



Exercise is Medicine™ Month Fact Sheet

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A UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE 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 in the prevention and treatment of diseases and should be regularly assessed as part of all medical care.

WHAT *Exercise is Medicine Month*

Exercise is Medicine Month is the special recognition month for Exercise is Medicine and a time for everyone to recognize, emphasize and celebrate the valuable health benefits of exercise on a national scale. Exercise and physical activity are important to health and the prevention and treatment of many chronic diseases.

WHY *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.

WHO *You and the members of your community*

Exercise is Medicine invites you and the members of your community to take part of a national event focused on celebrating physical activity. Organizations, state and local government officials and individuals across the country join together in May to promote exercise and the prevention and treatment of diseases.

WHEN *May 2009*

Exercise is Medicine has declared May as Exercise is Medicine Month, in conjunction with the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports' National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. May is a time to get involved in your community, to spread the word about the many benefits of exercise.

WHERE *Online and in your community*

Take advantage of Exercise is Medicine Month by becoming more physically active yourself, and by starting or signing up for events in your area. Download the [Action and Promotion Guide](#) to learn more.

GET INVOLVED

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. In this guide, you'll also find action steps about how to incorporate physical activity into your life. Don't forget to check out www.exerciseismedicine.org all year long for videos, fliers, handouts, guides and more!

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

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Physical Activity Facts

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Starting an exercise program can sound like a daunting task, but just remember that your main goal is to boost your health by meeting or exceeding the basic physical activity recommendations: 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity* physical activity through, for example, 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, five days per week.

Follow the guidelines below to meet the basic physical activity recommendations after consulting your health care professional.

Age	No Chronic Conditions	Chronic Conditions
Children & Adolescents (6-17)	60 minutes or more of physical activity every day (moderate*- or vigorous**-intensity aerobic physical activity). Vigorous-intensity activity at least 3 days per week. Muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activity at least 3 days per week.	Develop a physical activity plan with your health care professional. Avoid inactivity. Refer to the Your Prescription for Health series .
Adults (18-64)	150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity Muscle-strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups performed on 2 or more days per week.	Develop a physical activity plan with your health care professional. Be as physically active as possible. Avoid inactivity Refer to the Your Prescription for Health series .
Older Adults (65+)	Follow the adult guidelines, or be as physically active as possible. Avoid inactivity. Exercises that maintain or improve balance if at risk of falling.	Develop activity plan with your health care professional. Refer to the Your Prescription for Health series .

From the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

For more information on these guidelines, visit www.acsm.org/physicalactivity.

*Moderate-intensity physical activity means working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, yet still being able to carry on a conversation. Examples: brisk walking, ballroom dancing or general gardening.

**Vigorous-intensity physical activity causes rapid breathing and a substantial increase in heart rate. Example: jogging, aerobic dancing or jumping rope.

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