

# Barriers to Physical Activity

**Ever feel like something always gets in the way of doing physical activity? Here is a list of some common barriers to physical activity, along with ideas for how to overcome them.**



## **Do you feel self-conscious about your weight and being seen by others?**

Being physically active makes you feel healthy and good about yourself almost immediately. Consider joining men- or women-only gyms or working with a trainer one-on-one. Once you feel good, it's easy not to worry so much about how you look. You'll be surprised how supportive people will be.



## **Have you had little practice or a bad experience with physical activity in the past?**

Start slowly with something that you like. If you joined a gym before and hated it, then try something totally different, like walking with a friend or taking dance classes. You don't have to be a gym rat to be successful at physical activity.

**Not in the mood to exercise or have little motivation?** When you exercise, your mood almost always improves. Once you start moving you usually become motivated to do more because it makes you feel good and increases energy. Next time you're not in the mood, try some physical activity.

**Does the hot or cold weather stop you from being physically active?** You don't have to exercise outdoors. There are lots of activities you can do inside. You can walk at a mall; get an exercise tape from the local library; use items around the house for strength training, such as canned food or water bottles; join the local gym or participate in community classes; use active video games; or put on some music and dance.

### **Can't find the time to be physically active?**

Every bit of activity helps. Spreading exercise over the day in several 10-minute bouts works just as well as exercising all at once. Add physical activity to other daily routines. For example, walk to the store, take the stairs, park farther away and walk, or exercise at your desk or while watching TV. Schedule physical activity just like a doctor's appointment or get together with a friend. Make it a priority.



**Isn't exercising expensive?** There are many of physical activities you can do at little or no cost. Consider walking, using household items for weights, working in the yard, doing free or low-cost community events, or borrowing exercise or dance videos from the library.

**Think physical activity will make your pain worse?** In most cases, regular physical activity reduces pain over time.

**Are you afraid of getting hurt?** Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury. Choose activities that are appropriate for you by working with a physical activity specialist and choose activities that you are comfortable doing. Consult your primary care team if pain is severe or persistent.

**Feel like you have no support?** Ask for help from family and friends. Find a physical activity buddy.



**Does stress get in the way of physical activity?** Stress does not have to stop you from being physically active. In fact, being active is a good way to relieve some stress. If you need more help, ask your MOVE!<sup>®</sup> team.