

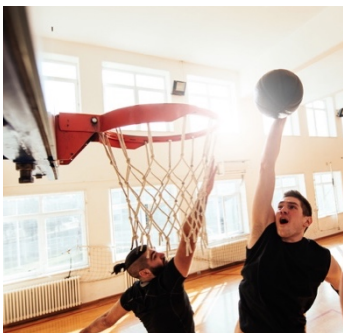
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

DO MORE OF WHAT YOU ENJOY!

VARIETY

The Spice of (a Physically Fit) Life

Diversifying your activity is an easy and fun way to begin a lifelong fitness habit. Walk one day, bicycle the next. Play basketball or tennis on another day during the week. Take your time and add activities slowly. Pursuing a variety of activities can keep you from getting bored with your exercise program by keeping it interesting and enjoyable! If maintaining a healthy weight is one of your goals, remember that all continuous activity will burn fat and calories. You will exercise longer and burn more calories by doing a variety of physical activities. Over a period of time, build up to 30 minutes or more of moderate and varied activity each day. Above all, enjoy what you are doing!



TYPES OF ACTIVITY

Different activities provide different benefits to your body.

Aerobic Fitness – Strengthens your entire cardiovascular system by increasing your heart rate, blood circulation, and endurance. Participate in brisk walking, jogging, swimming, biking, cross-country skiing, rowing, inline skating, stair stepping, aerobic dance, or ice skating.

Anaerobic Fitness – Short periods of high intensity exercise strengthens your respiratory system, builds stamina and muscle mass, and boosts metabolism. Participate in activities such as power walking, climbing stairs, HIIT programs, and circuit workouts.

Muscle Strengthening/Endurance – Strong muscles help you maintain and improve balance, posture, and increase bone mass. Use your own body resistance in push-ups and curl ups, use free weights at home, or use weight equipment at the gym. When you incorporate high repetitions of muscle strengthening exercises you build endurance which allows you to perform an activity longer and recover from fatigue sooner.

Flexibility – Flexibility and mobility will gradually decrease without regular stretching. Stretching is best done with warm muscles on a daily basis. Be sure to stretch from head to toe including things like neck rolls, hamstring/calf stretches, hip/ankle circles, and shoulder stretches.

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BENEFITS OF ADDING VARIETY

There are many muscles in your body, more than 600 of them! Some of your muscles help move food through your digestive system and some pump blood through your body. Skeletal muscles help you walk, jump, carry heavy boxes, and do sit-ups. It is often forgotten that your organs are muscles and can be strengthened through exercise. No single or series of activities can stretch and strengthen all areas. This is why variety is so important. Here are some ideas to add new activities to your physical fitness routine.

Combine multiple activities into the same workout - For example, you could begin your workout with a short bike ride, followed by stair climbing, and finish with 15 minutes of walking.

Do different activities - If you normally run, plan to swim, bike, ski or skate once or twice a week instead. If you continually do the same type of exercise every day, you exercise the same muscles in the same way. This can put overworked muscles at risk of strain and injury and contribute to atrophy of underworked muscles.

Go the distance once in a while - To build endurance and health, choose one day a week to exercise for a longer period of time than usual. If you typically bike 30 minutes daily, for example, go for an hour-long ride – even longer if you want to!

Ease into it - Even if you are already active, ease into any new activity. Just because you walk regularly doesn't mean you're ready to put on a heavy backpack and hike steep mountain trails! Replace a workout or two each week with your new activity. Whatever you choose – whether climbing stairs, playing tennis, or cycling – limit yourself to approximately 20 minutes until your muscles become accustomed to it. Once you are in shape for the new workout, you can increase

