

Physical Activity for Life

Official exercise guidelines are updated as we're learning more about how physical fitness and exercise affect our health and longevity. New evidence-based studies show we can fight many of our most common chronic health problems simply by staying physically active.

Key Recommendations:

AGES 3 TO 5 (NEW):

Get at least 3 hours **per day** of active play (light, moderate or vigorous) to enhance growth and development.

AGES 6 TO 17 (NO CHANGE):

Get 60 minutes **per day** of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity for healthy heart, muscle and bone development.

ADULTS (NO CHANGE):

Get at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity **each week**; add muscle strengthening 2 to 3 days a week.

Just move more and sit less. There is no minimum exercise time requirement now. The new guidelines suggest *any* amount of physical activity has health benefits, including better sleep, stress relief and improved blood pressure and mental health. Over time, staying physical helps manage many ongoing health conditions including obesity, osteoarthritis, diabetes and dementia.



May is Physical Fitness and Sports Month,

a good time to learn more at **Move Your Way** at health.gov/moveyourway/.



Light intensity

Walking leisurely or doing light household chores.

Moderate intensity

Biking, walking briskly or raking the yard.

Vigorous intensity

Jogging, circuit workouts or heavy labor.



Safety Corner

National Electrical Safety Month

May is National Electrical Safety Month, an observance established by the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), a non-profit organization that promotes electrical safety in the home, schools, and the workplace. According to ESFI, though electrical hazards may not be the leading cause of on-the-job injuries and accidents, electrical hazards are disproportionately fatal.

Always use caution when working near electricity. The following are tips from OSHA to help you avoid electrical hazards.

- Never assume that a wire is safe to touch even if the wire is down or appears to be insulated.
- Do not touch a fallen power line.
- During cleanup and other activities, stay at least 10 feet away from overhead wires. If you are working from heights or are handling long objects, survey the area for overhead wires before starting work.
- Stay inside your vehicle if an overhead wire falls across your vehicle when you are driving. If the engine stalls, do not get out of your vehicle! Call emergency services and the local electricity company.
- Do not operate electrical equipment while standing in water.
- Unless you are qualified or authorized to do so, do not repair electrical cords or equipment.
- If your electrical equipment has gotten wet, have a qualified electrician inspect it before energizing it.
- Inspect electric cords and equipment to ensure that they are in good condition and use a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) if you are working in a damp location.



Women: Take Time for Health

What have you done lately for better health? Aside from work, household routines and the people in your life, are you also taking care of you?

Here are quick, simple ways to address key health targets:

FOOD

- **Fill half of every meal** with fruits and vegetables.
- **Eat healthy** 90% of the time. Enjoy your favorite treats occasionally.
- **Learn how to cook a few easy meals.** Cut back on ordering unhealthy takeout food.
- **Limit alcohol** to 1 drink a day or less.
- **Drink water before snacking.** Sometimes what we think is hunger is actually thirst.
- **Choose a Mediterranean-style diet** to reduce your weight and stroke risk.

Good health is a woman's best friend.

That relationship becomes stronger as you learn the importance of staying well with age. Whether you're 25 or 65, know the steps needed to ensure continued health — and don't delay. Learn more about aging well during **National Women's Health Week, May 12 to 18.** Go to womenshealth.gov/nwhw/by-age.



MOVE

- **Stand up** and do 5-minute workouts using resistance bands.
- **Stand up** and do 5-minute core exercises.
- **Build leg muscle** and balance: Stand up on 1 leg and hold your pose for 30 to 60 seconds; repeat with the other leg (this takes some practice).
- **Be physically active at least 30 to 60 minutes each day.** Every movement on your feet counts: for example, walking up and down stairs and pacing while talking on the phone.

MOOD

- **Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep** every day for sustained energy. For insomnia, adopt regular sleep habits.
- **Take 3-minute stress breaks.** Relax, close your eyes and breathe deeply.
- **Turn off the chatter** and texting and listen to music.
- **Challenge your brain daily.** Read or use smartphone apps to learn about your special interests.
- **When feeling low,** reach out to a friend. But don't be dependent on outside factors to be happy.
- **Recognize and be proud** of your strengths.
- **Stop getting in the way of your good mood.** Remember to feel the positive aspects of your day and your life — and let that motivate you to better health.
- **Find laughter** and feel grateful every day.



Take the Pressure Off

 **May is Stroke Prevention Month.**

High blood pressure silently damages blood vessels and leads to serious health problems, including stroke. In fact, it's the major risk factor for stroke. Reducing high blood pressure can help prevent stroke, a major cause of death and disability.

First, discuss your blood pressure with your health care provider. If it's too high, or borderline high, work with your health care provider to lower it.

Taking prescribed medication, if needed, is important. But there's much you can do to help:

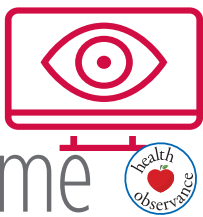
- ✓ **Research has shown** the heart-healthy DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan, rich in vegetables, fruits and whole grains and low in salt, can lower high blood pressure.
- ✓ **Regular physical activity** can lower blood pressure. (Get your provider's okay if you are new to exercise.)
- ✓ **Control stress.** Research shows techniques such as yoga and meditation can effectively soothe stress, lowering blood pressure in many people.
- ✓ **Get serious about weight control.** Even losing just 3% to 5% of excess weight can improve blood pressure readings.
- ✓ **If you smoke, get help quitting.** Call the National Cancer Institute's free Smoking Quitline at **1-877-448-7848**.



TIP of the MONTH: DASH

May is High Blood Pressure Education Month, a good time to try the eating plan best known to help prevent and treat high blood pressure: **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH)**. It's loaded with vegetables, fruit, fish, beans, low-fat dairy products and whole grains, but is low in meat, sweets and sodium. Studies show that people who follow this eating plan can lower blood pressure just as effectively as if they were taking medicine. **Note:** Even if you feel fine, never stop taking blood pressure medication.

Computer Vision Syndrome



May is Healthy Vision Month

— a perfect time to focus on computer vision syndrome (CVS). Although not a vision-threatening problem, CVS can cause several symptoms, including eyestrain, blurred vision, dry eyes, headaches and neck pain.

Studies show 50% to 90% of people who use a computer for 2 hours or more sometimes experience CVS symptoms.

But there's good news. Several simple self-help measures can help relieve and prevent CVS.

For example, the American Optometric Association advises adjusting your computer screen so it is about 4 to 5 inches below eye level. Position your computer screen to avoid glare, too. If you can't change the lighting, consider a glare filter for the computer screen.

More eye-relieving tips:

- **REST** your eyes for 15 minutes after 2 hours of computer use.
- **FOLLOW** the 20-20-20 Rule: For every 20 minutes of computer viewing, take a 20-second break and refocus your eyes by looking 20 feet away.
- **BLINK** frequently to keep eyes moist; use moisturizing eye drops.
- **MAKE** sure your chair is comfortable to avoid neck and shoulder discomfort.
- **GET** an eye exam. Uncorrected or under-corrected vision problems contribute to eyestrain. Some people benefit from glasses prescribed specifically for computer use, too.

Fish Power

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

eating smart

Dietary Guidelines suggest that Americans eat at least two (3.5 oz.) servings of fish each week, and for good reason. Fish is a great source of protein and omega-3 fats, and contributes vitamins and minerals to the diet, including selenium, vitamin D, iron and zinc.

Eating enough fish helps protect heart health, lower blood pressure and improve blood vessel function, especially when you choose fatty fish such as salmon, trout and sardines. Fish may also help reduce the risk of depression and Alzheimer's disease. The trouble is, most Americans aren't eating enough fish. About half of all Americans eat fish only occasionally or not at all.

Why is our fish intake so low?

Some people simply don't like fish, while others don't know how to prepare it. And others are worried about

possible contaminants such as mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

Is this fear warranted? Researchers have calculated that if 100,000 people ate farmed salmon twice a week for 70 years, the extra PCB intake could potentially cause 24 extra deaths from cancer — but would prevent at least 7,000 deaths from heart disease. Levels of PCBs and dioxins in fish are very low, similar to levels in meats, dairy products and eggs.

To avoid excess mercury, especially if you are pregnant, breastfeeding or feeding young children, watch local fish advisories. Steer clear of shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish. Instead, choose shrimp, canned light tuna or salmon — which happen to be the most popular types of fish for eating in the U.S. anyway.



Trout with Thai Peanut Slaw

EASY recipe

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 large trout fillets (about 1½-2 lbs total) | ¼ cup natural peanut butter |
| Few pinches of salt and pepper | 1 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce |
| 2 cups shredded purple cabbage | ¼ cup unseasoned rice vinegar or lime juice |
| 2 carrots, grated | 2½ tbsp chopped fresh chives |
| 1 red pepper, seeded and diced | |
| 1 yellow pepper, seeded and diced | |



Preheat oven to 400°F. **Line** a baking sheet with parchment. **Place** fish on parchment (skin side down) and sprinkle with salt and pepper. **Bake** 6-12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with fork (about 5 minutes per half-inch of thickness). **Meanwhile**, in a large bowl, combine cabbage, carrots and peppers. **In** a small bowl, whisk together peanut butter, soy sauce and vinegar or lime juice. **Pour** dressing over the vegetables and toss to coat. **Serve** slaw alongside trout and top with chives.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving:

275 calories | 26g protein | 13g total fat | 3g saturated fat | 6g mono fat
4g poly fat | 15g carbohydrate | 5g sugar | 4g fiber | 372mg sodium

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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EXPERT advice

Q: Asthma relief?

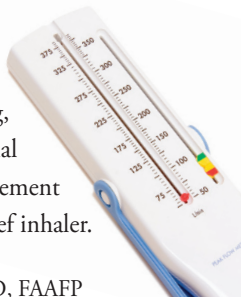
A: In asthma, narrowed airways cause coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing. Asthma relief can come from preventive steps and a treatment plan matched to disease severity. Top priorities:

Prevention: Schedule regular visits with your provider and get recommended care. Learn to identify your triggers and how to avoid them. Track your symptoms or peak flow meter readings to monitor how you're doing. Create an asthma action plan that tells you when to increase or decrease medicine based on your symptoms.

Treatment: Depending on disease severity, drugs for long-term control may be recommended, such as inhaled corticosteroids or long-acting inhaled beta agonists. Short-acting beta agonists often bring quick relief for asthma attacks. Severe asthma symptoms may require treatment with oral or intravenous corticosteroids.

Seek medical care immediately

if you have rapid worsening of breathing, symptoms with minimal exertion, or no improvement after using a quick-relief inhaler.



— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

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What's On Your Mind?



Do you ever feel like your mind is going in a million directions at once? Or maybe that it's about to burst from all of life's demands? Information overload can lead to stress, negativity and disorganization. What's the solution?

It pays to pursue a balanced state of flow or engagement, which is not only enjoyable but far more productive. Try these steps to declutter your mind:

Challenge yourself, but not too much. When a task is too easy, you are likely to get bored; when it's too hard, you may become frustrated and discouraged. Seek the Goldilocks zone of just-right difficulty.

Tame your emotional tiger.

Recognize and label your feelings; then take steps to manage them. Try deep breathing, challenging your negative thoughts and problem solving (vs. just plain worrying).

Stay focused. You may not experience the zone (the ability to focus) until 20 minutes into a task, so set distractions aside and stick with the activity long enough to hit your stride.

Break it up. Every hour or so, take a few minutes to stretch, move or do something different. You'll be fresher and more alert when you return.

Review these steps as needed when you take on a new project.

MOLD-FREE Home

Preventing mold in your home can help avert significant health issues, not to mention keeping your home in tiptop shape. Use these tips to maintain a dry, fungus-free abode:

- ✓ **Install** a whole-house dehumidifier or use a portable dehumidifier in damp areas of your home, such as laundry rooms or basements.
- ✓ **Use** a drain pan under your water heater and washing machine. Wash pans with bleach before reinstalling them.
- ✓ **Position** downspouts away from the house.
- ✓ **Keep** your home well ventilated. Install and use exhaust fans in bathrooms and kitchens (make sure they vent to the outside).
- ✓ **Fix** plumbing leaks immediately.
- ✓ **Clean** fabrics in your home routinely and keep them dry.

SAFETY corner



May is Building Safety Month.

Live Well, Be Well : 5.2019