with about 3.3 million attributed deaths per year. More recent evidence (2009) using direct measure, rather than survey data shows physical inactivity to be the leading cause of death in the U.S.
- More than half of adults (56 percent) do not meet the recommendations for sufficient physical activity in the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines.
- In a study of older adolescents and adults in the U.S., participants spent almost eight hours a day in sedentary behaviors, while as much as 36 percent of adults engaged in no leisure-time physical activity at all.
- A study in 2008 shows that physical inactivity costs the U.S. Health Care System \$330 per person each year, which equals more than \$102 billion dollars annually.
- 40 percent of U.S. primary care doctors and 36 percent of U.S. medical students do not meet 2008 federal physical activity guidelines. Physically inactive doctors are less likely to provide exercise counseling to patients and provide less credible role models for the adoption of healthy behaviors. Not surprisingly, only 34 percent of U.S. adults report having received exercise counseling at their last medical visit.

The Benefits

Many research studies have shown the benefits of regular physical activities. The U.S. Federal Physical Guidelines and many studies show that 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity physical activity is required to achieve these health benefits.

- Research shows that a low level of physical activity exposes a patient to a greater risk of dying than does smoking, obesity, hypertension, or high cholesterol, and for older men, regular physical activity can decrease the risk of death by 40 percent.
- Active individuals in their 80s have a lower risk of death than inactive individuals in their 60s.

Regular physical activity can:

- Reduce mortality and the risk of recurrent breast cancer by approximately 50 percent.
- Lower the risk of colon cancer by over 60 percent.
- Reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by approximately 40 percent.

- Reduce the incidence of heart disease and high blood pressure by approximately 40 percent.
- Lower the risk of stroke by 27 percent.
- Lower the risk of developing type II diabetes by 58 percent.
- Be twice as effective in treating type II diabetes as the standard insulin prescription and can save \$2250 per person per year when compared to the cost of standard drug treatment.
- Can decrease depression as effectively as Prozac or behavioral therapy.
- Adults with better muscle strength have a 20 percent lower risk of mortality (33 percent lower risk of cancer specific mortality) than adults with low muscle strength.
- A low level of fitness is a bigger risk factor for mortality than mild-moderate obesity. It is better to be fit and overweight than unfit with a lower percentage of body fat.
- Regular physical activity has been shown to lead to higher SAT scores for adolescents.
- In an elementary school setting, regular physical activity can decrease discipline incidents involving violence by 59 percent and decrease out of school suspensions by 67 percent.

Co-Benefits of Physical Activity and Exercise

- Improvement of individual health and quality of life.
- Economic savings through reduced health care costs (and, for active transport, saving on auto expenses).
- Reduced environmental impact through active transport.
- Increased work productivity, reduced absenteeism; worker cooperation, attitude, etc.
- Higher academic achievement among students.
- Improved cognitive function in children, youth, adults & older adults.

A Solution to the Greatest Public Health Problem of the 21st Century

Exercise is Medicine® (EIM), a global health initiative managed by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) is focused on encouraging primary care physicians and other health care providers to include exercise when designing treatment plans for patients. EIM is committed to the belief that exercise and physical activity are integral to the prevention and treatment of chronic disease and should be regularly assessed as part of medical care. Along with the National Physical Activity Plan, EIM strives to make physical activity a "vital sign" that is routinely assessed at every patient interaction with a health care provider. Former U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, M.D., M.B.A., serves as honorary chair of EIM.

Guiding Principles of Exercise is Medicine®

The guiding principles of Exercise is Medicine®, are designed to improve the health and well-being of our nation through a regular physical activity prescription from doctors and other health care providers, or from a health fitness professional working with the health care provider.

The guiding principles are as follows:

- Exercise and physical activity are important to health and the prevention and treatment of many chronic diseases.
- More should be done to address physical activity and exercise in health care settings.
- Multi-organizational efforts to bring a greater focus on physical activity and exercise in health care settings are to be encouraged.

A Critical Call to Action

EIM calls on each person and all partners dedicated to the idea that exercise truly is medicine to continue to build, support and advocate for physical activity as essential for global health and wellbeing by committing to action. Policy makers are called to change policy to support physical activity as a vital sign for health. Health care providers and fitness professionals are called to integrate exercise into every patient and client interaction. Communities, workplaces and schools are called to promote physical activity as an essential part of health and wellbeing.

Exercise is Medicine® Month Background Information

Rx for Health: A Daily Dose of Exercise!

May is Exercise is Medicine® Month

Health advocates and public officials around the world are getting it, with growing movements on six continents. In the U.S., with alarming increases in chronic diseases and consternation over health care costs, many see the EIM initiative as part of the solution.

That philosophy is the seed for EIM Month. During May, communities throughout the U.S. will hold activities that recognize physical activity and exercise—shown to help prevent and treat more than 40 chronic diseases—should be part of everyone’s health care plan. Since 2010, EIM Month has been proclaimed by mayors, governors, Congress and the President. Individuals and organizations of all kinds, from youth groups to universities, churches, fitness centers, corporations and hospitals, hold events aimed at keeping people active and healthy.

Though EIM is a global initiative, EIM Month is a grassroots, community-based phenomenon. Families and advocates—anyone who “gets it”—are empowered to encourage healthy lifestyles and help make physical activity part of everyone’s health care plan. From physicians who prescribe exercise to public officials seeking to control health care costs to parents who want to keep their kids healthy, EIM Month is a time to put into action what research has shown to be true.

“Everyone should start or renew an exercise program now as an investment in life-long health,” said Robert E. Sallis, M.D., FACSM, chair of EIM. “Every person, regardless of age or health, is responsible for his or her own physical activity. There are far more reasons to exercise than excuses not to.”

Get Involved! May is Exercise is Medicine® Month

May marks the 9th annual Exercise is Medicine® (EIM) Month. Now it is easier than ever to participate. Here’s how you can get involved:

- Access the latest resources for health care [providers](#). These resources can help you forge a connection between health care and existing physical activity resources.
 - EIM has two resources specifically for health care providers
 - * **The Health Care Provider One-Pager** provides a simple snapshot that guides the provider through the rationale behind EIM, using the Physical Activity Vital Sign (PAVS), and a description of the National Physical Activity Guidelines that they can use with their patients.
 - * **The EIM Rx Pad** provides the health care provider with a simple tool for prescribing physical activity to their patients based on national guidelines while providing information on the types of activity a patient can engage in and how they can get started.
 - Health Care Providers also can take the **EIM Pledge**
 - * By taking the EIM Pledge, health care providers will be provided with tools to influence their patients to become more physically active. The EIM Pledge is designed to empower and assist providers in taking specific action steps in helping their patients to move toward healthier lifestyles. To learn more, [click here](#).

- If you work on a university or college campus, get involved by bringing EIM Month to your school!
 - For more information on how to register your campus and to learn about potential activities that you can do on your campus, [click here](#) or email eim@acsm.org.
- Not a health care provider or on a university campus? Other ways that you can be involved include:
 - Become an EIM Credential exercise professional. The EIM Credential shows health care providers that you are qualified to assist their patients in becoming more active. The EIM Credential is an excellent tool to help exercise professionals build their client referral base. Visit www.certification.acsm.org for more information.
 - Read our latest resource for exercise professionals: Exercise Professionals' Stories from the[JLP1] Field. Learn how exercise professionals from all over the world are connecting with physicians and impacting the lives of patients through physical activity. Share your story with us to help other exercise professionals worldwide.
 - Read through and utilize suggestions in our [EIM Exercise Professionals' Action Guide](#). You will find information on exercise prescription, the referral process, and much more.

Other Ways to Be Involved

The EIM Solution – Share EIM with Your Health System and Community Leaders

To jointly address the rapid progression of chronic diseases and skyrocketing health care costs, EIM and ACSM, along with the American Council on Exercise (ACE) and the Medical Fitness Association (MFA) announced in February 2016 a new collaboration called the Exercise is Medicine Solution. The partnership and the EIM Solution will bring together health care systems, clinicians, fitness professionals and community resources to affect positive health outcomes and reduce health care costs. To learn more about the EIM Solution, [click here](#).

Become an EIM Advocate

- Sign up for EIM updates at www.exerciseismedicine.org. Click on the “Newsletter Sign Up” (top right corner) to receive updates, ideas, and resources for integrating EIM into your professional life.
- For updates on EIM and other ways to participate, follow us on:
 - Twitter: @EIMnews
 - Facebook: Exercise is Medicine

EIM Credential

EIM now includes a credential program that will provide exercise professionals with the opportunity and skills to work closely with the medical community and will provide additional benefits for the EIM credentialed professional. This credential will:

- Be a respected credential for those who work with individuals who are healthy, individuals with health-related conditions who have been cleared by their physicians for exercise (Level 1 or 2), and patients who require clinical support and monitoring (Level 3);
- Supply healthcare providers with a system to validate the qualifications of exercise professionals who are eligible to work with their patients; and
- Offer an opportunity for exercise professionals to promote their services to healthcare providers and to develop or cultivate patient referrals on a regular basis.

For more information on the EIM Credential and how to get signed up, [click here](#).

Exercise is Medicine® on Campus Facts

EIM-OC is designed to engage universities and colleges, their students, faculty, and staff in ongoing efforts to improve physical fitness, health and wellness across campus with the possibility for community outreach. The EIM-OC guiding principles include:

- Introducing EIM to universities/colleges and providing them with an opportunity to make a commitment supporting EIM and to collaborate in bringing EIM onto their campuses and into their local communities
- Providing universities/colleges with an opportunity to learn what other institutions are doing to promote physical activity and the health benefits on their campuses
- Recognizing campuses who are actively engaged and championing EIM on their campus

Get Involved

Visit [Exercise is Medicine®](#) to support the initiative and receive program updates. Download the *EIM-OC Action Guide*, which provides tips and tools to implement EIM on your campus and get your school moving.

References:

EIM Fact Sheet at <http://bit.ly/EIMFactSheet>

1. Diehl, K., Mayer, M., Mayer, F., Gorig, T., Bock, C., Herr, R. M., & Schneider, S. (2015). Physical activity counseling by primary care physicians: attitudes, knowledge, implementation, and perceived success. *Journal of physical activity & health*, 12(2).