

Be Active for Your Health!

Almost all of us would feel better, be able to do more, and be healthier by becoming more physically active than we are now. Physical activity is a great way to lose weight too!

■ Benefits of physical activity and exercise

- Lose weight or maintain your weight
- Improve your heart health; reduce your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke
- Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Reduce your risk of some cancers
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mental health and mood; sleep better
- Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- Increase your chances of living longer



■ How much physical activity do you need?

If you have an on-going health condition, get your doctor's advice about how much physical activity you should be doing. Most people need an exercise program that looks like this:

- **Aerobic exercises** (work most of your body, especially your heart and lungs)
 - 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise, 3 to 5 days a week
 - Try walking, biking, a treadmill or stationary bike, or an aerobics class
- **Strengthening exercises** (make your muscles stronger by making them work against resistance)
 - 8 to 10 different strengthening exercises, 2 to 3 days a week
 - Try using weights or canned goods



■ Ideas to get started

Start slow. Start where you are! Build up your program over a few weeks or a few months. For example, start with 10 minutes of walking a day and add 5 more minutes each week until you are walking 30 minutes most days.

Break it up. If you can't fit in 30 minutes of aerobic activity all at once, do it 10 minutes at a time throughout the day – like before work, during a work break, and after dinner.

Get support! Find an exercise partner or go to a class for beginners.

Make a plan to get started! Include what you will do, how much (such as time or distance), when (time of day, days of week), and how many days. For example: *I will ride my stationary bike for 10 minutes, after lunch, on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.*

Your plan:



Family Health Centers