

“Get Your Plate in Shape!”

Week 6: Let’s focus on physical activity



Be active ... get moving!

(Turn to page 6 of your *Activity & Eating* booklet)

Start with 30 minutes a day - 5 days a week!

You can start working toward this goal today. Remember, it’s better to start small!

Any movement is better than no movement, but aim for raising your heart rate for a minimum of 30 minutes most days of the week. This can be broken down into several sessions rather than completed all at once. Take advantage of your work breaks, as they are perfect opportunities to get in a 10 minute walk in.

The reason for exercising and the type of exercise we choose can be as unique as we are.

Some like to get in their exercise first thing in the morning; it energizes their day. Others do it during their lunch to break up their day and reenergize before the afternoon crunch. Yet others prefer to get their exercise in the evening as a way to unwind from their day. No matter what time of day you choose to exercise, you will get the same benefits which include burning calories and raising your metabolism for up to 24 hours post exercise.

Exercising helps you build and maintain your muscle mass.

In week 4 you may recall we discussed protein in the food label section. Our bodies are made up of protein, and one of the best examples is our muscles. As we age, it gets harder to maintain muscle mass. But by maintaining your muscle mass you can better protect yourself from falling and ultimately maintain physical independence.

There are many other great reasons to exercise such as:

- Increased energy
- Better sleep
- Lower high blood pressure
- Better weight management

➤ Check out **Why be physically active** on page 6 of your *Activity & Eating* booklet. Circle **what motivates you** to be active. Focusing on your reasons for being active will help you stick to it!

Am I getting enough physical activity?

(Turn to page 7 of your *Activity & Eating* booklet)

Use the chart on this page to track 3 days of your physical activity this week.

Complete the exercise below the physical activity tracking chart; even if you are meeting the minimum amount of activity per day and week. Many of us can still make improvements.

MyFitness Planner is a great online resource to help you stick to your activity goals!

<http://www.mealsmatter.org/EatingForHealth/Tools/MFP/MFP.aspx>

MyFitness Planner will calculate your current fitness level and help you determine if you are getting enough physical activity for optimal health. It is designed to provide individualized feedback unique to your situation. The program takes into account your current activity level, your willingness to change your current habits, as well as your perceived barriers and benefits to exercise. You will receive responses and suggestions that are relevant to your real life situation and are therefore more motivating to you.