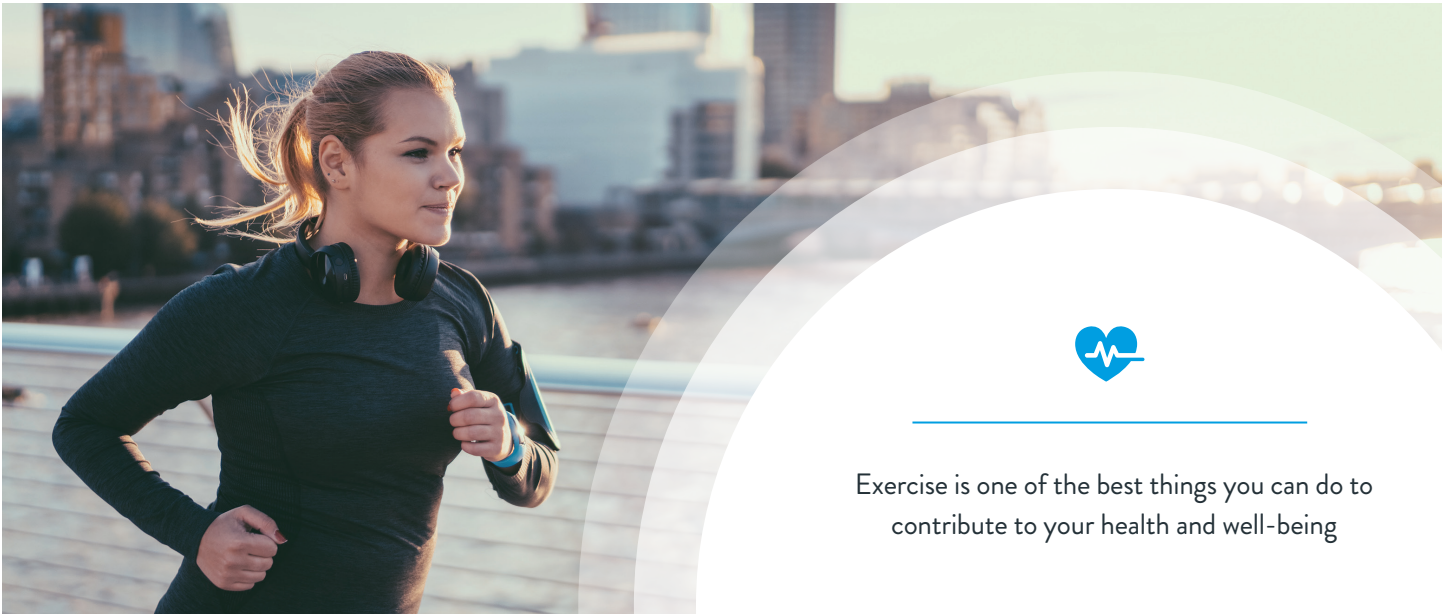




Fitness Is for Life

# Exercise for All

Chapter 1, Lesson 1













Exercise is one of the best things you can do to contribute to your health and well-being

## Exercise Is a Lifetime Activity

Exercise is one of the best things you can do to contribute to your health and well-being. No matter your age or stage in life, there are many healthy reasons to exercise and many exercises you can participate in.

**The primary reason that exercise should be a lifetime activity is due to many benefits. Exercise helps to:**

-  Strengthen your heart, lungs, bones and muscles
-  Use glucose more effectively to better control blood sugar
-  Clear your veins and arteries of cholesterol build-up
-  Control your weight
-  Feel happier and improve your outlook and sense of well-being
-  Boosts confidence and self-esteem
-  Improve balance and coordination
-  Increase energy levels and quality of sleep
-  Reduce the risk of serious health issues such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer, as well as the chance of cancer recurring
-  Improve mobility as you age and may even help live longer!

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (H.H.S.) has made a commitment to provide Americans with updated, research-backed, science-based guidelines to help encourage physical activity. Consider planning your exercise and physical activity based on what you learn about your age group!



### Tips for Children (3-5)

- Children should be active as much as possible throughout the day to help them grow strong and encourage healthy habits.
- Find multiple activities your child enjoys—the greater the variation, the better for their growth and development!
- Make exercise fun to engage this age group in physical activity.
- **Be a role model and participate in the activities with your children instead of being a spectator.**



### Tips for Adolescents (6-17)

- Adolescents also need a variety of activities. This includes at least 60 minutes of activity daily, which should include resistance and bone-strengthening activities on at least 3 days per week.
- Organized sports through their school or by joining community teams are a convenient way to help this age group stay active as well as learn the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
- Technology often inhibits this age group from being active. **Set a good example—make being active part of your daily life to encourage them to do the same.**



### Tips for Adults (18-64)

- Aim to get at least 150 to 300 minutes (5 hours—or an hour on most days a week) of moderate-intensity cardiovascular exercise each week, like brisk walking, or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous exercise each week such as running or hiking uphill.
- Build up beyond 300 minutes—gradually. Take your time to build your strength and endurance with exercise. The more physical activity you do, the greater the benefits you can experience,, but doing too much too soon can be dangerous!
- Include strengthening activities to work your all of your muscles at least 2 days per week.
- Perform exercises that test your balance 2 or 3 days per week at 20 to 30 minutes per session.
- **Think about how you can incorporate physical movement into everyday activities, like taking the stairs instead of the escalator, for instance. Consistent movement is key to good health!**



### Tips for Older Adults (65+)

- In addition to the tips above for adults, if you fall into this age group it is important to incorporate balance exercises to improve your coordination. This is as it may help reduce falling. Try tai chi, yoga and Pilates.
- Consider your activities carefully based on your fitness level and if you have any chronic conditions or other health issues that could affect your ability to exercise.
- **When selecting exercises, choose those that will help you become more efficient in your everyday activities.**

#### Remember:

Talk to your doctor before beginning to exercise or prior to trying any new exercises. It is important that women who are pregnant or in their postpartum period as well as adults and children with chronic health conditions and/or disabilities consult with their medical provider(s) to determine the types and amounts of activities appropriate for them.

#### Next Steps:

1. **Read Lesson 2:** Exercise Do's and Don'ts
2. **Read Lesson 3:** Find the Ideal Workout Option for You
3. **Watch Lesson 4:** 8 Ways to Start a Fitness Routine You Can Stick With
4. **Take Chapter 1 Quiz**

#### Source

US Department of Health and Human Services (2019). Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. [https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical\\_Activity\\_Guidelines\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf)