

Exercise & Physical Activity

A major risk factor for heart disease is physical inactivity. According to the American Heart Association & the American College of Sports Medicine Guidelines on physical activity, healthy adults (ages 18-65) should get a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days per week. Walking, jogging, swimming, cycling or aerobic dancing are great examples of physical activity; however, no matter what activity you chose, all of it helps in making your heart healthier!



References:

American Heart Association, *The Benefits of Daily Physical Activity*, 2010. Retrieved from www.americanheart.org on February 3, 2010.

American Heart Association, *Exercise Tips for Older Americans*, 2010. Retrieved from www.americanheart.org on February 3, 2010.

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HELPFUL HINTS TO FILL YOUR BASKET

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The Benefits of Daily Physical Activity

- Reduces the risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation
- Keeps weight under control
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Prevents and manages high blood pressure
- Prevents bone loss
- Boosts energy level
- Helps manage stress
- Releases tension
- Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well
- Improves self-image
- Increases muscle strength
- Establishes good heart-healthy habits in children
- In older adults, helps delay or prevent chronic illnesses and diseases associated with aging and maintains quality of life and independence longer



Exercise Tips for Older Americans

- Check with your doctor first.
- Pick rhythmic, repetitive activities that challenge the circulatory system, and exercise at an intensity appropriate for you.
- Pick activities that are fun and suit your needs.
- Wear comfortable, appropriate clothing and footwear.
- If you decide that walking is a great activity for you, choose a place that has a smooth, soft surface; that does not intersect with traffic; and that's well-lighted and safe. Many older Americans walk at area shopping malls.

- Find a companion to exercise with you.
- Take more time to warm up and cool down because muscular adaptation and elasticity generally slows with age. Make sure you stretch slowly.
- Start exercising at a low intensity and progress gradually.
- If you plan to be active more than 30 minutes, drink some water every 15 minutes. As you age, your sense of thirst tends to decrease and you can't completely rely on your internal sense of thirst.

Heart Healthy Spaghetti

Place chicken breasts in a pot of hot water. Boil until done. Cut into bite sized pieces or shred. Add chicken to your favorite tomato sauce instead of ground beef.

