

Keeping Active: The Why's and How's

Being physically active promotes health. Among its many benefits, keeping active helps you to:

- Protect against heart disease, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, arthritis and osteoporosis,
- Maintain a good appetite,
- Keep mobile,
- Reduce joint stiffness and the pain associated with arthritis,
- Lessen the risk of falling (by strengthening your muscles), and of fracturing bones,
- Manage weight, and
- Improve your mood and sense of wellbeing.

FIND THE ACTIVITY THAT SUITS YOU

Knowing which type of activity you enjoy will encourage you to make time for it.

1. Do you enjoy regular physical activity?
A Not really
B Somewhat
C Absolutely
2. Do you enjoy participating in organised activities and sports?
A Hate it
B It's okay
C Love it
3. Can you carve out 30 to 60 minutes a day on most days to do some physical activity?
A Not a chance
B Maybe
C Definitely
4. Do you like to learn new activities?
A No way
B If they aren't too hard
C Absolutely

5. Do you like to be around others when you participate in physical activity?
A Not really
B When they help motivate me
C Absolutely
6. How do you feel about perspiring?
A Hate it
B It's okay
C Like it because it means I'm getting the most out of my workout
7. Do you have a place to participate in physical activity?
A Not really
B Safe walking trail
C Home (with exercise equipment, exercise videos, etc) /outdoors/gym/sports centre
8. Have you ever enjoyed playing sports?
A Never
B Loved it as a kid
C Still enjoy it
9. How ready are you to get moving?
A Not very
B Pretty ready
C Can't wait to get started
10. How much variety do you want in your physical activity?
A Lots
B I'd rather stick to one thing
C Some

Total No. of As:

Total No. of Bs:

Total No. of Cs:

WHAT YOUR RESULTS MEAN?

(Please refer to Activity Strategies below)

6 – 10 A's Try the 'Lifestyle Approach'

6 – 10 B's Try the 'Walking Program'

6 – 10 Cs Try the 'Organised Activity Option'

What if your scores are quite evenly split? Choose the strategy that appeals to you most, or try combining the two that have the highest number. For example, if you have mostly A's and B's, try the Lifestyle Approach on some days and the Walking Programme on others. For a real variety, try some of each activity.

ACTIVITY STRATEGIES

The Lifestyle Approach

Perform small activities throughout your day – on top of what you normally do – to add up to an increased amount of total activity. Examples:

- Walk to the shopping mall instead of driving.
- Get off the bus a few blocks early and walk the rest of the way to your destination.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Do housework yourself instead of hiring someone else to do it.
- Wash the car yourself instead of going to the carwash.

The Walking Programme

Start a structured walking routine. Walking is an ideal way to fit fitness into your life because it is inexpensive, easy and convenient.

Sample 10-Week Walking Plans to get you started:

This plan is for those who are not used to physical activity.

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Minutes Walking	10	10	15	18	20	20	25	30	32	35
Walks Per Week	2	3	3	3	3–4	4	4	4	4	4

This plan is for those who are already physically active.

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Minutes Walking	20	22	25	30	30	35	35	40	42	45
Walks Per Week	3	3	3	3	4	4	4–5	4–5	4–5	4–5

Source: www.move.va.gov

The Organised Activity Option

Participate in scheduled classes (e.g. aerobics, yoga or pilates classes) or play sports (e.g. tennis, badminton, football) to add activity to your life. Besides getting fitter, you will benefit from the social support of your classmates and teammates.