

From the Center for Healthy Aging at the National Council on Aging

Key Guidelines for Adults

- Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none. Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits.
- For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.
- Additional health benefits are gained by engaging in physical activity beyond the equivalent of 300 minutes (5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity a week. • Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.

Key Guidelines for Older Adults

The key guidelines for adults also apply to older adults. In addition, the following key guidelines are just for older adults:

- As part of their weekly physical activity, older adults should do multicomponent physical activity that includes balance training as well as aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities.
- Older adults should determine their level of effort for physical activity relative to their level of fitness.
- Older adults with chronic conditions should understand whether and how their conditions affect their ability to do regular physical activity safely.
- When older adults cannot do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week because of chronic conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.

- **Stay Safe during exercise:**
- Exercising at home, with appropriate exercises and guidance, is generally safe and healthy. Be sure to follow these reminders:
 - Listen to your body. Always warm up before exercising and cool down afterward. Gauge your level of effort with the “talk test”. You should be exercising at a level that allows you to talk, but not sing.
 - Be aware of your environment. Make sure you are in reach of a counter, back of a couch, or a sturdy chair that is pushed up against a wall in case you lose your balance and need to hold on to something. It may also be helpful to put a chair/couch behind you in case you need to sit or lose your balance.
 - Hydrate. Drink water before, during, and after exercising, even if you don’t feel thirsty.
 - Wear appropriate shoes and clothing. Choose shoes that are made for the type of activity you want to do and choose clothes that work with your activity and the temperature of your environment.