



## Weight Management Tips — Exercise

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Successful weight management involves reducing the amount of calories you take in, increasing your exercise level, and making lifestyle changes. This information will help you understand how exercise can affect your weight.

Regular physical exercise:

- increases the rate at which you burn calories (metabolism)
- increases your energy level
- improves your sleep
- prevents the loss of muscle mass during weight reduction
- reduces your risk of certain chronic diseases (cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes)
- improves your bone density
- improves your self-esteem and sense of control

### **How to get started**

Beginning an exercise plan can be a difficult first step. Here are some practical tips to help you get started:

- Choose activities you enjoy and that fit into your lifestyle. You'll be more apt to stick to a plan if it is something you really enjoy and can do easily.

- Find an exercise buddy. It's more fun and more motivating if you have someone to exercise with you.
- If you have not been active, ease into an exercise routine. Start with 10 to 15 minutes of physical activity a day and gradually increase this to 30 minutes every day. Brisk walking is a great way to start.
- Remember all of the little things you can do throughout the day to burn calories. They really add up:
  - Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
  - Park your car a little farther away and walk the extra distance.
  - Skip the golf cart or caddie—carry your own clubs.
  - Get off the bus a stop or two early and walk the rest of the way.
  - Take a walk during your lunch break.
  - Forget the remote. Get out of the chair to change the channel.
  - Wash your car instead of going through a car wash.

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- Cut down on the amount of time you spend sitting:
  - Limit your television or computer time.
  - Walk to the mailbox or corner store.
  - Take a break from the computer every hour while at work. Get up and take a walk around the office.
  - Work in the garden, clean your house, or go dancing.
  - Play catch, Frisbee, or some other outdoor activity.
  - Make a list of all the sedentary things you do during the day (things you do sitting down) and figure out a way to reduce them by 1 hour.

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This information is not meant for use without a physician's or dietitian's recommendation. Call 1-800-533-UPMC (8762) for referral to a registered dietitian or if you have questions.

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