

# Overweight and Obesity: What You Can Do

*Being Physically Active Can Help You Attain or Maintain a Healthy Weight*

## OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY

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- 61% of adults in the United States were overweight or obese in 1999.
- Approximately 300,000 deaths each year in the United States may be attributable to obesity.
- Overweight and obesity are associated with heart disease, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, stroke, arthritis, breathing problems, and psychological disorders, such as depression.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: WEIGHT CONTROL AND OTHER BENEFITS

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- Physical activity contributes to weight loss, especially when it is combined with calorie reduction.
- Regular physical activity is extremely helpful for the prevention of overweight and obesity.
- Regular physical activity is very important in maintaining weight loss.
- In addition to weight control, physical activity helps prevent heart disease, helps control cholesterol levels and diabetes, slows bone loss associated with advancing age, lowers the risk of certain cancers, and helps reduce anxiety and depression.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES

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- Many people live sedentary lives; in fact, 40% of adults in the United States do not participate in any leisure-time physical activity.
- Less than 1/3 of adults engage in the recommended amounts of physical activity (at least 30 minutes most days).

## YOU CAN ACTIVATE YOURSELF

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- You don't need special skills or training to be physically active. Walking is a great way to be active.
- Physical activity should be initiated slowly, and the intensity should be increased gradually (e.g., start with a 10-minute walk three times a week and work your way up to 30 minutes of brisk walking or other form of moderate activity five times a week).
- Activities can be split into several short periods (e.g., 10 minutes 3 times a day) instead of one longer period (e.g., 30 minutes once a day).
- You should select activities that you **ENJOY** and can fit into your daily life.
- It may take time to incorporate more activity into your daily life. Don't get discouraged if at first you miss a day or two; just keep trying and do your best to make it a regular part of your life. You will soon realize how good it feels to be physically active and fit.
- Ask for support from friends and family; likewise, support the people in your life who are trying to be physically active.
- Many forms of physical activity can be social, allowing you to converse and spend time with family or friends or to develop new relationships.
- Make fitness a priority...**COMMIT TO IT.**

\* Consult with your health care provider before starting a vigorous exercise program if you have ever had heart trouble or high blood pressure or suffer from chest pains, dizziness or fainting, arthritis, or if you are over age 40 (men) or 50 (women).

**INTAKE**  
**Calories From Foods**

**OUTPUT**  
**Calories Used During**  
**Physical Activity**

## THE ENERGY BALANCE



- To maintain your weight, your intake of calories must equal your energy output.
- To lose weight, you must use more energy than you take in.
- A difference of one 12-oz. soda (150 calories) or 30 minutes of brisk walking most days can add or subtract approximately 10 pounds to your weight each year.

### TILT THE BALANCE WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Adding moderate amounts of physical activity five or more times a week to your routine uses 150 calories of energy on each day of activity, which can be equivalent to approximately 5 pounds in 6 months or 10 pounds in 1 year.
- You can choose any combination of type of activity at the length of time specified from the following table to burn approximately 150 calories:

#### **Examples of moderate amounts of physical activity**

##### **Common Chores**

Washing and waxing a car for 45-60 minutes  
Washing windows or floors for 45-60 minutes  
Gardening for 30-45 minutes  
Wheeling self in wheelchair 30-40 minutes  
Pushing a stroller 1½ miles in 30 minutes  
Raking leaves for 30 minutes  
Walking 2 miles in 30 minutes (15min/mile)  
Shoveling snow for 15 minutes  
Stairwalking for 15 minutes

##### **Sporting Activities**

Playing volleyball for 45-60 minutes  
Playing touch football for 45 minutes  
Walking 1¾ miles in 35 minutes (20min/mile)  
Basketball (shooting baskets) 30 minutes  
Bicycling 5 miles in 30 minutes  
Dancing fast (social) for 30 minutes  
Water aerobics for 30 minutes  
Swimming laps for 20 minutes  
Basketball (playing game) for 15-20 minutes  
Bicycling 4 miles in 15 minutes  
Jumping rope for 15 minutes  
Running 1½ miles in 15 min. (10min/mile)

**Less Vigorous,  
More Time**



**More Vigorous,  
Less Time**

- Reducing your calorie intake by 150 calories a day, along with participating in moderate activity, could double your weight loss and is equivalent to approximately 10 pounds in 6 months and 20 pounds in 1 year.

### BALANCE YOUR FOOD INTAKE AND YOUR ACTIVITY

- One small chocolate chip cookie (50 calories) is equivalent to walking briskly for 10 minutes.
- The difference between a large gourmet chocolate chip cookie and a small chocolate chip cookie could be about 40 minutes of raking leaves (200 calories).
- One hour of walking at a moderate pace (20 min/mile) uses about the same amount of energy that is in one jelly filled doughnut (300 calories).
- A fast food “meal” containing a double patty cheeseburger, extra-large fries and a 24 oz. soft drink is equal to running 2½ hours at a 10 min/mile pace (1500 calories).