



# FRESH

## Prince George's



A RESOURCE GUIDE TO **HEALTHIER LIVING**

# WELCOME TO THE PRINCE GEORGE'S HEALTHCARE ACTION COALITION'S **RESOURCE GUIDE TO HEALTHIER LIVING.**

You have just taken the first step on the road to a healthier lifestyle. In this Guide, you will find useful tips for incorporating healthier eating habits and increasing physical activity into your daily life. **Eating well and moving more** are two important measures that will help reduce your risk of developing chronic diseases such as obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes.



This Resource Guide to Healthier Living was developed by the Chronic Disease Workgroup of the Prince George's Healthcare Action Coalition (PGHAC), with funding from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission. The PGHAC was established in 2011 as a community health network and forum to advance the state of health care in Prince George's County, Maryland. Over thirty organizations, elected officials, physicians and county agencies are represented in the membership. The focus of the Prince George's Healthcare Action Coalition is to improve the health status of County residents through high quality health care that is accessible, place appropriate, affordable, and culturally competent.



**Whether you are an adult, an adolescent, or a child**, you will find recommendations here that are fresh, practical, and easy to work into your busy home, work, and/or school schedule. And many of them will cost you nothing at all to adopt! You will also find the latest information about healthy food choices, the role of salt, fats, and sugar in your diet, Nutrition Facts labels on food packaging, and the relationship between healthy lifestyles and chronic disease prevention and management. Other resources and related website addresses are provided at the end of this Guide so that you can stay abreast of the latest medical and scientific findings, and conveniently locate additional information that will help you be successful—and stay motivated—in adopting healthier behaviors.

**Share this Guide** with your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Keep a copy in your kitchen, car, or office as a constant reminder of the things you can do to become more active and improve your diet. After all, there is no better time than **NOW** to start your journey to better health.



# IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT CHRONIC DISEASES<sup>1</sup>



## Why Should You Eat Well and Move More?

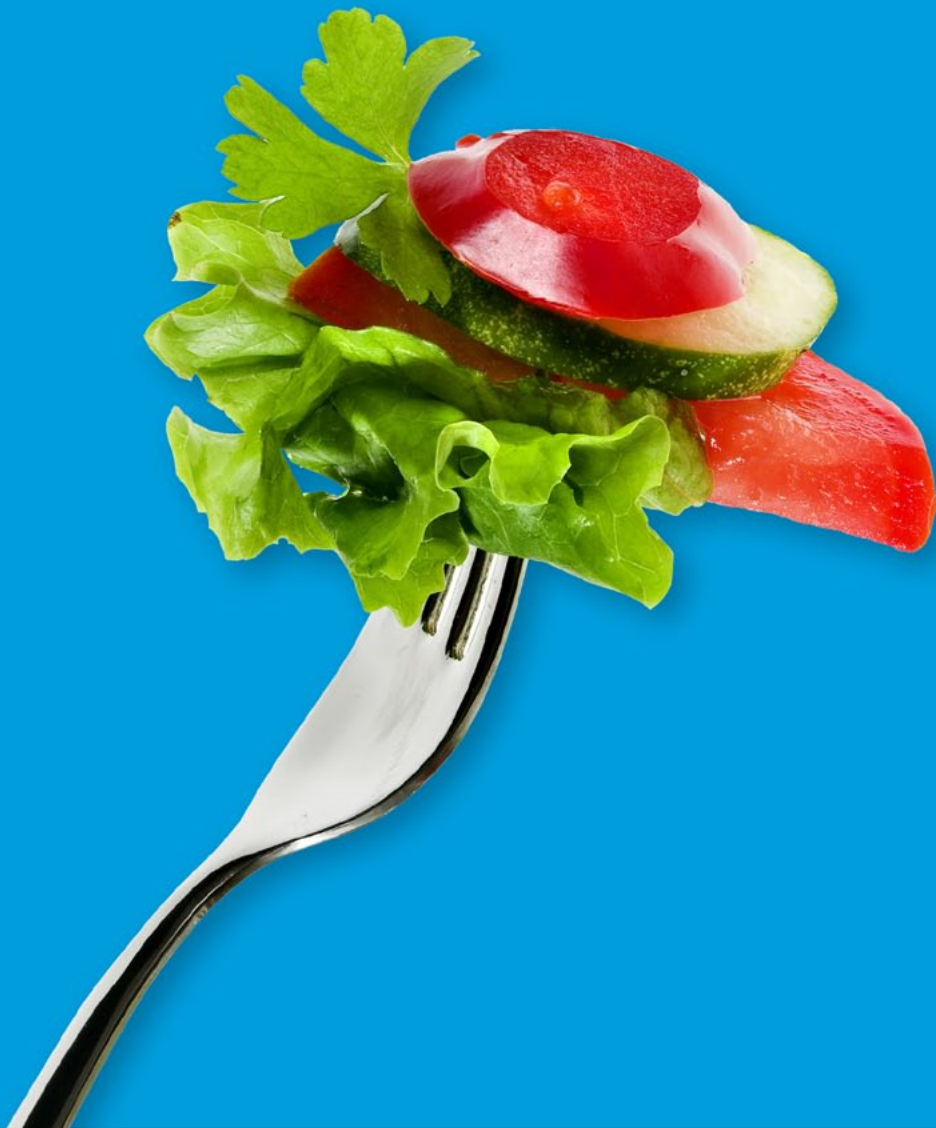
According to the CDC, chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability in the U.S.

- 7 out of 10 deaths among Americans each year are from chronic diseases. Heart disease, cancer and stroke account for more than 50% of all deaths each year.
- In 2005, 133 million Americans—almost 1 out of every 2 adults—had at least one chronic illness.
- Obesity has become a major health concern. 1 in every 3 adults is obese and almost 1 in 5 youth between the ages of 6 and 19 is obese (Body Mass Index {BMI}  $\geq$  95th percentile on the CDC growth chart).
- About 1 in 4 people with chronic conditions has one or more daily activity limitations.

## Common Causes of Chronic Disease

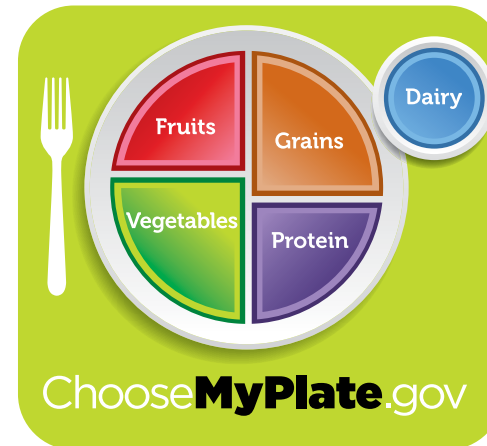
- Health risk behaviors—lack of physical activity, poor nutrition—are responsible for much of the illness, suffering, and early death related to chronic diseases.
- More than one-third of all adults do not meet recommendations for aerobic physical activity based on the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, and 23% report no leisure-time physical activity at all in the preceding month.
- In 2007, less than 22% of high school students and only 24% of adults reported eating 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

# MAKING HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES



## ChooseMYPlate.gov

Using the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has developed the MyPlate<sup>2</sup> logo below as a visual guide to assist individuals in making healthier food choices.



For more tips on making healthier food choices (including eating healthy when eating out, sample recipes and menus, and healthy eating on a budget), go to the following website:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips.html>





# HOW TO REDUCE SALT, SUGAR, AND FAT INTAKE



## How to Reduce Salt Intake

### Did you know?

According to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, nearly one in three American adults has high blood pressure<sup>3</sup>. Salt intake is a leading contributor to high blood pressure and can be found in all kinds of foods. This is significant because, in general, higher salt intake can mean higher blood pressure as well as greater risk for osteoporosis and cancer. Keeping blood pressure in the normal range of 120/80 mm Hg reduces the risk of stroke, heart disease and heart failure.

### What foods contain salt?

Salt—the primary source of sodium in the diet—is in a wide variety of foods. There are foods that taste salty like chips, salted nuts and pretzels, and there are other foods, especially processed foods like some ketchups and salad dressings, that don't necessarily taste salty but contain high amounts of salt. There is also high sodium content in many breads, cereals and canned vegetables.

### How much salt is OK to eat?

Most adults should consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium each day. However, those with high blood pressure or those who are at risk for high blood pressure should aim to consume even less sodium. At the same time, everyone should consume potassium-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables. Potassium helps to reduce the negative effects that salt may have on blood pressure.

Generally, the younger the child, the less salt he/she should consume. The following table provides some guidelines for maximum salt intake:

If a child is...	They should eat less than...
1 to 3 years old	1,500 milligrams a day
4 to 8 years old	1,900 milligrams a day
9 to 13 years old	2,200 milligrams a day
14 to 18 years old	2,300 milligrams a day

### How do I know the salt content of a packaged food?

Here is a rule for determining which foods have too much salt:

- Look on the Nutrition Facts label of the packaged food (remember to look at the serving size; the package might contain more than one serving).
- Find where the label lists the sodium or sodium chloride content. This will tell you how many milligrams of sodium are in the package per serving.
- An easy way to make a decision is to look at the % DV (Percent Daily Value) or percent of the recommended daily intake. If it is:
  - **More than 20%** = Stop! This food or beverage is very high in sodium.
  - **5 - 20%** = Use with caution and carefully monitor portion sizes to avoid eating too much sodium.
  - **0 - 5%** = This is a low sodium food or beverage.

## TIPS TO CUT DOWN ON SALT<sup>3</sup>

- **Go for flavor:** Instead of using salt, flavor food with herbs, spices, garlic and lemon juice.
- **Au natural:** Natural foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans tend to have very low levels of sodium—try to build more of these into your diet.
- **Snack attack:** Cut down on salty snacks such as chips, nuts and salty cheeses. Replace these with dried fruit and unsalted nuts and crackers.
- **Avoid processed foods:** Cut back on processed foods as much as possible as they contain a lot of salt. Replace processed cheeses with mozzarella, cheddar, cream cheese and cottage cheese. Replace processed meats, such as salami and sausages, with fresh chicken, lamb, turkey or beef.
- **Take stock:** Choose low-salt stock cubes or make your own soup stock.
- **Garnishing?** Many condiments (including mustard, ketchup and peanut butter) have “low-sodium” or “reduced sodium” options. Choose these when you are at the grocery store. Limit high-sodium condiments and foods, such as soy sauce, steak sauce, Worcestershire sauce, flavored seasoning salts, pickles and olives.
- **Cereal selection:** Breakfast cereals have a lot of hidden salt. Try the tasty low-salt options.
- **On the town?** When you eat out, request that the chef prepares your food without added salt and request all sauces “on the side.” Add sauce in moderation as you eat your meal.
- **Wash and go:** Try rinsing certain foods, such as canned tuna and salmon, feta cheese and capers, before eating to remove excess salt.
- **Get committed:** Remove the salt shaker from the table. Things may seem bland at first, but over time, your taste buds will adjust.

## How to Reduce Sugar Intake

### Did you know?

Americans consume hundreds more calories on average per day than they did 30 years ago, and eat almost a half a pound of sugar a day. The primary source of this excess sugar and calories... sugar sweetened beverages. Those extra empty calories consumed from sugary drinks lead to weight gain and ultimately negative health consequences such as heart disease and diabetes<sup>4</sup>.

### What foods contain sugar?

Foods containing sugar include canned or packaged fruit, pudding and pudding cups, snack cakes and pies, muffin mixes, prepared muffins, cereal bars, cookies, instant hot cereal, breakfast cereal, bottled spaghetti sauce, barbecue sauce<sup>5</sup>.

Other sources of sugar are soft drinks, candy, cakes, cookies, pies and fruit drinks (fruitades and fruit punch); dairy desserts and milk products (ice cream, sweetened yogurt and sweetened milk); cinnamon toast and honey-nut waffles<sup>6</sup>.

### How much sugar is OK to eat?

The American Heart Association has specific guidelines for added sugars — no more than 100 calories a day from added sugars for most women and no more than 150 calories a day for most men<sup>6</sup>. That's about 6 teaspoons of added sugars for women and 9 for men. Unfortunately, most Americans get more than 22 teaspoons — or 355 calories — of added sugars a day, which far exceeds these recommendations<sup>7</sup>.



### How do I know the sugar content of a packaged food?

The American Heart Association (AHA) gives information on how to figure out if a packaged food contains added sugars, and how much<sup>5</sup>. You have to be a bit of a detective. On a food product's Nutrition Facts label the line for sugars lists both the natural and added types as total grams of sugar. There are 4 calories in each gram of sugar, so if a product has 15 grams of sugar per serving, that's 60 calories just from the sugar alone (not counting the other ingredients).

To tell if a processed food contains added sugars, you need to look at the list of ingredients. Sugar has many other names. Besides those ending in "ose," such as maltose or sucrose, other names for sugar include high fructose corn syrup, molasses, cane sugar, corn sweetener, raw sugar, syrup, honey or fruit juice concentrates.

Limit your consumption of foods with high amounts of added sugars, such as sugar-sweetened beverages. Just one 12-ounce can of regular soda contains 8 teaspoons of sugar, or 130 calories and zero nutritional value.



## TIPS TO CUT DOWN ON SUGAR

- Drink water or other calorie-free drinks instead of sugary, non-diet sodas or sports drinks.
- When you drink fruit juice, make sure it's 100 percent fruit juice — not juice drinks that have added sugar. Better yet, eat the fruit rather than drink the juice.
- Choose breakfast cereals carefully. Although healthy breakfast cereals can contain added sugar to make them more appealing to children, skip the non-nutritious, sugar-frosted cereals.
- Opt for reduced-sugar varieties of syrups, jams, jellies and preserves. Use other condiments sparingly. Salad dressings and ketchup have added sugar.
- Choose fresh fruit for dessert instead of cakes, cookies, pies, ice cream and other sweets.
- Snack on vegetables, fruits, low-fat cheese, whole-grain crackers and low-fat, low-calorie yogurt instead of candy, pastries and cookies<sup>6</sup>.
- Cut back on the amount of sugar added to things you eat or drink regularly like cereal, pancakes, coffee or tea. Try cutting by half the usual amount of sugar you add and try cutting down even more or consider using an artificial sweetener.
- Buy sugar-free or low-calorie beverages.
- Buy fresh fruits or fruits canned in water or natural juice. Avoid fruits canned in syrup, especially heavy syrup.
- Instead of adding sugar to cereal or oatmeal, add fresh fruit (try bananas, cherries or strawberries) or dried fruit (raisins, cranberries or apricots).
- When baking cookies, brownies or cakes, cut the sugar called for in the recipe by one-third to one-half. Often you won't notice the difference.
- Instead of adding sugar in recipes, use extracts such as almond, vanilla, orange or lemon.
- Enhance foods with spices instead of sugar; try ginger, allspice, cinnamon or nutmeg.
- Substitute unsweetened applesauce for sugar in equal amounts in recipes.
- Try non-nutritive sweeteners such as aspartame, sucralose or saccharin in moderation. Non-nutritive sweeteners may be a way to satisfy your sweet tooth without adding more calories to your diet. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has determined that non-nutritive sweeteners are safe<sup>8</sup>.



## How to Reduce Fat Intake

### Did you know?

According to the FDA, eating too much fat can lead to a wide range of health challenges. The total amount and type of fat can contribute to and/or increase the risk of:

- heart disease
- high cholesterol
- increased risk of many cancers (including colon-rectum cancer)
- obesity
- high blood pressure
- type 2 diabetes

### What foods contain fat?

The American Diabetic Association (ADA) recommends eating less of the unhealthy fats—saturated and trans fat—to lower your risk of heart disease<sup>9</sup>. At the same time, you can protect your heart by eating the healthy fats—monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and omega-3 fats. All fats are high in calories so it is important to watch portion sizes as well. Substitute saturated and trans fats with the healthy fats. Instead of 1 cheese stick for an afternoon snack, have 12 almonds. The calories are about the same, but you will have improved your heart health with that single change!

### Unhealthy Fats

#### Saturated Fat

Why should you eat less saturated fat? Because saturated fat raises blood cholesterol levels. High blood cholesterol is a risk factor for heart disease and people with diabetes are at high risk for heart disease. Limiting your saturated fat can help lower your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.



#### *Foods containing saturated fat include:*

- High-fat dairy products such as full-fat cheese, cream, ice cream, whole milk, 2% milk and sour cream
- High-fat meats like regular ground beef, bologna, hot dogs, sausage, bacon and spareribs
- Lard
- Butter, fatback and salt pork
- Cream sauces
- Gravy made with meat drippings
- Chocolate
- Palm oil and palm kernel oil
- Coconut and coconut oil
- Poultry (chicken and turkey) skin

One of the important diabetes nutrition recommendations is to eat less than 7% of calories from saturated fat. For most people this is about 15 grams of saturated fat per day. That is not much when you consider just one ounce of cheese can have 8 grams of saturated fat.

Many adults, especially women and sedentary men, may need less fat. To find out a specific goal for you, talk with your dietitian or health care provider. Saturated fat grams are listed on the food product Nutrition Facts label under total fat. As a general rule, compare foods with less saturated fat. Foods with 1 gram or less saturated fat per serving are considered low in saturated fat.

### *Trans Fat*

Like saturated fat, trans fat tends to increase blood cholesterol levels. It is actually worse for you than saturated fat. For a heart-healthy diet, eat as little trans fat as possible by avoiding all foods that contain it. Trans fats are produced when liquid oil is made into a solid fat. This process is called hydrogenation. Trans fats act like saturated fats and can raise your cholesterol level. Trans fats are listed on the food product's Nutrition Facts label, making it easier to identify them. Unless there is at least 0.5 grams or more of trans fat in a food, the label can claim 0 grams. If you want to avoid as much trans fat as possible, read the ingredient list on the Nutrition Facts labels. Look for words like hydrogenated oil or partially hydrogenated oil. Avoid foods that contain hydrogenated oil or that have liquid oil listed first in the ingredient list.

*Sources of trans fat include:*

- Processed foods like snacks (crackers and chips) and baked goods (muffins, cookies and cakes) with hydrogenated oil or partially hydrogenated oil
- Stick margarines and shortening
- Some fast food items such as French fries

### *Cholesterol*

Your body makes some of the cholesterol in your blood. The rest comes from foods you eat. Foods from animals are sources of dietary cholesterol. Cholesterol from the food you eat may increase your blood cholesterol, so it's a good idea to eat less than 200 mg per day. Cholesterol is required on the Nutrition Facts label if the food contains it.

*Sources of cholesterol include:*

- High-fat dairy products (whole or 2% milk, cream, ice cream, full-fat cheese)
- Egg yolks
- Liver and other organ meats
- High-fat meat and poultry skin

### **Healthy Fats**

#### *Monounsaturated Fat*

Monounsaturated fats are called “good or healthy” fats because they can lower your bad (LDL) cholesterol.

*Sources of monounsaturated fat include:*

- Avocados
- Canola oil
- Nuts like almonds, cashews, pecans, and peanuts
- Olive oil and olives
- Peanut butter and peanut oil
- Sesame seeds

The ADA recommends eating more monounsaturated fats than saturated or trans fats in your diet<sup>9</sup>.





## How much fat is OK to eat?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommends that Americans<sup>10</sup>:

- Consume less than 10% of calories from saturated fats
- Replace solid fats with oils when possible
- Limit foods that contain synthetic sources of trans fats (such as hydrogenated oils), and keep total trans fats consumption as low as possible
- Eat fewer than 300 mg of dietary cholesterol per day
- Reduce intake of calories from solid fats

Age Group	Total Fat Limits
Children ages 2 to 3	30% to 40% of total calories
Children and adolescents ages 4 to 18	25% to 35% of total calories
Adults, ages 19 and older	20% to 35% of total calories

## How do I know the fat content of a packaged food?

The FDA recommends checking the Nutrition Facts label when comparing foods, and choosing the food with the lower % DV (Percent Daily Value) of total fat and saturated fat, and low or no grams of trans fat.

- 5% DV or less of total fat is *low*
- 20% DV or more of total fat is *high*

When choosing foods that are labeled “fat-free” and “low-fat,” be aware that fat-free doesn’t mean calorie-free. Sometimes to make a food tastier, extra sugars are added, which adds extra calories. Be sure to check the calories per serving.

## TIPS TO CUT DOWN ON FATS

Kaiser Permanente recommends the following few tips to cut down on fats<sup>11</sup>:

- Fill up on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Think of meat as a side dish instead of as the main part of your meal.
- Try main dishes that use whole wheat pasta, brown rice, dried beans, or vegetables.
- Use cooking methods with little or no fat, such as broiling, steaming, or grilling. Use cooking spray instead of oil. If you use oil, use monounsaturated oil, such as canola or olive oil.
- Trim fat from meats before you cook them. Drain off fat after you brown the meat or while you are roasting it.
- Chill soups and stews after you cook them so that you can skim off the fat after it gets hard.
- To get more omega-3 fatty acids, have fish twice a week. Add ground flaxseed to cereal, soups, and smoothies. Sprinkle walnuts on salads.
- When you bake muffins or breads, replace part of the fat ingredient (oil, butter, margarine) with applesauce, or use canola oil instead of butter or shortening.
- Read Nutrition Facts labels on canned, bottled, or packaged foods. Choose foods with little saturated fat and no trans fat.





**Cholesterol**

Cholesterol is found only in animal products, including meat, poultry, eggs, fish, and dairy. Fruits, vegetables, grains, and other plant foods contain no cholesterol. Your meal plan should call for less than 300 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol per day. A food that has less than 20 mg of cholesterol per serving can be called a low-cholesterol food.

**Sodium**

Sodium is another name for salt. A diet high in sodium may raise your blood pressure. Your goal should be to consume less than 2,400 mg of salt per day. A food that contains 140 mg or less of salt can be called a low-sodium food.

**Total Carbohydrate**

Carbohydrates are found in bread, pasta, rice, cereal, fruit, potatoes, starchy vegetables and sweets. A diabetic meal plan should pay special attention to total carbohydrate grams per serving, not just to sugar grams.

Dietary fiber is found in vegetables, whole grains, and fruit. Fiber is important to digestion. Your meal plan should include 25 to 30 grams of fiber per day. Sugars, whether added or occurring naturally, are included in total carbohydrate and also listed separately.

**Protein**

Protein is found in both animal and plant foods, especially beans, nuts, meat, poultry, eggs, fish and dairy.

**Percent Daily Value (DV)**

This item shows the percentage of each listed nutrient that is provided by one serving of the food as part of a 2,000 calorie per day diet. A value of 20% or more means that the food is considered high in that nutrient; a value of 5% or less means it is low in that nutrient. The percentages supplied by your meals will vary if the calories per day in your meal plan vary.





# ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING AN ACTIVE LIFESTYLE



## Physical Activity: Getting Fit for Life

Physical activity can benefit anyone, at any age.

- Appropriate physical activity can help you feel better and enjoy life no matter what your age or physical condition.
- Regular exercise can prevent or slow the progress of chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes, or heart disease. Exercise also is recognized as effective in treating mood disorders such as depression.
- Maintaining your activity level supports your independence by keeping you able to care for yourself as you age.

## Effective Exercise

An effective activity program includes all four types of exercise: energy-building, strength training, balance and flexibility. For energy building, spend at least 150 minutes a week in physical activities that increase your heart rate. For instance, start with 10 minutes of walking a day and build up to 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

Strength training helps you enjoy daily activities and improve your performance in physical exercise. Muscles weaken when they are not used. Additionally, muscle activity makes your bones stronger and helps avoid osteoporosis. As you age, maintaining your physical strength helps you avoid balance problems, a concern for older adults. Strong leg and hip muscles make you less likely to fall and better able to get yourself up if you do fall.

The ability to maintain your balance is crucial to exercising and to preventing falls. Repeating the following exercises will help improve your balance:

- Stand on one foot and then on the other. When possible, do not hold on to anything.
- Use your leg muscles only when standing up from a seated position, without help from your arms.

- Walk a straight line with a repeated heel-to-toe action.
- You can fit these activities into the other activities of your day, such as balancing on one foot while standing in line.

Flexibility can be improved with a consistent program of stretching. Stretch when your muscles are warm, and never stretch so far that it hurts.

### Who should exercise?

The right exercise can benefit almost anyone, at any age, if done correctly. Check with your doctor before beginning any new physical activity or exercise program if you:

- have a chronic disease
- are overweight
- are a smoker
- have not talked with your doctor about a new symptom
- have chest pain or shortness of breath
- have joint swelling
- have pain or trouble walking after a fall
- have balance problems
- have a hernia
- have recently had surgery or sustained an injury

### Are you ready to exercise?

Before starting a new exercise program, see your health care provider for advice, particularly if you haven't been active. Plan for realistic progress and keep track of your activities. Start gradually. Set a schedule for your exercise program that fits in with your daily life. Choose activities that you like and will do regularly. Consider whether you would like to exercise with a friend or take a class. Try to make exercise fun.

## SAFETY TIPS

Stay safe by using the following guidelines:

- Start slowly. Increase your activity level in small increments. If you have not been active, a fast start may be painful.
- Breathe normally when exercising. Holding your breath may affect your blood pressure. When lifting weights, breathe out when lifting; breathe in when releasing the weight.
- Do not depend on your pulse rate to measure how hard to exercise. Some conditions and medicines can change your natural heart rate.
- Use a helmet when riding a bike, and wear the right shoes for walking or jogging.
- Drink plenty of water when doing activities that make you sweat, unless your doctor has told you to limit fluids.
- Learn the safe way to bend when you exercise.
- Be sure to wear clothing and shoes that are right for your exercise.
- Warm up before stretching with walking and arm pumping.
- You may aim to work hard enough to feel a bit tired, but your activity should not exhaust you. While you may feel some discomfort or a little soreness, you should not feel pain. If you feel pain while exercising, stop.
- Your doctor can suggest activities that are suitable for your present health status.
- If the weather can affect your planned exercise, have an alternative planned.





## ACTIVITY LEVEL AND DURATION

Moderately intense activity increases your heart rate and improves circulation. It promotes bone strength, flexibility and balance in weight-bearing activities such as dancing, walking and swimming. Start with 30 minutes a day, five days a week, and increase to 1 hour, five days a week.

Vigorous activities such as running, kickboxing and high-impact aerobics further increase your heart rate and can offer greater health benefits. Increasing your level of activity in other activities can also add these benefits. When ready, start with 15 minutes, five days a week, and increase to 30 minutes, five days a week.

Muscle-strengthening exercise includes weight lifting, resistance bands, and yoga. Your program should exercise all your muscles, including arms and shoulders, chest and back, abdomen, hips and legs. Use heavier weights with few repetitions to increase muscle bulk, and lighter weights with more repetitions to add lean muscle. Include muscle-strengthening exercises at least 2 days a week.

### Getting Started

If your current daily activities are sedentary, sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time, such as using a computer or watching TV, it is important to add more movement to your day.

Begin with common daily activities, such as house-cleaning, yard work, and walking the dog. Add steps when possible. Use the stairs rather than the elevator and park your car farther from your destination.

Gradually add activities from a variety of exercises. Aim for the following mix:

- Flexibility and strength exercises, 2 to 3 times a week: stretching, yoga/tai chi, sit-ups/push-ups, weight lifting.
- Aerobic activities, 4-5 times a week: Brisk walking, jogging, swimming, cross-country skiing, exercise machines.
- Leisure and recreational activities: golfing, bowling, gardening, dancing, hiking, basketball, soccer, downhill skiing, tennis, martial arts.





## For more information on chronic disease prevention, healthy eating and physical activity, contact:

Prince George's Healthcare Action Coalition at 301-883-7851

Prince George's County Health Department, Division of Adult and Geriatric Health, at 301-883-3900

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