

Physical Activity and Health: The Evidence Explained

Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It helps to keep your body strong and healthy, and it can reduce your risk of developing a variety of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer.



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by Adrienne E. Hardman

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But how much physical activity do you need? And what types of activities are best for you? The answers to these questions may vary depending on your age, sex, and health status. However, the general recommendations for adults are to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week.

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity includes activities such as walking, swimming, biking, and dancing. Vigorous-intensity aerobic activity includes

activities such as running, sprinting, and playing sports like basketball or soccer.

If you're new to exercise, it's important to start slowly and gradually increase the amount of time you spend exercising each week. You should also choose activities that you enjoy, as this will make it more likely that you'll stick with them.

In addition to aerobic activity, it's also important to get regular strength training exercises. Strength training helps to build muscle, which can help to improve your balance, coordination, and flexibility. It can also help to reduce your risk of falls and fractures.

The recommended amount of strength training for adults is two to three sessions per week. Each session should include exercises that work all of the major muscle groups, such as the chest, back, legs, and arms.

If you have any concerns about starting an exercise program, talk to your doctor first. They can help you develop a plan that is safe and effective for you.

The Benefits of Physical Activity

There are many benefits to getting regular physical activity, including:

- Improved heart health
- Reduced risk of stroke
- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes
- Reduced risk of some types of cancer

- Weight loss or maintenance
- Improved mood
- Increased energy levels
- Better sleep
- Stronger bones and muscles
- Improved balance and coordination
- Reduced risk of falls and fractures

Physical activity can also help to improve your overall quality of life. It can give you more energy, make you feel happier and more confident, and help you to sleep better.

How to Get More Physical Activity

If you're not used to exercising, it can be difficult to know where to start. Here are a few tips to help you get more physical activity into your life:

- Start slowly and gradually increase the amount of time you spend exercising each week.
- Choose activities that you enjoy, as this will make it more likely that you'll stick with them.
- Find a workout buddy or join a fitness class. This can help you stay motivated and accountable.
- Set realistic goals for yourself. Don't try to do too much too soon, or you'll quickly get discouraged.
- Listen to your body and take rest days when you need them.

If you have any concerns about starting an exercise program, talk to your doctor first. They can help you develop a plan that is safe and effective for you.

Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It has many benefits, including improved heart health, reduced risk of chronic diseases, weight loss or maintenance, improved mood, and increased energy levels. If you're not used to exercising, start slowly and gradually increase the amount of time you spend exercising each week. Choose activities that you enjoy and set realistic goals for yourself. With a little effort, you can reap the many benefits of physical activity.



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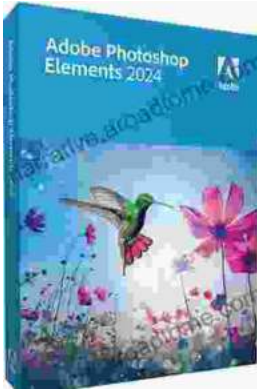
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