

Physical Activity Prescription for Children, (Ages 12-18)

Physical activity is important for teens' growth and good health. It helps them develop a healthy heart, lungs, and immune system to fight off illness, as well as strong bones and muscles, and balance, and coordination. Physical activity also helps relieve stress and proves an opportunity to have fun.

If teens are not physically active, as adults they lack physical endurance, strength, coordination, and the ability to do physical tasks. These problems can increase the risk of chronic illness and lower self- esteem.

Types of Activities

To help be healthy and fit, it is important to do three different types of activities: aerobic; strengthening; and balance and coordination. Each type of activity provides particular benefits, but it is important to do all three types. Not doing all three types is like trying to run a car without an engine.

Aerobic	Strengthening	Balance & Coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes endurance and heart health • Improves cardiovascular fitness • Helps control weight • Lowers blood pressure and cholesterol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens bones and muscle • Promoted stability for movement • Reduces risk of injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps to move around more efficiently • Improves awareness of body • Promotes self-confidence

*For examples of activities within each type, see the other side of this sheet.

Amount of Physical Activity

Target goal: One hour six to seven days a week. Raise heart rate for at least 20 consecutive minutes, four or more times a week.

Avoid sitting for more than two hours without getting up and moving around.

Begin with goals that are easy to achieve and boost confidence with the success. For example, if your teen is active for 30 minutes a day now, each week increase activity by 10 minutes.

Tips for Making Physical Activity Fun

To help teens enjoy being physically active and make it a lifetime habit, let them choose the activity. It may take them time to find what they like, but they will be more likely to make it a priority in their life for years to come. There are many choices to try and they will discover activities that are fun for them. Follow these tips to help keep your teen motivated to move:

- Make sure the activity is age appropriate

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301 Cedar St. Suite 206
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- Involve the whole family
- Incorporate music
- Take a class or join a team
- Keep a variety of equipment on hand; bikes & sports equipment
- Encourage activities to do alone or with a friend

Examples of Physical Activities for Youth (Ages 12-18 years)

<p>Aerobic At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dancing • Jumping jacks or Jump rope • Walking up and down stairs • Interactive video games such as: Wii sports (bowling, golf, baseball, tennis) or dance games such as Just Dance. • Use a treadmill or elliptical 	<p>Aerobic Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming, water sports • Jogging • Soccer • Tennis • Scooters • Brisk walking • Martial arts
<p>Strengthening At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga • Pull ups • Push ups • Sit ups • Exercise using a stability ball • Exercise using exercise rubber bands 	<p>Strengthening Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifting weights at school or a gym • Take a Pilates or yoga class • Hiking
<p>Balance and Coordination At Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crab walk • Standing on one leg or leg lifts on one leg • Trampoline • Pogo stick 	<p>Balance and Coordination Outside of Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimate Frisbee • Skateboarding • In-line skating • Ice skating • Jump rope games and tricks • Volleyball • Basketball

- Moderate intensity: Allows you to talk but not sing
- Vigorous intensity: Allows you to say only a few words without catching your breath.
- Note: Some activities can be classified as more than one type of activity.