



# Physical activity: the key to healthy aging



## Reasons to stay active

**Exercise (working out) is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Here's why:**

- It can help keep you from getting heart problems and some cancers. It can also help you cope with sickness better.
- Staying active helps you stay independent as you age. It can also protect you from disability. A disability is when you can't do everyday activities because of physical or mental illness.
- Physical activity helps your mood and well-being. It can lower stress, anxiety and depression.
- Being active can keep your memory sharp and your brain healthy.
- Strength and balance activities lower your chance of falls.
- Moving often can give you more energy and help you sleep better.



## Keys to an active life

**No matter how old you are, almost everyone can be active. Here's how:**

- Move more and sit less. If you don't move around, your chance of getting sick goes up.
- Every bit of physical activity helps. If you're not active yet, moving a little each day can help a lot. Even just one hour of activity each week can help your health.
- Are you already an active person? Try to get 30 minutes of moderate exercise 5 days a week. Moderate activities include brisk walking, dancing or yard work.
- Try to exercise at least 3 days a week. But, any movement is better than none.
- You don't need to do all your exercises at one time. Working out a little while a few times a day is just as good.
- Check with your doctor about what exercises are best for you.



## Tips for success

### Check out these helpful tips to make the most of your workouts:

- Make movement a part of your everyday life. You can walk a dog, take the stairs or park your car farther away from the store.
- Make physical activity fun and social. Find activities you enjoy doing with an “exercise buddy.”
- Pick exercises that are easy to fit into your life. Add new activities to keep your interest up.
- Do things that make your heart beat faster and your muscles stronger. And try to do things that help you keep your balance and move more easily.
- Try the Optum Care Virtual Community Center at [youtube.com/user/optum](https://youtube.com/user/optum). It has many safe and fun online exercise classes.

#### Sources

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