

■ Endurance

Aerobic exercise strengthens the heart and improves overall fitness by increasing the body's ability to use oxygen.

- Start with short periods of moderate aerobic activity; gradually increase duration.
- Walk on flat surfaces initially; slowly increase distance and difficulty.
- Climb stairs for an added workout; use handrails to avoid falling.
- Popular activities include walking, swimming and/or water aerobics, bicycling (*remember to wear a helmet*), dancing, and household tasks like gardening, yard work, and vacuuming.

■ Other Helpful Tips

- Start slowly. Build up your activities and your level of effort gradually.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes that give you good support.
- Start and end an exercise session with an easy walk while moving your arms for 5 to 15 minutes.
- Drink water before, during, and after physical activity.
- Make it fun! Exercise with a friend or a group.
- Vary your activities daily to work different muscles and keep it interesting.

■ Informational Resources

- American Association of Retired Persons
www.aarp.org/health
- American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov
- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
www.niams.nih.gov/hi/index.htm
- National Institute on Aging
www.nia.nih.gov

Simple Measures for Successful Aging

KEEP MOVING

Brought to you by
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Department of Public Health and Education
860 Winter Street
Waltham, MA 02451-1411
www.massmed.org

For additional copies, call (800) 843-6356

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■ Flexibility

Proper stretching every day reduces the chance of muscle strain and injury.

- Start your day with stretching to increase joint mobility.
- Slow, gentle stretches alleviate stiffness and reduce the risk of injury.
- Hold each position for 15 to 20 seconds to stretch your muscles slowly.
- Take deep breaths to help you relax into each stretching position.



Physical activity of many types can keep you feeling and looking your best. It can help your heart, your muscles, your bones, your brain, your mood, and increases your ability to perform everyday activities.

■ Strength

Strength training, like lifting weights or exercising against resistance, builds muscle tone and strength.

- Increased strength helps to improve posture and makes muscles and bones more resistant to injury.
- Strengthening exercises help lessen the pain of arthritic joints and reduce the risk of falling.
- Exercises for both the upper and lower body can be done by lifting free weights, or by working out with machines or an elastic band.
- Keep your movements slow and controlled.
- Try not to exercise the same muscles two days in a row.

■ Balance

Improved balance reduces the risk of falls.

- Popular balance exercises include
 - Standing on one foot at a time next to a dresser or other support,
 - Sitting on an oversized therapy ball, and
 - Tai Chi.
- Exercise is best done with a companion or with supervision.

With all these activities, practice MODERATION. Just because something is good does not mean that more of it is better!

These are general guidelines and not a substitute for the advice of your physician.

Be sure to consult with your physician before changing your diet or exercise, or if you have any concerns.