

# Exercise is Medicine® Month 2015



## Toolkit

[www.exerciseismedicine.org](http://www.exerciseismedicine.org)



Dear Professional,

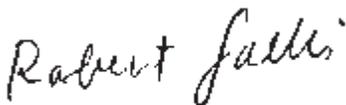
Please join us in celebrating May as Exercise is Medicine® (EIM) Month. We welcome you to a global network of professionals who value exercise as medicine for optimizing health and wellness and want to help you get the dose you need to stay healthy.

We encourage you to celebrate EIM Month and showcase the efforts you are making to create a culture of movement in your community, workplace, and schools. Our collective goal is to provide education and awareness to the many ways exercise works as medicine to prevent, treat and manage many of the diseases and conditions that plague our society today. We encourage you to sign up for EIM email updates and follow us on Twitter and Facebook for the latest news and updates.

If you are a professional who is affiliated with a college or university, this is the perfect time to register your campus as an official Exercise is Medicine® on Campus (EIM-OC) institution. All registered institutions are eligible to apply for our new University Recognition Program, where ACSM recognizes outstanding EIM-OC programs. Recognition provides value to a university by honoring those institutions that care enough about the health and wellness of their students, faculty, staff and administrators to make physical activity a priority on their campus. Recognized campuses will earn a certificate of achievement and be announced at the ACSM Annual Meeting.

We look forward to hearing about the many ways you will be celebrating EIM in your community.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Sallis, M.D., FACSM  
Chair, EIM Advisory Board



Carena S. Winters, Ph.D., MPH, FACSM  
Chair, EIM-OC Committee

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

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## 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%) 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% 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% of U.S. primary care doctors and 36% 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% 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%.
- 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%.
- Lower the risk of colon cancer by over 60%.
- Reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by approximately 40%.
- Reduce the incidence of heart disease and high blood pressure by approximately 40%.
- Lower the risk of stroke by 27%.
- Lower the risk of developing type II diabetes by 58%.
- 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% lower risk of mortality (33% 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% and decrease out of school suspensions by 67%.

## 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® 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 chronic disease and should be regularly assessed as part of medical care. Along with the National Physical Activity Plan, Exercise is Medicine® 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 Exercise is Medicine®.

## Guiding Principles of Exercise is Medicine®

The guiding principles of Exercise is Medicine®, a multi-organizational initiative coordinated by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), 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 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

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. Therefore, Exercise is Medicine® 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 Exercise is Medicine® initiative as part of the solution.

That philosophy is the seed for Exercise is Medicine® 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, Exercise is Medicine® 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.

This year, EIM Month will focus on bringing EIM to college and university campuses nationwide!

#### Exercise is Medicine® on Campus (EIM-OC) Action Guide

The EIM-OC Action Guide provides campuses information on how to bring EIM to their campus. Information includes:

- Background information on EIM-OC
- The mission and vision of EIM-OC
- A letter from Dr. Carena Winters and Dr. Bob Sallis (EIM Leadership)
- How to form your leadership team
- Information on getting your campus recognized
- Examples of campuses who have implemented EIM on their campuses

Though Exercise is Medicine® is a global initiative, Exercise is Medicine® 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 Exercise is Medicine®. “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.”

## 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® online at <http://bit.ly/1PktdPX> 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.

### Program Mission

Foster collaborative relationships and leadership on campus between exercise, health, and other disciplines that support the EIM-OC vision and goals

### Program Vision

See all campus and community members across multiple disciplines discover, share, and adopt the principles of EIM-OC that will help change the culture of chronic disease prevention and management campus-wise.

## Exercise is Medicine® on Campus Recognition Program

The Exercise is Medicine® on Campus (EIM-OC) recognition program highlights the steps individuals are taking, large and small, in leading their campuses and communities to become healthier through increased levels of physical activity and incorporating physical activity into health care.

Recognition provides an opportunity for your campus to enhance its image as a healthy academic environment; emphasizing your commitment to utilizing exercise as medicine to create a culture of wellness on campus.

EIM-OC recognizes three levels of engagement:

- **Gold Level**  
Implementing the EIM Solution
- **Silver Level**  
Educational opportunities for the campus and surrounding community
- **Bronze Level**  
Physical activity promotion and awareness

This month, get your campus registered and prepare as well for Exercise is Medicine® on Campus Month in October. It can be activated at any campus, large or small, rural or urban. Let's get moving—register today!

**For more information, contact Jennifer Pesarchick at [jpesarchick@acsm.org](mailto:jpesarchick@acsm.org).**

