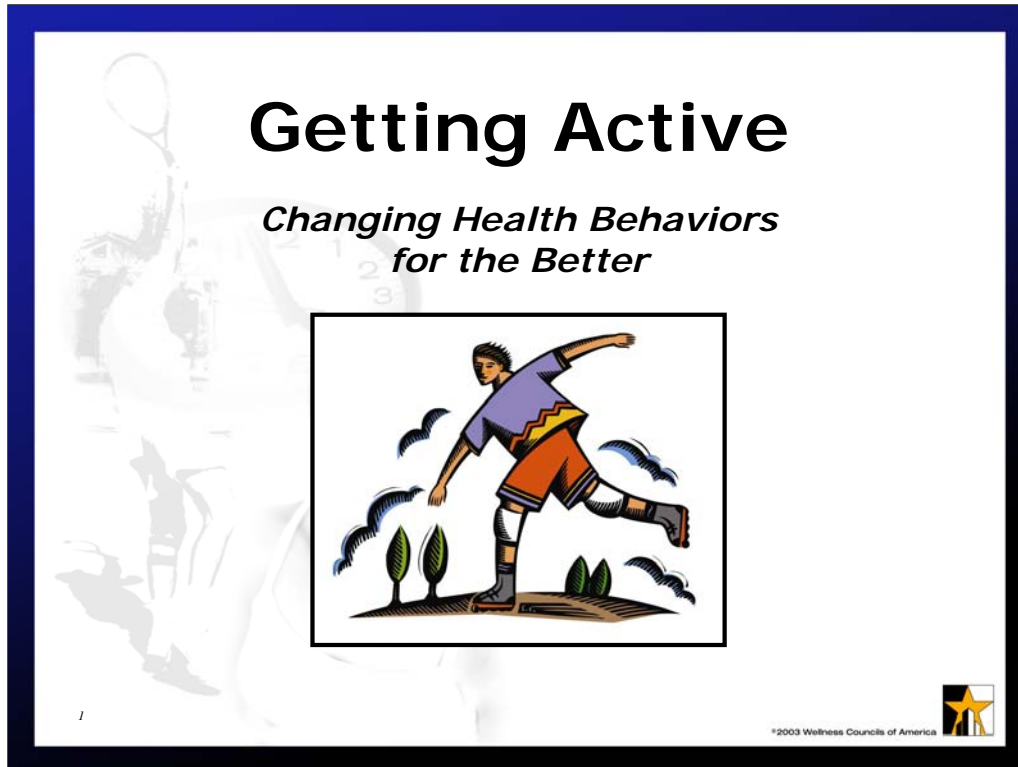


# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better



## Getting Active: Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

Welcome to *Getting Active: Changing Health Behaviors for the Better*. This presentation has been designed to teach individuals about the importance of regular physical activity in healthy living. In this presentation, the topic of physical activity will be examined in detail, and stage-based strategies for getting active will be explored.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### What You'll Learn

- Why physical activity is important.
- The consequences of physical inactivity.
- The benefits of becoming physically active.
- The barriers to changing.
- Strategies for becoming more physically active.

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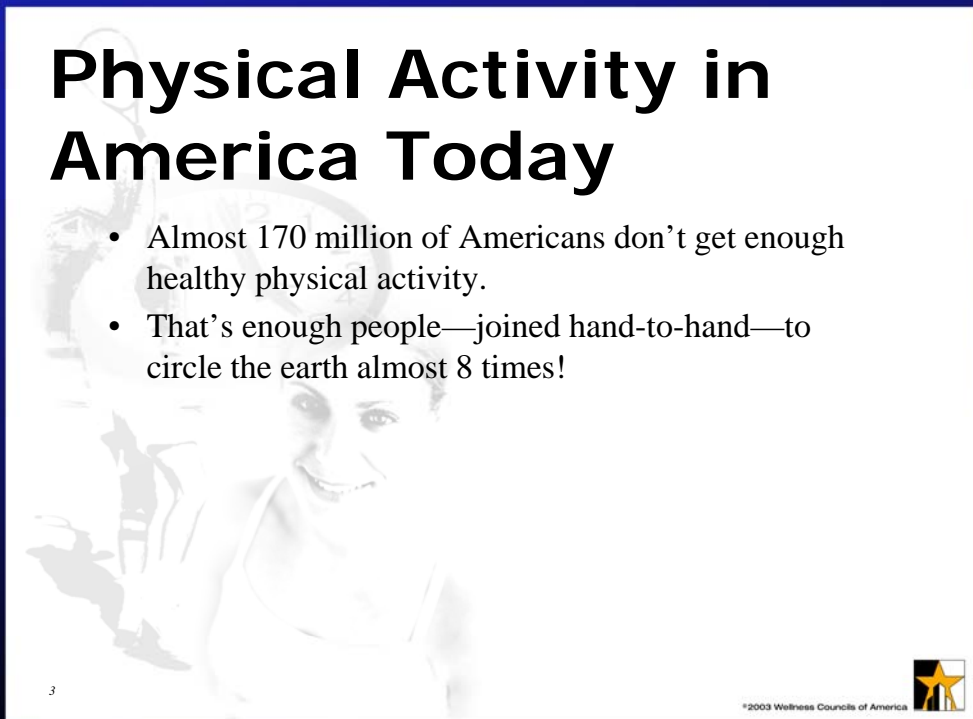


### What You'll Learn

In this presentation, *Getting Active: Changing Health Behaviors for the Better*, we'll explore the in's and out's of physical activity. Specifically, we'll take a look at why physical activity is important to your health and well-being. We'll explore the consequences of not getting enough physical activity, as well as the benefits of increasing your level of physical activity. And lastly, we'll look at what it takes to incorporate physical activity into our daily lives.

# **Getting Active**

## **Changing Health Behaviors for the Better**



**Physical Activity in America Today**

- Almost 170 million of Americans don't get enough healthy physical activity.
- That's enough people—joined hand-to-hand—to circle the earth almost 8 times!

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### **Physical Activity in America Today**

America has become a nation of sitters. We sit when we work, we sit when we drive, and we sit when we watch TV. In a cruel twist of irony, America's motto has become, "Don't just do something, sit there."

When we look at the numbers, about 170 million Americans aren't getting enough healthy physical activity in their daily lives. If all these people joined hands, they'd circle the earth almost eight times.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Physical Activity in America Today

- What's more, approximately 42 million Americans aren't active *at all*.
- That's enough people to fill California's Rose Bowl stadium more than 400 times!



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### Physical Activity in America Today

What's more, another quarter of our population—or 42 million Americans—don't get *any* healthy physical activity at all—that's enough people to fill California's Rose Bowl stadium more than 400 times.

There's no doubt that exercising—even moving—has become extremely difficult in our society. Automobiles, moving walk-ways, drive-thru restaurants, and a variety of labor saving devices such as self-propelled lawn mowers (just to mention a few) all make it extremely difficult to burn calories in everyday activity.

But the fact of the matter is we can't afford to not exercise.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### So Why Should You Be Concerned?

- Not being active damages your heart and other major organs—cutting your life short.
  - More than 2,600 Americans die each day of heart disease—1 death every 33 seconds!
- Not being active can lead to diabetes—a major cause of blindness and limb amputations.
  - Approximately 800,000 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year. This means that more than 2,000 people—each day—are told that they have diabetes.

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### So Why Should You be Concerned?

By falling well short of getting our healthy dose of physical activity, we're putting ourselves at risk for a whole host of health problems. In fact, studies show that physical inactivity impacts our health as much as smoking a pack of cigarettes each day.

Just like skipping oil changes damages your car's engine, not exercising damages your heart. Exercise helps keep blood pressure low, and cholesterol at healthy levels—two important factors in preventing heart disease. Don't think that's a big deal? More than 2,600 Americans die each day because of heart disease—that's one death every 33 seconds.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### So Why Should You Be Concerned?

- Not being active damages your heart and other major organs—cutting your life short.
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### So Why Should You be Concerned? *(Continued)*


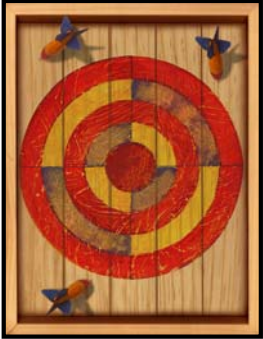
Our lack of physical activity also increases our chances of developing diabetes. If not diagnosed and treated early, diabetes can have serious consequences, causing blindness, heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, birth defects, and amputations. Don't think it's a problem? Consider the fact that approximately 800,000 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year. What's more, about half of the people who have diabetes don't even know it.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### So Why Should You Be Concerned?

- Physical inactivity will prevent you from doing the things you want to do.



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### So Why Should You be Concerned?

Not being active will prevent you from doing the things you want to do. Physical inactivity will prevent you from moving around efficiently, and also increases the chance of injuries in situations when they otherwise could have been prevented.

By exercising, you'll build stronger muscles and bones, and maintain healthier joints so that your body will respond to your commands. The ability to move about is critical for independent living and quality of life. Also, exercise keeps your reflexes alert and your muscles ready to respond so you might avoid, or recover more quickly from accidents, falls, injuries, and illnesses.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### The Good News...

- Here's the good news—life doesn't have to be this way for you. Just as being physically inactive leads to negative life consequences, exercising regularly can bring significant health benefits.

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### The Good News...

People tend to think of an “elixir of life” as medicine in a bottle, a “magic bullet” as some kind of pill, and the “fountain of youth” as mystical waters. But exercise may come closer than anything else we know as the best way to become and stay beautiful, strong, healthy, energetic, and happy.

You don't have to suffer the ill effects of physical inactivity. Just as being physically inactive leads to negative life consequences, exercising regularly can bring significant health benefits.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### The Benefits of Being Active

- Regular physical activity improves health in the following ways:
  - Reduces the risk of premature death;
    - More than 300,000 lives are cut short because of complications due to physical inactivity, obesity, and poor nutrition.
  - Reduces the risk of dying from a number of diseases including: heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.
  - Studies indicate that physical inactivity can reduce the risk for these diseases by as much as 30-50%.

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### The Benefits of Being Active

Regular physical activity may be the single best route to a long, healthy, and active life.

Physical activity reduces your risk of dying early. Each year, more than 300,000 lives are cut short because of complications due to physical inactivity, obesity, and poor nutrition.

Regular physical activity is also important for disease treatment and prevention. It can help prevent or treat many diseases such as stroke, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, arthritis, and osteoporosis. In fact, studies indicate that physical activity can reduce your risk of these diseases by as much as 30 to 50 percent.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### The Benefits of Being Active

- Physical activity improves your health.
  - It reduces feelings of depression and anxiety, puts you in a better mood, and fosters a sense of well-being.



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### The Benefits of Being Active *(Continued)*

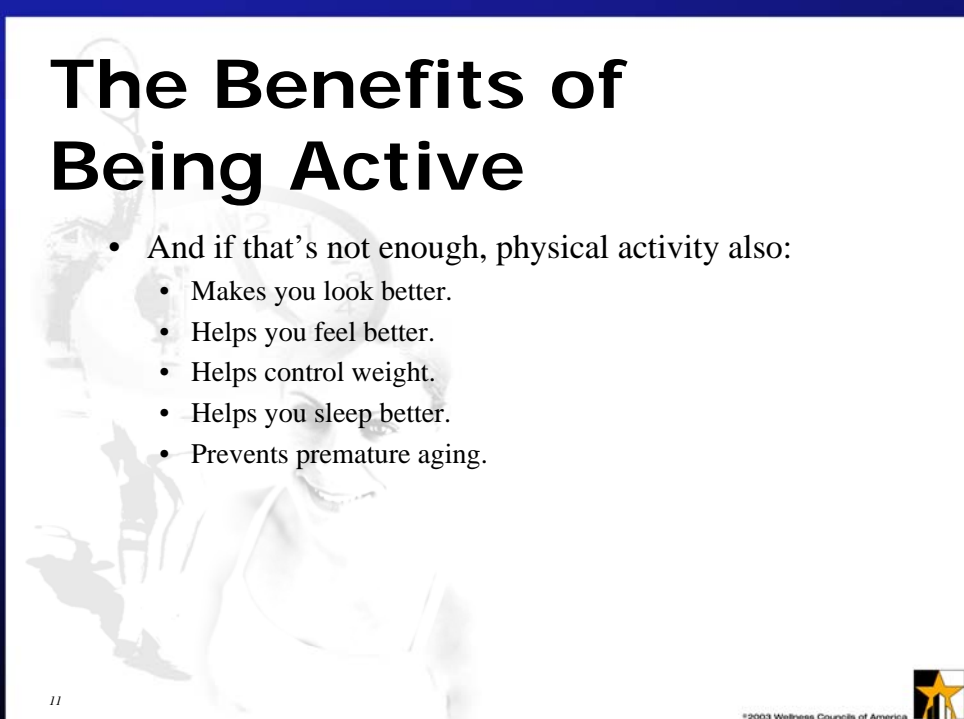
Being physically active can have a dramatic impact on a person's mental health and overall quality of life. Regular physical activity reduces feelings of depression and anxiety, puts you in a better mood, and fosters a sense of well-being.

The feeling of being fit that comes from regular exercise goes a long way toward imparting a strong sense of well-being, a positive outlook, and a feeling of “can-do” confidence.

As is evident in any heated basketball game, tennis match, or dance performance, exercise tunes up mental reflexes, reaction time, and ability to process information. Exercise helps you wake up in the morning, and stay awake until bedtime. This effect applies to both physical and mental tasks.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better



### The Benefits of Being Active

- And if that's not enough, physical activity also:
  - Makes you look better.
  - Helps you feel better.
  - Helps control weight.
  - Helps you sleep better.
  - Prevents premature aging.

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### The Benefits of Being Active *(Continued)*

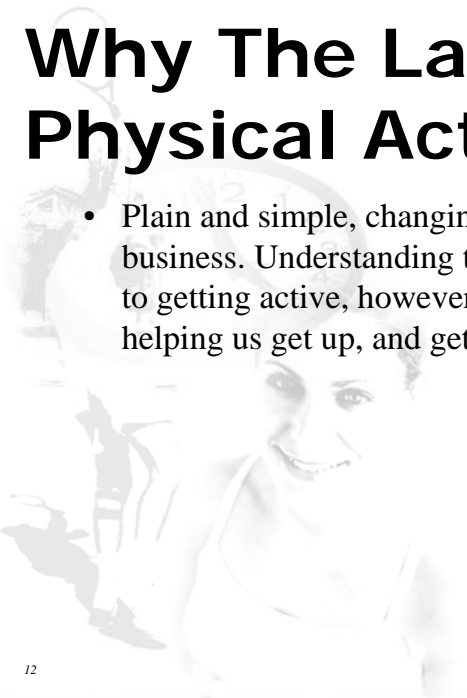
If that's not enough, you'll find that being physically active makes you look and feel better, will help you control your weight, and will help you look and feel younger.

Exercise keeps your body trim, your muscles toned, your posture straight and tall, and your complexion clear and glowing. It not only burns calories, but it also tunes up your metabolism to better use nutrients. Studies show, in the long run, exercise may be even more effective than diet in weight loss. Exercise helps you look better, regardless of how much you weigh.

A regular exercise program, rather than exhausting you, gives you more energy and staying-power—helping you not only look younger, but feel younger, too.

# **Getting Active**

## **Changing Health Behaviors for the Better**




### **Why The Lack of Physical Activity?**

- Plain and simple, changing behaviors is tough business. Understanding the most common barriers to getting active, however, can go a long way in helping us get up, and get moving.

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### **Why The Lack of Physical Activity?**

Plain and simple, getting active is tough. There are a lot of things that stand in our way or prevent us from getting active. As was mentioned before, things like automobiles or moving walk-ways, drive-thru restaurants, and a variety of devices all make it extremely difficult to burn calories through everyday activity.

But understanding the most common barriers to getting active will go a long way in helping us get up and get moving—knocking the barriers down.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

- Plain and simple, changing behaviors is tough business. Here are some common barriers that keep people from getting active.
  1. “I’ve got other priorities at the top of my list.”
  2. “My environment keeps me from exercising.”
  3. “None of my friends or family exercise.”
  4. “The weather is terrible, I can’t possibly exercise in this heat/cold.”
  5. “I just don’t have the time.”

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### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

**“I’ve got other priorities at the top of my list.”** The key to getting physically active is making it a priority. Americans have lots of different priorities, be they family, friends, work, or play. Oftentimes, physical activity isn’t one of them. By making physical activity even just a small priority, you’re one step closer to a healthy life.

**“My environment keeps me from exercising.”** It seems as if elevators, escalators, and moving walkways are available everywhere we look—but that doesn’t mean we have to use them. It’s true, our environment is becoming less and less conducive to regular physical activity, but that just means we have to look harder to find opportunities to move on a regular basis.

**“None of my friends or family members exercise.”** An important factor for getting physically active involves having the support of friends or family. It’s a lot harder to find the motivation for getting active if you’re all alone. Invite a friend or family member to join you if you’re thinking about exercising. Chances are it’s been on their mind, too.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

- Plain and simple, changing behaviors is tough business. Here are some common barriers that keep people from getting active.
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  5. “I just don’t have the time.”

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### Barriers to Getting Physically Active *(Continued)*

**“The weather is terrible, I can’t possibly exercise in this heat or cold.”** There’s no doubt that ridding your bike or going for a jog in the middle of a blizzard is a bit much. But there are plenty of things you can do in your own home to increase your activity.

**“I just don’t have time.”** Americans are busier than ever. We’re working a lot more and harder than ever before. But if we don’t make time—even as little as 30 minutes a day—we won’t be able to keep up with what our life now demands. Remember, some exercise is better than none.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

More Barriers...

6. "I'm too tired at the end of my busy day."
7. "I'll have to see a doctor before I start."
8. "I don't know how to get started."
9. "I'm so out of shape, it's too late for me, anyway."
10. "I don't have enough space or the right equipment."

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### Barriers to Getting Physically Active *(Continued)*

**“I’m too tired at the end of my busy day.”** There’s a lot of evidence that suggests making exercise a part of your daily routine is best done in the morning. Whenever you decide to exercise, make it a part of your daily routine. By increasing your level of physical activity, you’ll soon have the energy you need to do everything you want to do during the day, and you’ll even sleep better at night.

**“I’ll have to see a doctor before I start.”** Although it’s a good idea to consult your physician before dramatically increasing your physical activity, you’re at much greater risk by not exercising at all. You may find that your healthcare professional can help you determine a good exercise prescription to help you get on the fast track to improved health.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

#### More Barriers...

6. "I'm too tired at the end of my busy day."
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10. "I don't have enough space or the right equipment."

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### Barriers to Getting Physically Active *(Continued)*

**"I don't know how to get started."** Getting fit doesn't have to be hard. The Surgeon General recommends that people get about 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week. You can do some gardening or housework, or go for a walk. As you increase your activity, you can find literally hundreds of pages of great information on getting active at your local library or on the Internet.

**"I'm so out of shape, it's too late for me, anyway."** Absolutely not...Exercise is for everyone! People can keep exercising well into old age—in fact, people who exercise are more likely to live longer and enjoy their golden years. The best prescription for many injuries and illnesses is to start exercising as soon as possible.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Barriers to Getting Physically Active

More Barriers...

6. "I'm too tired at the end of my busy day."
7. "I'll have to see a doctor before I start."
8. "I don't know how to get started."
9. "I'm so out of shape, it's too late for me, anyway."
10. "I don't have enough space or the right equipment."

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### Barriers to Getting Physically Active *(Continued)*

**"I don't have enough space or the right equipment."** You don't need a gold plated, 1000-acre fitness facility to get in shape. Simple things like walking your pets, taking your children to the park, washing your car, or doing yard work are simple ways of increasing the amount of physical activity in your life.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Making Physical Activity a Priority

- In order to make physical activity a priority, you'll have to understand the process of how people change. When changing behaviors, most people go through a cycle known as the “**Stages of Change**.”



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### Making Physical Activity a Priority

Overcoming common barriers is a key first step in making healthy changes in your life. But without a roadmap—and without a clear, concise way of conceptualizing your challenges—it's going to be tough to make any progress. That's why understanding the “Stages of Change” is so important in the process of changing health behaviors for the better. Let's take a look at how people change.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### The Five Stages of Change

**Stage 1.** Nope...Not interested in changing now.

**Stage 2.** Hmm...I'm giving change serious consideration.

**Stage 3.** Yep...I'm getting ready to change...soon.

**Stage 4.** Let's go...I'm taking action.

**Stage 5.** Old news...I've been doing this for a long time.

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### The Five Stages of Change


Understanding how people change means having a firm grasp on a theory known as the Stages of Change. The Stages of Change is a model developed by Dr. James Prochaska that proposes that people cycle through a very distinct set of stages when making changes in their lives. From not being interested in making a change at all, all the way through to maintaining a healthy change after it's already been made, the Stages of Change model can help you change your health behaviors for the better. Let's take a look at the five stages of change so that we can understand them better and apply them in our plans to get healthier.

Here are the five stages of change:

1. Not at all ready to change
2. Seriously considering a healthy change
3. Getting ready to change
4. In the process of changing
5. Maintaining a healthy behavior

# **Getting Active**

## **Changing Health Behaviors for the Better**



**Not Interested in Changing Now**

- People in this group have no intention of changing their behavior, and frankly may not even see a need to change their behavior at all.

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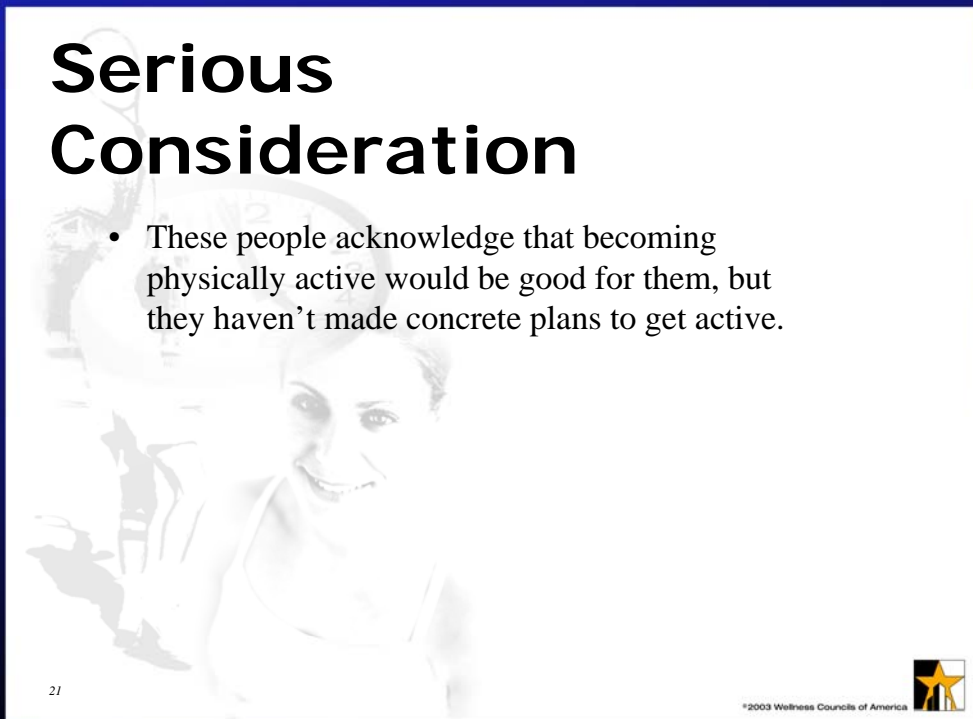
### **Not Interested in Changing Now**

People here have no real intention of becoming more physically active. And, although their friends and family may see the need for them to get more exercise, the person may not even see physical activity as a need or a potential problem in their life.

Oftentimes, what gets people thinking about making a change, like becoming more physically active, is steady outside pressure. This pressure is a good thing—it gets people moving. People in this stage will often resist change, they may be lacking information, and quite often see their situation—mistakenly—as hopeless.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better



**Serious Consideration**

- These people acknowledge that becoming physically active would be good for them, but they haven't made concrete plans to get active.

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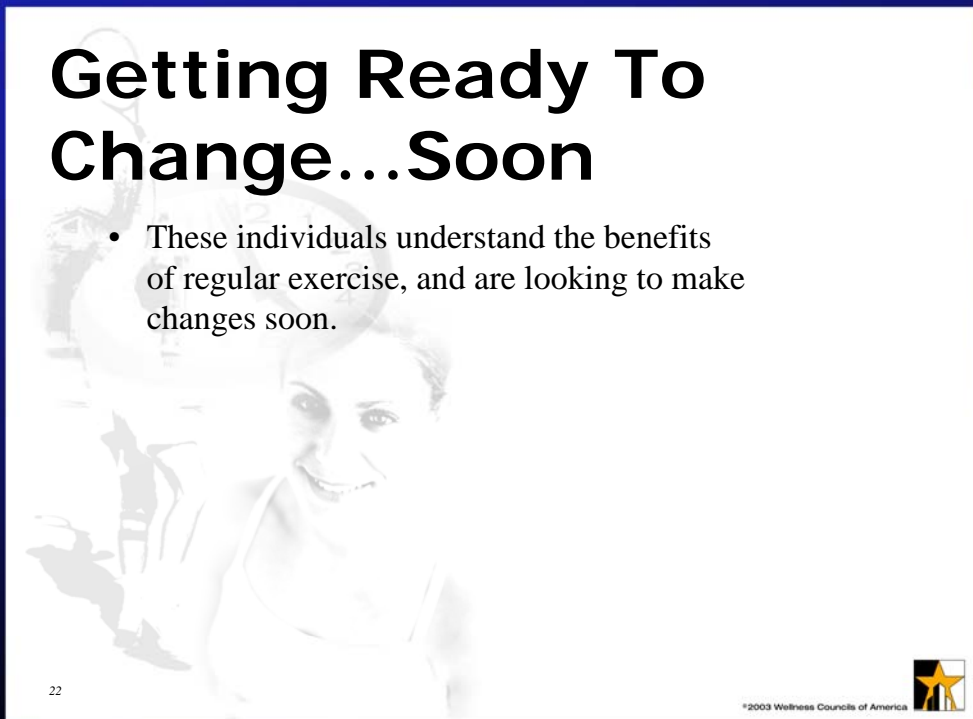
### Serious Consideration

People here acknowledge the fact that they need to increase their activity, or that inactivity is a problem for them. They begin to understand that becoming physically active would be good for them. And even though they are beginning to think seriously about making a change, people here are often very far—maybe even years—away from making concrete plans to change.

It is only after people begin to focus more on the solution than their problem, and think more about the future than the past that they are ready to get moving.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better



**Getting Ready To Change...Soon**

- These individuals understand the benefits of regular exercise, and are looking to make changes soon.

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### Getting Ready to Change...Soon

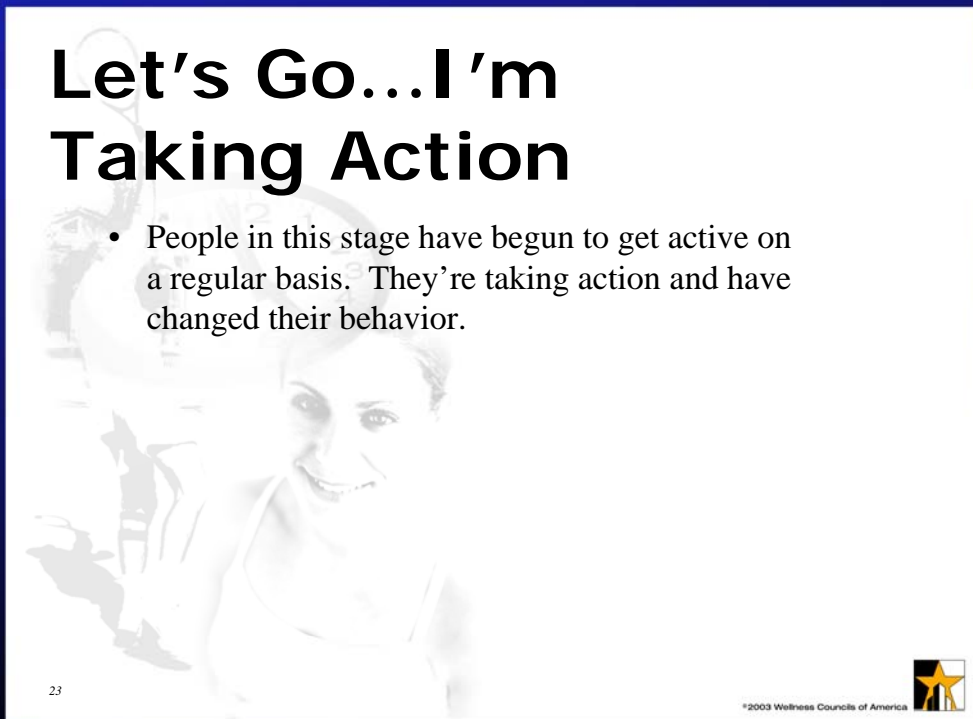
It's here where people are formulating concrete plans to get physical—and within the next thirty days. They are preparing to change both their behaviors and the environment, which affects their behaviors.

Here, people may have already instituted a number of smaller changes, such as taking the stairs versus the elevator, and so on. And although changes are beginning to happen, a person still may need to convince himself or herself that getting active will be for the better.

Preparing to change is important, and shouldn't be rushed. People who rush through their preparation often fall backwards—even denying that they need to make the changes after all. To be successful, people need to plan carefully and develop a firm and detailed plan—concentrating on sustaining their physical activity.

# **Getting Active**

## **Changing Health Behaviors for the Better**



**Let's Go...I'm Taking Action**

- People in this stage have begun to get active on a regular basis. They're taking action and have changed their behavior.

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### **Let's Go...I'm Taking Action**

In this stage of the change process, a person is making their most overt changes. They're becoming physically active on an increasingly regular basis. They're beginning to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine.

It's in this stage that getting active takes the most energy and commitment. Because of this, it's often easy for people to mistake action for change. It's important to remember that change involves altering a person's level of awareness, their emotions, self-image, and thinking—so, there's more to changing behaviors than what's on the surface. In this stage there's still a little ways to go before physical activity is a part of the individual.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Old News...Been There, Done That

- These people are working to hold on to the positive changes they have made. These folks continue to exercise even after they have reached their goals.



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### Old News...Been There, Done That

Here, people are working to hang on to the positive changes that they've made. For the most part, physical activity has become a part of the person. In this stage, the majority of the person's efforts focus on maintaining their changes—preventing them from returning to old, sedentary habits.

From here, with strong commitment and dedication, a person will begin to make physical activity a part of who they are—a core value—or something they think little about or try hard to maintain.

# **Getting Active**

## **Changing Health Behaviors for the Better**

### **What Stage Are You In?**

- Determining what stage you're in is an important first step to becoming more physically active. Once you know your stage, you'll be better equipped to change when you're ready.

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### **What Stage Are You In?**

Now that we've had a chance to learn a little more about each of the stages of change, it's time to decide which stage you fall into. Take a look at the following self-quiz—it will help you determine your place in the Stages of Change.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Determining Your Stage: Self Quiz

- To find out what stage you're in, pick the statement that most accurately describes you:
  - ☐ I'm currently not physically active, and don't intend to be in the next six months.
  - ☐ I'm currently not physically active, but I'm thinking about becoming active in the next six months.
  - ☐ I'm currently physically active, but not on a regular basis.
  - ☐ I am currently physically active on a regular basis, but have only started within the last six months.
  - ☐ I currently am physically active regularly, and have been for longer than six months.

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### Determining Your Stage: Self Quiz

The following statements are designed to help you gauge your readiness to change. It's important to be honest with yourself, picking the statement that most accurately describes you. As you begin to consider your current health status, think of this self-quiz as a chance to start the change process on the right foot.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Determining Your Stage

- To find out what stage you're in, pick the statement that most accurately describes you:
  - ☐ I'm currently not physically active, and don't intend to be in the next six months—you're in **stage one**.
  - ☐ I'm currently not physically active, but I'm thinking about becoming active in the next six months—you're in **stage two**.
  - ☐ I'm currently physically active, but not on a regular basis—you're in **stage three**.
  - ☐ I am currently physically active on a regular basis, but have only started within the last six months—you're in **stage four**.
  - ☐ I currently am physically active regularly, and have been for longer than six months—you're in **stage five**.

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### Determining Your Stage: Scoring Your Self Quiz

If the first statement most accurately describes you, you're in stage one—not really thinking about making a change right now. If you picked the second statement, you're in stage two, thinking about changing within the next six months. If statement three most accurately describes you, you've begun preparing to make a significant change in your life. Those who picked statement four are in the process of changing and those who picked statement five are currently maintaining a change already made.

No matter what stage you're in, we'll now discuss strategies to help you be successful in changing your health behaviors for the good. Let's look at some change strategies for the first stage.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 1

*Not Interested in Changing Now*

- Read, *Exercise: The Magic Bullet*.
- Create a list of reasons why becoming physically active will benefit you.
- Create a list of reasons why becoming physically active will benefit your family.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 1

**Read, *Exercise: The Magic Bullet*.** This informative brochure is a great place to get started when you're thinking about changing a negative health behavior. Learning about a specific health risk can inspire you to change your ways.

**Create a list of reasons why becoming physically active will benefit you.**

Understanding what we stand to gain from exchanging a negative health behavior for a healthier one can inspire us to get up, and get moving.

**Create a list of reasons why becoming physically active will benefit your family.**

Listing out the reasons to change a negative health behavior forces us to consider the severe health and social consequences we'll face if we refuse to change.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 1

#### *Not Interested in Changing Now*

- Watch the movie, *Rocky*.
- Interview a friend who has been successful in developing an exercise routine.
- Write about two situations in the last year when you defended your lack of regular physical inactivity.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 1 (Continued)

**Watch the movie, *Rocky*.** A classic “feel good” movie about a boxer who rises above his challenges, watching *Rocky* or engaging in other “cinema therapy” may prompt an interest in getting healthier.

**Interview a friend who has been successful in developing an exercise routine.**

Speaking with someone about the benefits of changing a health habit for the better can often inspire us to change our own habits.

**Write about two situations in the last year where you defended your lack of regular physical inactivity.** Doing this will be a real eye opener. Often we don’t realize the rationalizations we make until we sit down and think about them. It’s no surprise, in order to continue with negative health behaviors, we have to make some pretty juicy rationalizations.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 2

*I'm Giving Change Serious Consideration*

- Read, *Getting Fit: It's all a Part of the Master Plan*.
- Describe how your poor physical condition makes you feel emotionally.
- Write down five roadblocks that are standing in your way to getting active.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 2

**Read, *Getting Fit: It's all a Part of the Master Plan*.** This informative brochure is a great place to get started when you're thinking about changing a negative health behavior. Learning about a specific health risk can inspire you to change your ways.

**Describe how your poor physical condition makes you feel emotionally.** Very much the opposite of trying to relax, describing in detail your emotions related to a negative health behavior can incite feelings that instigate more rapid change.

**Write down five roadblocks that are standing in your way to getting active.** Once you know the barriers that prevent you from leading a healthier life, you'll be better positioned to change your circumstances and overcome the hurdles in your path.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 2

#### *I'm Giving Change Serious Consideration*

- Speak with a friend who's experiencing negative health effects from a lack of physical activity.
- Keep a journal noting your physical activity habits, or lack of physical activity habits. Especially note times when you could have/should have been physically active but weren't.
- Take a physical activity self-assessment.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 2 (Continued)

**Speak with a friend who's experiencing negative health effects from a lack of physical activity.** Although this may be an uncomfortable task, speaking with someone who has experienced the negative health consequences of physical inactivity can be a great way to learn from others' mistakes. You'll find, too, that usually these individuals are willing to speak to you and encourage you to make wise decisions before it's too late.

**Keep a journal noting your physical activity habits, or lack of physical activity. Especially note times when you could have/should have been physically active but weren't.** Knowing the exact details surrounding why we engage in unhealthy behaviors helps unravel the mysteries of habitual behavior. If you can discover a trigger that causes you to engage (or not engage) in a specific action, you may be able to avoid that trigger in the future.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 2

#### *I'm Giving Change Serious Consideration*

- Speak with a friend who's experiencing negative health effects from a lack of physical activity.
- Keep a journal noting your physical activity habits, or lack of physical activity habits. Especially note times when you could have/should have been physically active but weren't.
- Take a physical activity self-assessment.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 2 (Continued)

**Take a physical activity self-assessment.** Self-assessments are easy and unbiased ways to fairly examine your habits when it comes to healthy living. As an added bonus, the questions included on these assessments can help you better understand your behavior and develop a plan for getting healthy.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 3

#### *Getting Ready to Change Soon*

- Meet with a personal trainer for a fitness test and develop an exercise prescription.
- Create a written plan to incorporate physical activity into your routine—make sure it's realistic and enjoyable.
- Tell your friends and family about your plans to get physically active.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 3

#### **Meet with a personal trainer for a fitness test and develop an exercise prescription.**

Personal trainers are an excellent fitness resource for you to take advantage of. Their vast amounts of knowledge on how to get active and maintain health improvements will be an asset to you as you begin your new, healthier lifestyle.

**Create a written plan to incorporate physical activity into your routine—make sure it's realistic and enjoyable.** Putting your goals and objectives on paper means you've set the standard. Don't deviate. When you get caught up in the details of changing your behavior, and aren't sure where to turn, you can return to your written plan to refocus and find answers.

**Tell your friends and family about your plans to get physically active.** Telling your family and friends about your plans to change your health behavior will bring a sense of accountability into your life. After all, who wants to disappoint friends or family?

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 3

#### *Getting Ready to Change Soon*

- Find someone who's willing to commit to exercising with you.
- Read, *Walking for the Health of It*.
- Purchase any workout clothes/equipment you'll need to carry out your written exercise plan.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 3 (Continued)

**Find someone who's willing to commit to exercising with you.** Using the “buddy system” is one of the best ways to succeed in changing behaviors. This technique has been used for years in a variety of situations for one reason—it works.

**Read, *Walking for the Health of It*.** This informative brochure is a great place to get started when you're thinking about changing a negative health behavior. Learning about a specific health risk can inspire you to change your ways.

**Purchase any workout clothes/equipment you'll need to carry out your written exercise plan.** Doing this will further reinforce the fact that you plan on making a health change very soon. After buying the clothes/equipment, you may also feel obligated to use them, which, of course, is the point.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 4

*Let's Go...I'm Taking Action*

- Enroll in an exercise class/activity to help you stay active.
- Regularly update your friends and family about your exercise status.
- Keep a written activity log tracking your exercise—include type of activity, duration, difficulty, goals, etc.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 4

**Enroll in an exercise class/activity to help you stay active.** It's important to develop a social support group when trying to incorporate healthier habits into your life. Having a support group gives you a chance to vent your frustrations, and can be encouraging because you know you're not alone.

**Regularly update your friends and family about your exercise status.** Continual updates will not only encourage your friends and family, but will also give you a reason to continue in your efforts to change your behavior.

**Keep a written activity log tracking your exercise—include type of activity, duration, difficulty, goals, etc.** Knowing the exact details surrounding why we fail to engage in healthy behaviors helps unravel the mysteries of habitual behavior. If you can discover a trigger that causes you to engage in a specific action, you may be able to avoid that trigger in the future.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 4

*Let's Go...I'm Taking Action*

- Create a list of physical activities you can substitute for sedentary activities.
- Take on a new activity like golfing, joining a walking club, or bicycling.
- Read, *Body for Life* by Bill Phillips and Michael D'Orso.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 4 (Continued)

**Create a list of physical activities you can substitute for sedentary activities.** Again, sometimes our health behaviors are simply a matter of habit. If we can identify different, more positive health habits to substitute for negative ones, we'll be more prepared to change for the better.

**Take on a new activity like golfing, joining a walking club, or bicycling.** Doing this further entrenches a lifestyle characterized by making the right decisions. There's a whole world out there you never knew before—take advantage of it!

**Read, *Body for Life* by Bill Phillips and Michael D'Orso.** This informative book is a great place to get started when you're thinking about changing a negative health behavior. Learning about a specific health risk can inspire you to change your ways.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 5

*Old News...Been There, Done That*

- Celebrate accomplishing your written exercise plan.
- Meet with a/your physical trainer to retake your fitness test and get a new exercise prescription for moving forward.
- Offer yourself as a testimonial to others about the benefits of regular exercise.

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 5

**Celebrate accomplishing your written exercise plan.** There's nothing like rewarding yourself for a job well done. A celebration after reaching your goals is important in staying on the right track as you work to form your new, healthier behaviors into habits.

**Meet with a/your physical trainer to retake your fitness test and get a new exercise prescription for moving forward.** It's always great to measure your improvements, and meeting again with a fitness specialist will also help you set new, more challenging goals for improved health.

**Offer yourself as a testimonial to others about the benefits of regular exercise.** If you become a spokesperson for health, chances are you won't be very eager to spoil your reputation by falling back into your old, negative health behaviors.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Strategies for Change: Stage 5

*Old News...Been There, Done That*

- Create a list of all the benefits you've been experiencing since getting physically active—be sure to review previous lists and write down how things have changed.
- Begin looking at other changes you can make that will enhance your physical fitness, (i.e., nutrition).

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### Strategies for Change: Stage 5 (Continued)

**Create a list of all the benefits you've been experiencing since getting physically active—be sure to review previous lists and write down how things have changed.** This list will serve as reinforcement that you made the right decision when difficult situations tempt you to fall back into your old way of doing things.

**Begin looking at other changes you can make that will enhance your physical fitness—like better nutrition.** After reaching your goals, it's a good idea to take on new, healthy behaviors to help bolster the change you've already made. Now that you know the process and feel a bit more comfortable, you'll be in a position to begin systematically improving all aspects of your health and well-being.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### Key Point: Change Is A Process

- Pay attention to all of these change strategies no matter which stage you're in. Because **change is a process**, chances are you'll find yourself in each stage at some point in time.



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### Key Point: Change Is A Process

As you work through the change process, remember, you're likely to visit each stage more than once before you're successful in adopting a new and healthier lifestyle. Knowing this, it's important to pay attention to the strategies presented for each stage of the process—not only will you be better prepared to meet the challenges presented along the road to change, but having a general understanding of the change process can also help you in each of the stages while you're changing health behaviors for the better.

# Getting Active

## Changing Health Behaviors for the Better

### General Tips on Exercise

Incorporating the following strategies into your life will make it more likely that you'll be physically active. A little can go a long way.

- Exercise in the morning.
- Build exercise into your daily schedule.
- Exercise with family and friends.
- Start slowly.

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### General Tips on Exercise

**Key Idea:** You don't have to be a gym rat to experience the benefits of physical activity—a little goes a long way. The Surgeon General recommends that people get 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week—so you don't have to spend hours upon hours running or pumping iron.

When you're ready, the following tips and strategies will help you incorporate physical activity into your daily life.

- Exercise in the morning.
- Build exercise into your daily schedule.
- Exercise with family and friends.
- Start slowly.