



Play it Safe

Session plan for group leader

About this session:

This session provides guidance on safety and physical activity. By the end of this session, participants will have had the opportunity to:

- Discuss when to stop exercising
- Discuss how hard they should exercise
- Consider personal safety including appropriate foot wear and tips for cold and hot weather physical activity

To do before this session:

- Review the [Introduction to Group Sessions](#). This provides an overview of facilitating groups and offers guidance on group size, format etc.
- Organize materials for the session:
 - Paper, pens, flip chart/white board
 - *MOVE!* handouts:
 - [\(P19\) When to Stop Exercising?](#)
 - [\(S07\) F.I.T.T](#)
 - [\(P08\) How Hard Should I Exercise](#)
 - [\(P12\) Making a Good Fit! Shoes For Active Feet](#)
 - [\(P14\) Physical Activity and Your Safety](#)
 - [\(P17\) Tips For Cold Weather Physical Activity](#)
 - [\(P18\) Warm Weather Exercise Guidelines](#)

Introduction (may take 15-20 minutes):

- Conduct individual weigh-in in private (can also be done at the end of the session). Enter weight into the CPRS Vitals Signs package.
- Welcome everyone to the class.
- Revisit ground rules for the session (set new rules if appropriate).
- Invite participants to discuss their progress/goals since the last class.
- Review food and activity diaries and facilitate problem-solving for barriers.
- Discuss any homework from the last class.
- Discuss the purpose of today's session.
- Encourage questions and comments.

Exercise 1: When to stop exercising

- Distribute *MOVE!* handout [\(P19\) When to Stop Exercising](#) and discuss.
- Patients who report medical concerns as a result of exercise should be referred to their primary care team for further assessment.
- Remind participants that moderate physical activity is safe for most people. If the veteran is in any doubt regarding safety, have them address this with their PCP.

Exercise 2: How hard should I exercise?

- Ask participants to describe a physical activity that they found “too hard” to do. Use the examples given to demonstrate that what is easy for one person may be hard for another.

Write the following on a flip chart and ask participants to comment:

- **Frequency**- How often should you plan physical activity?
- **Intensity**- How hard should you be working during physical activity?
- **Time**- How much time should you spend being physically active?
- **Type**- What type of activity should you do?

- Ask participants to discuss the F.I.T.T principle based on the activities recorded in their Food and Activity Diary. Use the information in *MOVE!* handout ([S07](#)) [F.I.T.T](#) to guide the discussion. Distribute the handout.
- Use the following definitions of intensity for the discussion:

Moderate-Intensity Physical Activity

Makes you breathe a little harder and sweat slightly. You should be able to carry on a normal conversation. Examples include brisk walking, swimming, slow bicycling, dancing, gardening, yard work, and housework, such as vacuuming.

Vigorous-Intensity Physical Activity

Makes you breathe hard, makes your heart beat fast and makes you sweat. Examples include jogging/running, lap swimming, bicycling, aerobic classes and racquet sports.

Physical activity break

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

- Ask participants to join you in doing the following flexibility exercise:

SIDE BENDS: Extend one arm up overhead and gently lean to the opposite side. Hold the stretch a count of 15. Repeat the stretch with the other arm. You should feel a stretch along your side.



Exercise 3: Talk test

- Use *MOVE!* handout [\(P08\) How Hard Should I Exercise](#) to describe the 'Talk Test'. If possible give participants the opportunity to determine moderate activity by using the talk test while walking.
- Ask participants to practice using the Talk Test before the next class.

Exercise 4: Be active-be safe

- Write the following headings on a board and ask participants for their opinion:
 - Tips to stay safe while walking or jogging.
 - Things to remember before going out for physical activity.
 - Things to be careful of while out and about.
 - Why are the proper shoes important?
- Use *MOVE!* handouts [\(P14\) Physical Activity and Your Safety](#), [\(P12\) Making a Good Fit! Shoes For Active Feet](#), [\(P17\) Tips For Cold Weather Physical Activity](#), and [\(P18\) Warm Weather Exercise Guidelines](#) to guide the discussion.

Exercise 4: Goal setting

- Ask participants to decide on a physical activity goal for the next week and ask that they write it into their Food and Activity Diary.
- Remind participants to use the Talk Test to monitor the intensity of their physical activity during the coming week.

Close the session:

- Remind participants to:
 - Maintain their food and activity diaries,
 - Wear their pedometers, and
 - Bring both the diaries and the pedometers to all of the sessions.