



Fact Sheet

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A CRITICAL CALL TO ACTION Exercise is Medicine™ is an initiative focused on encouraging primary care physicians and other health care providers to include exercise when designing treatment plans for patients. Exercise is Medicine is committed to the belief that exercise and physical activity are integral to the prevention and treatment of diseases and should be regularly assessed as part of all medical care.

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE Physical inactivity is a fast-growing public health problem and contributes to a variety of chronic diseases and health complications, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, depression and anxiety, arthritis, and osteoporosis. In addition to improving a patient's overall health, increasing physical activity has proven effective in the treatment and prevention of chronic diseases.

A VITAL SIGN FOR HEALTH A key component of Exercise is Medicine involves calling on health care providers, regardless of specialty, to review and assess every patient's physical activity level at every visit. Patients should be counseled on exercise regimens, with office visits concluding with exercise clearance and prescription or referral to a certified health and fitness professional. The initiative aims to have physical activity recorded as a vital sign during patient visits and to encourage able patients to meet the Federal Physical Activity Guidelines by participating in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week through, for example, 30 minutes of physical activity, five days per week.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF EXERCISE IS MEDICINE The guiding principles of Exercise is Medicine, shared by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and other leading health and fitness organizations, 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 and fitness professional working through a referral from 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 encouraged.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS Exercise is Medicine is well-positioned to expand its roles and contributions to improving global public health through serving and connecting individuals, organizations and countries. Activating Exercise is Medicine as a global initiative will spur worldwide progress in the promotion of physical activity and disease prevention. The initiative engages individuals as both exercise counselors and advocates, medical societies and governmental agencies as partners, and countries as collaborators to make Exercise is Medicine a global initiative. The inaugural World Congress on Exercise is Medicine, first held in June 2010, served as an international forum to address the science, practice and policy aspects of the impact physical activity has on disease prevention and health promotion.

SUPPORTING EXERCISE IS MEDICINE Exercise is Medicine has received support from numerous national organizations based on a shared vision to help improve the health and well-being of our nation through regular physical activity prescription from doctors and other health care providers. Currently, there are two levels of support: network members and corporate funders. Contact us or visit the Web site for more information.

GET INVOLVED Visit Exercise is Medicine online at www.exerciseismedicine.org to support the initiative and receive program updates. Visit www.exerciseismedicinemonth.org to download an [Action and Promotion Guide](#), which provides tips and tools to plan your own local event or activity during Exercise is Medicine Month in May or throughout the year, including a PowerPoint slide deck and media advocacy tools.

Support for the Exercise is Medicine™ Global Initiative is Provided By:

EIM GLOBAL PARTNERS:



EIM GLOBAL ADVOCATES:

