Be Active Your Way!

The 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

Why are they important?

• You can protect your health with physical activity.
• Research shows that 150 minutes (just 2 ½ hours) a week of moderate-intensity physical activity can lead to important health benefits.
• You may also look and feel better too!

What do the guidelines say?

• You should avoid being inactive.
• Some activity is better than no activity.
• For general health, all adults should aim for at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity physical activity, OR 75 minutes of vigorous activity.
• To manage weight, work up to 300 minutes (5 hours) of moderate activity, OR 150 minutes of vigorous activity per week.
• Do strength activities at least 2 days a week.

What do “moderate intensity” and “vigorous intensity” mean?

• Your body is working at a moderate level when you can talk but not sing.
• Your body is working at a vigorous level when you can’t say more than a few words without pausing for a breath.
What should I do?

• Write down how many minutes/week you are physically active to see if you are meeting the guidelines.
• If you are doing 150 minutes/week, good for you. Do more for even greater health benefits or if managing your weight.
• If not, plan to build up gradually to 150 minutes/week.

How do I do it?

It is up to you. Being active your way means…
• Choosing activities that work for you.
• Being active for at least 10 minutes at a time.
• Spreading out activity over the week.
• Aiming to be active at least 5 days, if not all days of the week.

How do I build up my physical activity?

• Set some goals. Start slowly and do a little each time.
• Once you feel comfortable, do more.
• Add in vigorous activities.
• It’s ok to do both moderate and vigorous activity each week.

What about muscle strengthening activities?

• Do these at least 2 days each week.
• Work all major muscle groups: legs, hips, back, chest, abdominals, shoulders, and arms.