



ENCOURAGING SENIORS TO BE MORE ACTIVE

It's not about how young you are—it's about how young you feel! And you're never too old to benefit from physical activity. In fact, physical activity is particularly important for older adults, because it helps maintain independence as you age. Independent living requires you to be able to lift, carry, and move around easily—and staying physically active helps you do these things. Despite these clear benefits, research tells us that 57% of Canadian adults aged 65 or older are insufficiently active.

Older adults should accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity, most days of the week. This may sound like a lot, but this doesn't mean you need to suit up in spandex or do jumping jacks to see benefits. If you do active things you enjoy, 10 minutes at a time, you can work your way up to a healthier, independent lifestyle. It's simple—the more you move, the better you feel! For the best health, you should try to include a variety of activities from all three of these categories:

1. ENDURANCE

> activities that make you breathe deeply and increase your heart rate, like walking

2. FLEXIBILITY

> gentle reaching and stretching, like yoga, dancing or Tai Chi

3. STRENGTH AND BALANCE

> lifting weights and resistance activities, whether it's lifting groceries or hitting the gym



Getting and staying active is also a great way to meet people. Community organizations all over the country offer physical activity programs specifically geared to older adults, and some even offer reduced fees and transportation to and from activities.

CHECK OUT THESE ORGANIZATIONS FOR PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES IN YOUR OWN AREA:

- > Seniors' centres
- > Parks and recreation department
- > Shopping malls for walking programs
- > YMCA / YWCA
- > Fitness clubs
- > Health department
- > Heart and Stroke Foundation
- > Arthritis Society
- > Osteoporosis Society

If you are just starting to make a move to get moving, you should consult your family doctor first. Healthcare providers can help you decide what physical activity is right for you. If you are unaccustomed to being active, start slowly and progress gradually. Set a small manageable goal like adding a few minutes of walking or wheeling a day. Once you have accomplished this, add a bit more.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND OLDER ADULTS, CONSULT THE WEBSITES OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA

Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults

The guide serves as a roadmap for older adults, explaining why physical activity is important and offering tips and motivation to increase your physical activity. The guide also outlines how much activity you need to maintain good health and improved quality of living later in life.

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/pdf/guide_older_e.pdf

ACTIVE LIVING COALITION FOR OLDER ADULTS (ALCOA)

ALCOA's primary focus is on the promotion of physical activity, while recognizing the critical linkages of physical health with social, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

<http://www.alcoa.ca>



HEALTH CANADA – HEALTHY LIVING FOR SENIORS

The proportion of seniors in the Canadian population is expected to double by 2025. Health Canada's Division of Aging and Seniors works to ensure knowledge and expertise are shared to help seniors stay healthy.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/seniors-aines/index-eng.php>