



Why Physical Activity, Fruits, and Vegetables?

Living a healthy lifestyle is not always easy. It means making [physical activity](#) part of a daily routine that includes consuming a healthy diet, rich in fruits and vegetables. Living healthy requires balancing physical activity with sensible eating. These strategies may help prevent many of the most common chronic diseases, such as [heart disease](#), [cancer](#), and [diabetes](#), illnesses that can be costly, debilitating, and disabling.

The benefits of physical activity not only protect one's physical well being but can also enhance their mental health, as well. Interestingly, fitness promotes healthy eating, too, (as we develop physically, proper nutrition soon becomes equally important). A healthy diet includes grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat, and beans. Eat at least three ounces of whole grains daily, with a good selection of whole grain breads, cereals, crackers, rice, or pasta. Purchase grain products and look for "whole" before the grain name on the list of ingredients. Eat an assortment of dark green and orange vegetables, and introduce more dry beans and peas daily. Consume a variety of fruits each day and select fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit, and fewer fruit juices. Choose calcium rich foods and consume low-fat or fat-free products. For those individuals who are unable to tolerate milk, select lactose-free products or

other calcium sources. Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry, and prepare by baking, broiling, or grilling, and remember to vary protein choices by selecting fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.¹

The results of physical activity are profound and can:²

Improve self-esteem and feelings of well-being

Increase fitness level

Help build and maintain bones, muscles, and joints

Build endurance and muscle strength

Enhance flexibility and posture

Help manage weight

Lower risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes

Help control blood pressure

Reduce feelings of depression and anxiety

Make physical activity fun and integrate it into a daily routine. Introduce simple changes such as getting off the bus or subway one stop early and walking the rest of the way. Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk and ask a friend to go with you. Take part in an exercise program at work or a nearby gym. Join a

sports league. Employees that are strong both physically and mentally create a vibrant workforce and employers value and depend on a workforce that can help grow their business.

Healthy living can easily transfer into a daily habit, and with effort, that habit will transfer into a lifelong behavior. Think of healthy living not as a choice but as a reverence for life.

Physical Activities to Consider

Aerobics	Hiking/Backpacking	Skating
Archery	Hockey	Ski Jumping
Badminton	Home Repair	Ski Mobiling
Baseball	Horseback Riding	Sky Diving
Basketball	Horseshoe Pitching	Sledding
Baton Twirling	Household Tasks	Snorkeling
Bicycling	Hunting	Snowboarding
Billiards	Inline Skating	Snowmobiling
Bowling	Jai Alai	Snowshoeing
Boxing/Kickboxing	Juggling	Snow Shovelng
Calisthenics	Kayaking	Soccer
Canoeing	Lacrosse	Softball
Cardio Machines	Lawn Bowling	Squash
Cardio Tennis	Lifting/Hauling	Stationary Bike
Cheerleading	Marching	Stretching
Children's Games	Martial Arts	Surfing
Circuit Training	Motor Cross	Swimming
Cricket	Mountain Biking	Table Tennis
Croquet	Mountain Climbing	Tai Chi
Cross Country Skiing	Orienteering	Tennis
Curling	Paddleball	Track & Field
Dancing	Pedometer	Trampoline
Darts	Pilates	Trap & Skeet
Diving	Polo	Unicycling
Downhill Skiing	Racquetball	Volleyball
Fencing	Rock Climbing	Walking
Field Hockey	Roller Skating	Wallyball
Figure Skating	Rope Jumping	Water Aerobics
Fishing	Rowing	Water Jogging
Foot Bag	Rowing Machine	Water Polo
Frisbee	Rugby	Water Skiing
Gardening/Lawn Mowing	Running	Weight Training
Golf	Sailing	Whitewater Rafting
Gymnastics	Scuba Diving	Wind Surfing
Handball	Shuffleboard	Wrestling
Hang Gliding	Skateboarding	Yoga

Resources to Share with Employees

[How Many Fruits and Vegetables Do You Need?](#) (PDF-1.1Mb)

The amount of fruits and vegetables you need depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. We'll show you simple ways to eat the amounts that are right for you. This brochure was designed for all audiences.

[Three Simple Steps to Eating More Fruits and Vegetables](#) (PDF-560k)

Eating fruits and vegetables is simple and healthy. Use these three steps to get the amounts that are right for you. This handout is designed to be easy to read. Budget-friendly tips are also included.

[Choose Smart Choose Healthy](#) (PDF-647k)

Your mother and grandmother always told you to eat your fruits and vegetables. Now find out how eating a colorful variety every day may protect against chronic health conditions. This brochure was designed for African American women

[How to Use Fruits and Vegetables to Help Manage Your Weight](#) (PDF-706k)

Learn about fruits, vegetables, and their role in your weight management plan. Tips to cut calories by substituting fruits and vegetables are included with meal-by-meal examples. You will also find snack ideas that are 100 calories or less. With these helpful tips, you will soon be on your way to adding more fruits and vegetables into your healthy eating plan.

References

1. United States Department of Agriculture. Food and Nutrition Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. <http://www.mypyramid.gov/guidelines/index.html>. Accessed 2007 June 19.
2. Play Hard Your Way. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/PlayHard/makefamilytimeanactivetime.htm> Accessed 2007 June 18.

Thank you for using the [Center For Ability®](#) as your information resource.

July 13, 2007