



American Heart Association.  
EmPOWERED to Serve™

# Get Active!

#EmPOWERChange

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Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks. This could include an inspiring quote or reading or share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.



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## GET ACTIVE | Lesson Overview

### Welcome

- What is EmPOWERED to Serve™?
- Program Topic and Urgent Community Need

### Health Lesson: *Get Active!*

- Understand the physical activity guidelines for Americans
- Identify how to remove barriers to physical activity
- Establish a physical activity plan

### Closing Thoughts

- Your Voice Matters
- Online Resources



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Get everyone focused by reading through the lesson overview.

Let participants know that the lesson takes 30 minutes to complete.



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## WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

**EmPOWERED to Serve is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.**

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.



**AHA's Mission Statement:**  
**To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.**



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Read the introduction to ETS.

Share why you joined the ETS movement.

Encourage anyone who has not joined ETS to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.

Note that ETS is a platform of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works in partnership with community organizations across the country.

Highlight the American Heart Association's Mission Statement.



## WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MATTERS

**Heart disease is the  
No. 1 killer worldwide.**

**Stroke ranks second globally.**

Even when these conditions don't result in death, they can cause disability and diminish a person's quality of life.



Review the information on the slide.

Increasing physical activity also factors into meeting the AHA's 2030 impact goals:

- To increase healthy life expectancy from 66 to at least 68 years in the U.S. and from 64 to at least 67 years worldwide by 2030.



## WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MATTERS

**We want to see a world free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.**

Heart disease and stroke can be prevented 80% of the time by making healthy choices – such as getting regular physical activity – leading to longer, healthier lives.



Review the information on the slide.



## THE SITUATION

**Only about 20% of adults get the recommended amount of physical activity.**

Inactivity increases the risk of death from heart attack, stroke and type 2 diabetes, as well as colon, endometrial and lung cancer.



Review the information on the slide.



## THE SITUATION

The 30% to 50% of U.S. adults who perform little to no moderate-to-vigorous physical activity can realize valuable benefits by **replacing sitting time with light activity.**



Review the information on the slide.





## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

Adults should get at least:

150 minutes a week of  
moderate-intensity aerobic activity

- OR -

75 minutes a week of  
vigorous aerobic activity

- OR -

A combination of both,  
and preferably spread throughout the week



**Strength training activities should be incorporated at least two days per week.**



Review the information on the slide.

Then, give examples of health problems that people who are NOT physically active are more likely to develop:

- Increased risk for heart attack and stroke.
- Greater likelihood of being overweight.

**Ask the group:** Imagine some friends wanted to be physically active but weren't active yet. What would you say to them about how inactivity could harm their health?





## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

**Children 3-5** years old should be physically active and have plenty of opportunities to move throughout the day.

**Kids 6-17** years old should get at least 60 minutes per day of moderate-to vigorous-intensity physical activity, mostly aerobic.



Read the information on the slide. Then say:

Being physically active has many health benefits no matter what age you are. It's especially important to help kids develop and grow into healthy adults.

It can be hard to get kids to put down their electronic devices and do something active. But with a little effort, we can help them learn healthy habits now and find activities they can love for a lifetime.

## VIDEO: Exercise Within Reach



PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the Exercise Within Reach video. If you aren't going to have a live Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or skip this slide.

This video is available in English only.

Play the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqLBXrzZgi0>



## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Move more, sit less

Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Any physical activity is better than none.

Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits.



**There are benefits to any physical activity.**

Review the information on the slide.



## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Reducing sedentary time lowers risks for chronic diseases.

If you're not getting any activity, start with light activity such as walking. Even light-intensity activities are better than sitting.

**Add small bursts of activity.** Stand up for phone calls, get up to stretch and take a short walk every hour or so, or try a standing desk or workstation.



Review the information on the slide.

**Ask the group:** Is walking an activity you could add to your daily schedule?



## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Kids and Physical Activity

- Inactive kids are likely to be inactive adults.
- Physical activity produces overall physical, psychological and social benefits.
- Activity may be particularly helpful for the physical and psychological well-being of children with a weight problem.



Review the information on the slide.

Explain to the group:

- All children, even less-coordinated ones, need to be physically active.
- Physical activity produces overall physical, psychological and social benefits.
- Activity may be particularly helpful for the physical and psychological well-being of children with a weight problem.

If a full hour of activity is not doable, aim for at least two 30-minute periods or four 15-minute periods of vigorous activities.



## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Examples of moderate physical activity:

- Walking briskly  
(3 miles per hour  
or faster, but not  
race-walking)
- Water aerobics
- Bicycling  
(less than 10 mph)
- Tennis (*doubles*)
- Yoga
- Ballroom dancing
- General gardening



Read the information on the slide.



## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Examples of vigorous physical activity:

- Race walking, jogging or running
- Swimming laps
- Tennis (*singles*)
- Aerobic dancing
- Bicycling (*10 mph or faster*)
- Jumping rope
- Heavy gardening (*continuous digging or hoeing*)
- Hiking uphill or with a heavy backpack



Read the information on the slide.





## POINT 1: Physical Activity Recommendations

### Physical activity helps:

- Control weight.
- Reduce blood pressure.
- Raise HDL (“good”) cholesterol.
- Reduce the risk of diabetes and some kinds of cancer.
- Improve psychological well-being, including building more self-confidence and higher self-esteem.
- Strengthen the immune system.
- Prolong good health.



Review the information on the slide.

- Note that just by standing instead of sitting, your body is benefiting from moving.
- Look for opportunities to stand during the day. For example, if you’re reading at work or watching the news at home, instead of sitting, stand up – or even better, walk around.
- In addition to all of the above, physical activity helps keep your mind sharp, both now and later. Studies show that higher fitness levels are linked to better attention, learning, memory and problem-solving ability.



## **POINT 2: Possible Barriers to Physical Activity**

**“I don’t have enough time.”**

**Select activities that fit into your routine,** such as walking in your neighborhood, climbing stairs, parking farther away from your destination or exercising while you watch TV.

**“I don’t have anyone to exercise with.”**

**Join a gym or a walking or running group for social support.**

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Here are some common barriers people mention. What are some of the ways to overcome barriers? (See examples below.)

### **BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS:**

#### **Lack of time**

Monitor your activities for a week and identify times open for physical activity. Select activities that fit into your routine, such as walking in your neighborhood, climbing stairs, parking farther away from your destination or exercising while you watch TV.

#### **Friends and family don’t share your interest in physical activity**

Explain your fitness/health goals to friends and family and ask for their support. Invite others to participate in physical activity with you. If it’s an option, join a gym or a walking or running group for social support.



## POINT 2: Possible Barriers to Physical Activity

**“I don’t have enough energy.”**

### **Plan ahead.**

Determine what time of day you’re most energetic and schedule activity at that time.

**“I don’t have exercise equipment.”**

### **Select activities that don’t require gym equipment or a membership,**

such as walking, jogging, jumping rope or calisthenics.

**“I have to take care of my family.”**

### **Spend time together while exercising.**

Play tag, go for a walk or visit a park.



Here are some common barriers people mention. What are some of the ways to overcome barriers? (See examples below.)

### **BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS:**

#### **Lack of motivation and/or energy**

Plan ahead. Schedule physical activity for specific times/days and check it off your list or calendar each time you complete it. Determine what time of day you’re most energetic and schedule activity at that time. Join an exercise group or class and interact with others in the group as motivation to attend and to keep yourself accountable. Pack your workout clothes the night before and take them to work with you as a reminder.

#### **Lack of resources/equipment**

Select activities that don’t require gym equipment or a membership, such as walking, jogging, jumping rope or calisthenics. Identify inexpensive, convenient resources in your community, such as parks and recreation programs, walking clubs, etc. Use soup cans or one-gallon milk containers filled with water as weights.

#### **Family caregiving obligations**

Exercise with your kids. Go for a walk together, play tag or other running games. You can spend time together while making sure they’re getting the daily physical activity they need to stay healthy. If there’s an exercise class you like to attend, try alternating



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babysitting time with a neighbor.



## POINT 3: Create a Physical Activity Plan

You've made the decision to start being more physically active. What's next?

- 1) Get a baseline health screening if you have a chronic condition or have medical questions or concerns.
- 2) Identify and address your obstacles.
- 3) Assess yourself.
- 4) Set your goals.
- 5) Consider keeping an activity log.



It's always a good idea to talk to your health care provider before starting an exercise program.

### Review these five steps to get started:

**Step 1:** Get a baseline health screening from your health care provider if you have questions, concerns or a chronic condition.

**Step 2:** Identify and address your obstacles – be honest with yourself:

- What's stopping you?
- How can you overcome what's stopping you?

**Step 3:** Assess yourself: Your starting point and choice of physical activity are based on what you can do.

- How fit are you now?
- Can you walk at a brisk pace for 20 minutes? For 30 minutes?
- Can you walk a mile? How long does it take you?
- Can you bend down and touch your toes?
- What aerobic, muscle-building, flexibility and body composition activities do you enjoy?

**Step 4:** Take time to set your goals.

**Step 5:** Consider keeping an activity log.

- Note the value of finding a buddy or two:
- Ask family and friends to join you since you'll be more likely to stick with it if you have company.
- Join a walking group, other physical activity group, health club or the YMCA.
- Churches and senior centers often offer physical activity programs.
- Many people say listening to music during exercise can enhance endurance and delay fatigue.



## MOVE MORE, WITH MORE INTENSITY, AND SIT LESS



**10 minutes** of stretching  
is like walking the  
length of a football field



**20 minutes** of vacuuming  
is like walking one mile



**2.5 hours** of walking every  
week for a year is like walking  
across the state of Wyoming



**1 hour** of dancing every week  
for a year is like walking from  
Chicago to Indianapolis



**30 minutes** of singles  
tennis is like walking a 5K



**30 minutes** of grocery  
shopping every other  
week for a year is like  
walking a marathon



Review the information on the slide.



## MOVE MORE, WITH MORE INTENSITY, AND SIT LESS

**Get out there.**  
Then slowly increase duration  
and/or intensity.

- Set clear goals to motivate yourself.
- Goals can help when you're not in the mood to get moving.



Review the information on the slide.

Share with the group the importance of setting your own goals. Adults who set their own goals are more likely to stick with them.

**Ask the group:** If you're currently active, please share with the group one tip on how you successfully achieve your physical activity goals.

Give a few tips on setting realistic goals:

- Build up to at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (or a combination of the two) each week.
- Or do whatever your doctor recommends.
- Gradually increase your workouts by setting goals.
- Include chances to be more active during the day: Walk around the mall before shopping, take the stairs instead of the escalator, or take 10-15-minute walking breaks while watching TV or reading.
- Plan on a convenient time and place to do activities.
- Be active at the same time of day, making it a regular part of your activities – a healthy habit.





## ADD YOUR TIME UP!

You get the same benefits if you divide your time into two or three 10- to 15-minute segments a day.

- Squeeze in a walk.
- Walk, jog in place or use the treadmill at the gym.



Review the information on the slide.

Add a few more suggestions about ways to fit physical activity into the day:

- Go on a brisk walk with friends or relatives.
- Stroll around a nearby mall.
- Park some distance from your destination and walk the rest of the way.
- Take the stairs.

**Ask the group:** What strategies for being active in 15-minute increments might work for you?



## EXERCISE AT WORK

### Active Workdays

- Schedule time for physical activity on your calendar and treat it as any other important appointment.
- Participate in or start a walking club at work.
- Walk during the workday.



Review the information on the slide.

Add a few more suggestions about ways to fit physical activity into the day:

- Walk and talk with a coworker instead of sitting in a conference room.
- Walk during business calls, when possible.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Get off the elevator a few floors early and take the stairs the rest of the way.
- Walk around your building for a break during the workday or at lunchtime.



## EXERCISE AT HOME

### Household Chores Count

- Clean the house.
- Rake leaves, prune trees and work in the garden.
- Walk or bike to the corner store.
- Wash the car.



Review the information on the slide.



## YOUR VOICE MATTERS

**We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.**

Join **You're the Cure** today and be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

**Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!**



### Say:

Thank you for joining today. Before we close this lesson, we would like to mention other ways you can continue your health journey and help others in your community.

Each of us have the power to make a difference in our community. By joining the American Heart Association's **You're the Cure** program, you can be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for an issue. Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!



## USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!

**Join us as we impact the health of ALL in our communities!**



Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPOWERED to Serve movement.

Share how being part of the ETS movement helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.

Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.



## WRAP-UP

**We appreciate your thoughts!**

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:  
[empoweredtoserve@heart.org](mailto:empoweredtoserve@heart.org)



Thank everyone for coming.

Thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate the program.

Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.

# WE ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE

...serve our health, serve our community



**The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:**  
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Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all the participants leave the room.