Physical activity

Physical activity is moving your body. This includes everything from working out at a gym, playing sports, going for a walk, cleaning your home, gardening, dancing, etc. This is opposed to being **sedentary** (sitting or lying down and not moving much). Being physically active has a lot of health benefits. Being sedentary, especially for long periods of time, can have a negative impact on your health.

What does physical activity do for you? It can improve your strength and stamina. It can improve your mood, energy, and mental health. It decreases your risk of premature death, heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, some kinds of cancer, and many other diseases.

Aim to be active every day. Look for activities you enjoy and will be able to continue doing for life. If you don't love running, for example, setting a goal to run every day may not be the place to start. Maybe learning to hula hoop is more your style!

Try to get moving to the point where your heart rate and breathing are increased. It's also a good idea to add some muscle and bone strengthening activities at least two days per week. This might be jumping, climbing, running, using weights, yoga, etc.

Think about getting active with friends or family. For example, organize a walking group, join a recreational sport league, or learn how to dance by watching online videos with a friend. If you're not sure where to start, Alberta has a lot of programs you can access for **free**:

AHS.ca/ahlp	The Alberta Healthy Living Program	Group education classes and supervised exercise classes
BeFitForLife.ca	Be Fit For Life: Moving Alberta	Information, ideas, and workshops for adults, parents, and children
uWalk.ca	uWalk	Track your activities and progress, fun and motivating
HealthierTogether.ca	AHS Heathier Together	Ideas and information about physical activity

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

FOR ADULTS - 18 – 64 YEARS

Guidelines

To achieve health benefits, adults aged 18-64 years should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.

It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.

More physical activity provides greater health benefits.

Let's Talk Intensity!

Moderate-intensity physical activities will cause adults to sweat a little and to breathe harder. Activities like:

- Brisk walking
- Bike riding

Vigorous-intensity physical activities will cause adults to sweat and be 'out of breath'. Activities like:

- Jogging
- Cross-country skiing

Being active for at least **150 minutes** per week can help reduce the risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Certain types of cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Overweight and obesity

And can lead to improved:

- Fitness
- Strength
- Mental health (morale and self–esteem)

Pick a time. Pick a place. Make a plan and move more!

- ☑ Join a weekday community running or walking group.
- ☑ Go for a brisk walk around the block after dinner.
- ☑ Take a dance class after work.
- ☑ Bike or walk to work every day.
- ☑ Rake the lawn, and then offer to do the same for a neighbour.
- ☑ Train for and participate in a run or walk for charity!
- ☑ Take up a favourite sport again or try a new sport.
- ☑ Be active with the family on the weekend!

Now is the time. Walk, run, or wheel, and embrace life.

PARTICIPACTION

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