

Healthy Living – Get Active!

Use this fact sheet to have a conversation about the benefits of physical activity with the individuals you support. Be ready to answer questions that the person may have. The following is a set of questions you may be asked. Be positive, encouraging – and a good example!



Why get active?

- Regular physical activity is good for your health! It helps you to look good and feel better! Being active can help you:
 - Keep your body healthy.
 - Keep your muscles strong.
 - Lose weight.
 - Exercise more often.
 - Feel better about yourself.
 - Sleep better.
- Physical activity along with a healthy diet helps to prevent diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure, and other serious medical conditions. This is sounding better and better!
- It is easy! Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. Take a walk, work in the garden, ride a bicycle, or go swimming – do something that you enjoy.

This sounds like fun! How do you get started?

- Start at your comfort level. Don't do anything that hurts you or that makes you uncomfortable. If you have been inactive and you do too much, you can hurt yourself.
- Start out slowly and add new activities little by little. After a few days or weeks, increase your level of activity – exercise a little longer and more often.
- Build activities into your normal daily routines. Take a walk at lunch. Look for ways to be more active each day.
- Don't be a couch potato! The more time you spend sitting and watching television, the more likely you are to be overweight or obese. You can exercise and watch TV. Get up and dance while you are watching American Idol!
- Find a friend. Join a team. Take a class. Have fun!

Are there things you need to watch out for?

- Don't let yourself get thirsty! Drink lots of water when you are active.
- If you feel pain, feel faint, or have shortness of breath, stop and tell someone.
- Talk to your doctor before you start to get their advice on what is best for you. There are special rules about exercise for people with diabetes and other health conditions. Talk to your doctor to find out what they are.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes.
- If you are away from home, take an ID with you in case you fall or are hurt. If you have diabetes, you should wear a medical ID bracelet.

How much physical activity should you get?

Set a goal. To get all the benefits of exercise, you should be physically active at least 150 minutes (two and a half hours) a week or – even better – 30 minutes a day! Time adds up. If you can't exercise for 30 minutes at a time, exercise three times a day for ten minutes each. Keeping a daily record of what you do helps you keep track of your time.