

Get Fit for Life

Session Overview

This session introduces the concepts of lifestyle and planned physical activity, how to find enjoyable ways to be physically active, and how to overcome barriers.

Objectives for Session

1. Understand the difference between lifestyle and planned physical activity
2. Discuss ways to be physically active and find enjoyable activities
3. Understand how to overcome barriers to physical activity

Session Preparation

- Prepare the following materials:
 - P01 Barriers to Physical Activity
 - P23 Activities to Fit Your Lifestyle
 - P24 Types of Physical Activity
 - P29 Planned Physical Activity
 - P34 Step Conversions for Physical Activity
 - P38 Be Active Your Way
 - “Be Physically Active” Healthy Living Message
 - NCP video – Physical Activity: A Little Goes a Long Way
- Facilitate the session so that most of the talking comes from the participants and less from the leader.
- As coach, your role is to facilitate discussion without lecturing.

Session Outline (60-minute class)

- Check-in (5 minutes)
- Discussion Topics (40 minutes)
- 5-Minute MOVE![®] (5 minutes)
- Putting It All Together (10 minutes)

Check-in (5 minutes)

- Facilitate weigh-ins; enter weight into the CPRS Vital Signs package.
- Collect Daily Food and Physical Activity Diaries.

Discussion Topics (40 minutes)

Introduction

- Welcome everyone to the session.
- Review Ground Rules.
- Describe the purpose of today's class. State today's objectives and discussion topics. Encourage participants to attend all 16 sessions, since folks who do more sessions lose more weight.
- Invite participants to discuss their homework, Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary, progress, and goals since the last class.
- Facilitate problem-solving for any barriers, with an emphasis on asking permission before offering advice (i.e., "May I make a suggestion?").

Discussion #1: What is the difference between lifestyle and planned physical activity?

- Use handouts P24 Types of Physical Activity and P29 Planned Physical Activity to facilitate discussion.
- Write "Physical Activity" on a board and make two columns. Ask participants to give examples of physical activities. Without explanation, record the examples provided on the board and separate planned/programmed and lifestyle activities into two columns. Ask participants the difference between the columns and discuss why both planned/programmed and lifestyle activities are important when developing a physical activity plan. The purpose of this discussion is to differentiate between the two types of physical activities and to promote both.
- Refer to handout P23 Activities to Fit Your Lifestyle and ask participants to share what they think are lifestyle physical activities they can incorporate into their day/week. One of the MOVE!® program goals is to help them become more active in their daily routine in ways that can be counted (planned activity) as well as in ways that are difficult to count (unplanned).

5-Minute MOVE!® (5 minutes)

Incorporating physical activity into the session reinforces the healthy lifestyle message and provides opportunity to demonstrate some simple but effective exercises.

Ask participants if they would like to join you in doing the following warm-up and flexibility exercise:

Invite participants to stand up and march in place for 2-3 minutes. If they cannot stand, invite them to lift their knees while seated, as if marching.

Then, after 2-3 minutes, invite them to perform the following:

HAMSTRINGS:

Sit in chair and extend one leg forward. Keep the knee straight with the toes pointed up. Gently lean forward toward your toes. Take a deep breath in and let it out slowly. You should feel a stretch in the hamstrings and calves. Reduce or discontinue the stretch if it increases leg pain. Repeat the exercise on other leg.



Discussion #2: How can I be more physically active and enjoy it?

- Ask the question: “What activities do you currently enjoy doing?” Use handout P34 Step Conversions for Physical Activity to demonstrate how to increase physical activity with enjoyable activities, and explain how the conversion chart works. Remind participants that these converted steps can be added to their pedometer step tracking if they are using a pedometer.
- Refer to handout P06 Exercise Can Be Fun, and ask participants to share fun activities that they enjoy. Consider adding in some unconventional activities that participants may not consider (e.g., hiking, dancing, gardening).
- Remind participants that those who are active and use activities that they enjoy to accomplish goals are more likely to stick with a regular physical activity routine.

Discussion #3: How do I handle barriers?

- Ask the question: “If being active is so good for us, why is it that many of us are not as active as we could be?” Refer to P01 Barriers to Physical Activity, as participants offer responses to the question above. Ask participants to brainstorm how to overcome the barriers identified.
- Ask participants if they have developed a physical activity habit. Do they schedule time for physical activity on a regular basis?

Putting It All Together (10 minutes)

Session recap:

- Review Physical Activity Guidelines, P38 Be Active Your Way, from session #3.
- Ask, “What was most helpful today? What could have been better?”

Goals and action planning for the next week:

- If Veterans are **not** achieving 150 minutes/week of physical activity, tell them that now is the time to start!
- Remind Veterans to look for times during their day when they can insert just 10 extra minutes of activity.
- If they are already achieving 150 minutes/week, ask them to consider a new goal of 300 minutes/week.
- Remind them that physical activity should feel challenging. If it’s getting too easy, they should find ways to increase intensity by adding more time, or increasing speed or weight.

Homework for next week:

- Remind Veterans to continue logging in their Daily Food And Physical Activity Diary and to bring the diary and their pedometer to every session.
- Provide information necessary for attending the next session (date/time/location, etc.).

Topic for next week:

Manage Stress and Handle Hunger