



Research proves that exercise has a role in the treatment and prevention of more than 40 chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease, obesity and hypertension.

Ready to receive your prescription for health?

Introducing your plan: the Public Action Guide

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



www.ExerciseisMedicine.org

E-mail: eim@acsm.org • Phone: 317-637-9200



1	HOW TO GET STARTED	2	MEETING THE GUIDELINES AND STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM	3	MY EXERCISE PLAN
4	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	5	EXERCISE IS MEDICINE MONTH	6	NOTE TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

HOW TO GET STARTED

SIGN ON TO EXERCISE IS MEDICINE

- Visit www.exerciseismedicine.org and click [Join Us](#) to receive program updates and the quarterly newsletter.
- Click on the [Latest News](#) graphic on the home page to view the latest updates on Exercise is Medicine™.
- Check the [Public's page](#) for updates and more resources.

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE RESOURCES

- [Health Care Providers' Action Guide](#)
- [Health and Fitness Professionals' Action Guide](#)
- [Your Prescription for Health series](#)
- [Public Service Announcements \(PSAs\)](#)
- [ACSM ProFinder](#)
- [Keys to Exercise video series](#)
- [Physical Activities with a Disability](#)
- [Exercise is Medicine™ with Robert Sallis, M.D., DVD](#)
- [Additional Resources](#)

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- Phone: 317-637-9200, ext. 117 or 127
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American College of Sports Medicine
P.O. Box 1440
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1440

The Exercise is Medicine® Public Action Guide provides you with a simple, fast and effective tool for using exercise as a 'medicine' to help prevent or manage many of the most common chronic health conditions. It will also help you approach your health care provider to discuss physical activity as a part of a disease prevention and management strategy.

Now that you have the Exercise is Medicine Public Action Guide, what are your next steps?

1. Start by making an appointment with your health care provider for your annual checkup or plan to talk about physical activity during your next visit.
2. Learn how to get started on a physical activity program that will give you the health benefits you want by reading the physical activity recommendations and tips in *Meeting the Guidelines and Starting an Exercise Program*.
3. Get a customized physical activity plan by taking the exercise assessment tests through *My Exercise Plan*.
4. Consult the *Questions and Answers* page to find answers to the most common questions about exercise as medicine and how to start exercising.
5. If you want to become more active with the Exercise is Medicine initiative, learn about how to participate in *Exercise is Medicine Month* and other ways to get your community involved.
6. Keep the appointment you made with your health care provider. Be sure to bring any questions necessary to ask your health care provider about physical activity, your abilities and limitations, and what exercises are best for your goals. Print and share the Exercise is Medicine *Note to Health Care Providers* during your visit. Encourage your health care provider to check out the Exercise is Medicine Web site and action guide at www.exerciseismedicine.org.
7. Get moving!



1	HOW TO GET STARTED	2	MEETING THE GUIDELINES AND STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM	3	MY EXERCISE PLAN
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MEETING THE GUIDELINES AND STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

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 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 health care professional. Refer to the Your Prescription for Health series .

From the 2008 Federal 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.

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Guidelines for healthy adults under age 65 with no apparent chronic disease or condition

STEP 1 - Set aside time each day to exercise. Getting started can often be the most difficult part of any exercise routine. Scheduling exercise into your day and making it a priority will increase the chance of being successful.

STEP 2 - Choose cardiovascular activities you enjoy, such as swimming, biking, or playing basketball with friends to get your daily physical activity. If you need a variety of activities to stay motivated, combine a few that appeal to you. Physical activity can be accumulated through a variety of activities. Walking is a great way to do moderate-intensity physical activity. 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.

STEP 3 - Start with 10 to 15 minutes of cardiovascular exercise daily. Each week, add five minutes to your exercise routine until you reach 30 minutes of moderate-intensity for a minimum of five days per week. Alternately, you may do 20 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise three days per week. The 30-minute recommendation is for the average healthy adult to maintain health and reduce the risk for chronic disease. It should be noted that to lose weight or maintain weight loss, 60 to 90 minutes of physical activity may be necessary.

STEP 4 - Incorporate strength training into your routine. Do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, with eight to 12 repetitions of each exercise, twice a week. This can be accomplished by using dumbbells, resistance bands or your own body weight. If you are unsure how to perform the exercises correctly, seek the advice of an exercise professional.

Guidelines for adults over age 65 with no apparent chronic disease or condition (or adults under age 65 with chronic conditions, such as arthritis)*

STEP 1 – Begin by following the four steps listed above. Both aerobic and muscle-strengthening activity are important to help you maintain a quality of life as you age.

STEP 2 - If you are at risk of falling, perform balance exercises. If you are unsure how to perform the exercises correctly, seek the advice of an exercise professional.

STEP 3 - Create a physical activity plan. Older adults or adults with chronic conditions should develop an activity plan with an exercise professional to manage risks and take health-related needs into account. This will maximize the benefits of physical activity and ensure your safety.

For more information, visit www.acsm.org/physicalactivity.

*If your physician has not cleared you for independent physical activity, you should exercise only under the supervision of a qualified professional. The American College of Sports Medicine has two groups of certified fitness professionals that could meet your needs. The ACSM Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist (CES) is certified to support those with heart disease, diabetes and lung disease. The ACSM Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist (RCEP) is qualified to support patients with a wide range of health challenges. You may locate all ACSM-certified fitness professionals by using the ProFinder at www.acsm.org.

Tips for meeting the guidelines

- With busy work schedules, family obligations, and packed weekends, it can often be difficult to get the recommended amount of physical activity. Try these tips for incorporating exercise into your life:
- Do it in short bouts. Research shows that moderate-intensity physical activity can be accumulated throughout the day in 10-minute bouts, which can be just as effective as exercising for 30 minutes straight. This can be useful when trying to fit physical activity into a busy schedule.
- Mix it up. Combinations of moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity can be used to meet the guidelines. For example, you can walk briskly for 30 minutes twice per week and jog at a higher intensity on two other days.
- Set your schedule. Maybe it's easier for you to walk during your lunch hour, or perhaps hitting the pavement right after dinner is best for you. The key is to set aside specific days and times for exercise, making it just as much a regular part of your schedule as everything else.
- While a health club membership offers some advantages, it isn't a necessity. It doesn't take a membership to get the daily recommended amount of physical activity. A pair of athletic shoes and a little motivation are all you really need to live a more active, healthy life.

- If you can exceed the minimum recommendations, do it! The minimum recommendations are just that: the minimum needed to maintain health and see fitness benefits. If you can exceed the minimum, you can improve your personal fitness, improve management of an existing disease or condition, and reduce your risk for health conditions and mortality.

Your Prescription for Health series

The [Your Prescription for Health](#) series provides information and recommendations for exercising safely with a variety of health conditions, including:

Alzheimer's	Chronic Restrictive Pulmonary Disease	Mental Retardation
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)	Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery	Multiple Sclerosis
Anemia	Cystic Fibrosis	Muscular Dystrophy
Aneurysm	End-Stage Metabolic Disease	Osteoporosis
Angina	Epilepsy	Pacemaker
Arthritis	Frailty	Parkinson's Disease
Atrial Fibrillation	Hearing Loss	Peripheral Arterial Disease
Brain Injury	Heart Attack	Polio or Post-Polio Syndrome
Cancer	Hyperlipidemia	Psychiatric Disorder
Cardiac Transplant	Hypertension	Stroke
Cerebral Palsy	Losing Weight	Type 2 Diabetes
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	Lower Back Pain	Valvular Heart Disease
	Lung or Heart-Lung Transplantation	Visual Impairment

Click [here](#) to download the *Your Prescription for Health* series!

Your Prescription for Health Series
EXERCISING FOLLOWING A HEART ATTACK

Getting Started

- Talk with your health care provider about integrating regular exercise into your treatment plan.
- Take all medications as prescribed by your physician.
- Choose low-impact activities such as walking, cycling or water exercises, which involve large muscle groups and can be done continuously.
- Start slowly and gradually progress the frequency and duration of your workouts.
- If your fitness level is low, start with shorter sessions (5 to 15 minutes) and gradually add five minutes to your workouts every two to four weeks. Ideally, you should build up to 30 to 60 minutes, at least three to four days per week.
- Take frequent breaks during activity if needed. Your workouts should be comfortable and not stressful.

Exercise Cautions

- Always check with your physician prior to increasing your activity level.
- Closely monitor your intensity level and stop within the exercise heart rate range prescribed by your health care provider.
- Stop exercising immediately if you experience chest pain or angina. Contact your physician if you experience chest pain, lightheadedness or extreme fatigue.
- If dizziness has been present, always carry it with you, especially during exercise.
- Avoid extreme weather conditions.

In This Series

- Cardiovascular Diseases
- Pulmonary Diseases
- Metabolic Diseases
- Neurological/Neurological Disorders
- Orthopedic Diseases and Disorders
- Neuroendocrine Diseases

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1

HOW TO GET STARTED

2

MEETING THE GUIDELINES AND STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

3

MY EXERCISE PLAN

4

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

5

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE MONTH

6

NOTE TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

MY EXERCISE PLAN

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The first step in meeting any recommendation for how much exercise to do is to simply get started with an activity that will work for you. The tools below will help you in assessing your health, figuring out your barriers to exercise and working through some of the challenges to sticking with a program. Visit www.myexerciseplan.com/assessment to find these free tools.

Pre-Exercise Health Assessment

The pre-exercise health assessment will give you an idea of what factors increase your risk for exercise related illness or injury. You can share these results and the recommended exercise program with your personal physician.

Barriers to Exercise Assessment

The barriers to exercise assessment will help you discover what specific obstacles are getting in the way of a consistent exercise habit. It assesses seven different areas of potential barriers and provides you with solutions to overcoming your specific challenges.

Additional Tools for Success

- [Exercise Time Finder](#)
Putting your schedule on paper allows you to see when you can fit in exercise, and makes you more likely to stick to a plan.
- [Self-Assessment](#)
Map out your goals and plan, and sign an agreement with yourself to begin or continue exercising.
- [Keep It Simple](#)
Pick exercises that are the easiest and the most enjoyable for you.
 - [Basic Bodyweight Strength Program](#)
 - [Basic Stretching Program](#)
- [Create a Ritual](#)
Write down your plan to make exercise a daily routine in your life.
- [Cost/Benefit Analyzer](#)
Examine costs and benefits of regular exercise vs. inactivity.

To customize your exercise plan and to receive ongoing support, visit MyExercisePlan.com.



Exercise is Medicine is pleased to partner with MyExercisePlan.com to bring you these resources. Visit MyExercisePlan.com and enter offer code 'ACSM20' to receive a 20 percent discount off a one-year membership to the site's full range of exercise support services.



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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Can I still exercise with my health issues and/or limitations?
 - Consult your health care provider if you have any medical issues you think might limit your exercise routine.
- How often should I exercise per week?
 - ACSM and AHA's [physical activity guidelines](#) recommend moderately intense* aerobic exercise (like walking) 30 minutes a day, five days a week or vigorously intense** aerobic exercise (like jogging) 20 minutes a day, three days a week. In addition to either plan, do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, with eight to 12 repetitions of each exercise, twice a week. Older adults (those over 65 or adults under 65 with chronic conditions) should do moderately intense aerobic exercise 30 minutes a day, five days a week or vigorously intense aerobic exercise 20 minutes a day, three days a week, also doing eight to 10 strength-training exercises, with 10-15 repetitions of each exercise, two to three times per week. They should also perform balance exercises and plan a physical program with a healthcare professional.
- How often should I do resistance training exercises?
 - ACSM and AHA's [physical activity guidelines](#) state resistance training at least twice per week provides a safe and effective method to improving muscular strength and endurance by 25 percent to 100 percent or more. It is recommended that eight to 10 exercises with eight to 12 repetitions be performed on two non-consecutive days using the major muscles. Older adults (those over 65 or adults under 65 with chronic conditions) should do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, 10-15 repetitions of each exercise twice to three times per week.
- If I want to hire a personal trainer, what credentials and educational background should I look for?
 - Look for a trainer certified by an organization accredited by the [National Commission of Certifying Agencies](#), such as ACSM.
- How do I know a personal trainer is right for me? What qualities should I look for in a personal trainer?
 - Look for a trainer that will be a good fit for your personality and your fitness goals. Make sure he or she has the appropriate amount of experience working with someone like you, especially if you are an older adult or if you have a chronic condition. A personal trainer should motivate you without intimidating you. He or she should be open to answering your questions and sensitive to your specific needs.
- If I cannot afford a personal trainer, what other options do I have?
 - Gather your own information from health and fitness Web sites, such as EIM and ACSM. Go to your local hospital or medical facility and attend free (or minimal fee) lectures and seminars regarding fitness and exercise. Join a local health club, fitness center or YMCA. If at all possible, hire a trainer for just a few sessions to get started and check in with your trainer once a month.

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1

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2

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MY EXERCISE PLAN

4

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

5

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE MONTH

6

NOTE TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

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Help Exercise is Medicine celebrate physical activity during May for Exercise is Medicine Month!

In 2008, cities, states and individuals around the United States celebrated the inaugural Exercise is Medicine Month. This year, we'll be once again making the month of May a time to celebrate physical activity and get people moving!

Every year, numerous states, cities and organizations proclaim May as Exercise is Medicine Month. We need your help in making this May an even bigger success.

A comprehensive [Action and Promotion Guide](#) with resources and information is available for download. Here are things you can start doing right now to promote Exercise is Medicine Month and the wide array of benefits physical activity has to offer:

- Contact your local officials. Tell them about the importance of getting the public active, and encourage them to sign a [mayoral proclamation](#) or [governor's proclamation](#) for Exercise is Medicine Month.
- Use the resources on the Exercise is Medicine Web site. We've got guides for health care providers and health and fitness professionals already in place. Visit www.exerciseismedicine.org.
- Get tools to help you with health promotion. Visit www.exerciseismedicinstore.com to find materials and resources.

Look for more resources in the near future. Also, there will be a special recognition program to honor communities and individuals who are especially active in promoting Exercise is Medicine Month!

Visit Exercise is Medicine Month online at <http://exerciseismedicine.org/makeithappen.htm>!

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2

MEETING THE GUIDELINES AND STARTING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

3

MY EXERCISE PLAN

4

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

5

EXERCISE IS MEDICINE MONTH

6

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Share this resource with your health care provider during your next annual checkup or scheduled visit. Bring any questions about physical activity, your abilities and limitations, and what exercises are best for your goals. Encourage your health care provider to check out the Exercise is Medicine Web site and action guide at www.exerciseismedicine.org.

The Note to Health Care Providers is available for download [here](#).

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Dear Health Care Provider,

What if there was one prescription that could prevent and treat dozens of diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity? Would you prescribe it to your patients? Certainly.

The Exercise is Medicine™ initiative is a shared vision of the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Medical Association, designed to help improve the health and well-being of our nation through a regular physical activity prescription from doctors and other healthcare providers.

We are calling on health care organizations, health care providers and other professionals, regardless of specialty, to assess, to advocate for, and to review every patient's physical activity program during every comprehensive visit.

Visit the Exercise is Medicine™ Web site (www.exerciseismedicine.org) for additional information. You will find a more detailed description of the initiative, ways you can counsel patients on their exercise regimens and information on how physical activity can be an integral part of any patient's health care program.

We urge you to make exercise consultation a regular, important part of your interaction with every patient at every visit.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
The Exercise is Medicine Advisory Board

Exercise is Medicine Resources for Health Care Providers

- The *Exercise is Medicine Health Care Providers' Action Guide* provides physicians and other healthcare providers with a simple, fast, and effective tool for using physical activity, in the right "dosage", as a highly effective prescription for the prevention, treatment, and management of more than 40 of the most common chronic health conditions encountered in primary practice.
- The *Exercise Prescription and Referral Process* document is the core of the guide and will explain how to either quickly write a prescription for your patient or else refer them to a certified health and fitness professional.
- Use the *Exercise and Readiness Prescription Pad* to either give your patient a physical activity prescription or to refer them to a health and fitness professional.
- If your patient is healthy, print out and give them a *Starting an Exercise Program Patient Handout*.
- If your patient has a chronic health condition, look at the *Your Prescription for Health* series to see if your patient's condition is included in this series and, if it is, print out and give them the appropriate patient handout on how to safely exercise with their condition. This series has been reviewed by experts from the American College of Sports Medicine.

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