

# May



## National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

**Sponsor:** President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition

(<http://www.fitness.gov/resources/toolkit/index.html>)

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is a great time to promote the benefits of physical activity.

Getting active increases your chances of living longer and can help you:

- Control your blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight.
- Raise your "good" cholesterol.
- Prevent heart disease, colorectal cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

Here are some tips to help you get active:

- Aim for at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate activity a week. This includes things like walking fast, dancing, or biking.
- Do muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week. Be sure to strengthen all major muscle groups including the legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, shoulders, and arms.

## Get the Word Out

### Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

*Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.*

**[Your organization]** is teaming up with the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition in honor of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. During the month of May, we challenge you to include 30 minutes of physical activity each day. Physical activity not only increases your chances of living longer, it also reduces your risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and some types of cancer. In **[state]** nearly **[local statistics]** do not get enough physical activity.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week. Moderate activity includes walking fast, dancing, or raking leaves. Do strengthening activities, like sit-ups and push-ups, at least 2 days a week. By getting active, you will sleep better, strengthen your bones, and lower your risk of depression.

- **[Add details about your local activities.]**
- **[Include quotes from your organization.]**





No matter what shape you are in, together we can rise to the challenge to get more active during the month of May.







For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.


### Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.


Sample tweets: Tips to Get Active

The messages below are sample tweets. To send them via Twitter, click on the URL link provided after the “Tweet this message” phrase. Or, copy the message and paste it to your Twitter stream and click post.

- Fitness Tip: Build physical activity into your life. Start at a comfortable level.  
[Tweet this message:  
<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Fitness+Tip%3A+Build+physical+activity+into+your+life.+Start+at+a+comfortable+level.> 
- Can you name 7 benefits of being active? We can: <http://1.usa.gov/HPDofC>  
[Tweet this message:  
<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Can+you+name+7+benefits+of+being+active%3F+We+can%3A&url=http://1.usa.gov/HPDofC> 
- Rise to the challenge. Take time to get the physical activity you need. Sign up for the President’s Challenge: <http://bit.ly/iB88l2> [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://bit.ly/iB88l2&text=Rise+to+the+challenge.+Take+time+to+get+the+physical+activity+you+need.+Sign+up+for+the+President's+Challenge.> 
- Q. Is physical activity for everyone? A. Yes. Here is a helpful resources that explain why: <http://1.usa.gov/hkalfP> [Tweet this message:  
<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Q%3A+Is+physical+activity+for+everyone%3F+A.+Yes.+Here+is+a+helpful+resources+that+explain+why%3A&url=http://1.usa.gov/hkalfP> 

- Did you know? No matter how inactive you've been or how out of shape you are, people of all ages benefit from physical activity. [Tweet this message: <https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Did+you+know%3F+No+matter+how+inactive+you%27ve+been+or+how+out+of+shape+you+are%2C+people+of+all+ages+benefit+from+physical+activity.> 
- Fitness Tip: Include aerobic activities that make you breathe harder and your heart beat faster. [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?text=Fitness+Tip:+Include+aerobic+activities+that+make+you+breathe+harder+and+your+heart+beat+faster.> 
- Q. How much physical activity do I need each week? A. Check out these guidelines for details: <http://1.usa.gov/IP4URb> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/IP4URb&text=Q.+How+much+physical+activity+do+I+need+each+week?+A.+Check+out+these+guidelines+for+details:> 
- Fitness Tip: Start by doing what you can, and then look for ways to add more. [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?text=Fitness+Tip:+Start+by+doing+what+you+can,+and+then+look+for+ways+to+add+more.> 
- Take action to get active. Find your fitness level and see what you can do starting today: <http://1.usa.gov/iFt90r> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/iFt90r&text=Take+action+to+get+active.+Find+your+fitness+level+and+see+what+you+can+do+starting+today:> 
- Interested in physical activity? Read the Be Active Your Way blog to stay up to date on all things active: <http://1.usa.gov/jt81kC> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/jt81kC&text=Interested+in+physical+activity?+Read+the+Be+Active+Your+Way+blog+to+stay+up+to+date+on+all+things+active:> 
- Test your knowledge with the Be Active Your Way health widget: <http://1.usa.gov/IU4sSx> [Tweet this message:

<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Test+your+knowledge+with+the+Be+Active+Your+Way+health+widget:&url=http%3A%2F%2F1.usa.gov%2FIU4sSx> 

- Did you know? Walking for 10 minutes burns about 50 calories? More ways physical activity keeps a healthy weight: <http://1.usa.gov/u92XMk>  
[Tweet this message:  
<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Did+you+know%3F+Walking+for+10+minutes+burns+about+50+calories%3F+More+ways+physical+activity+keeps+a+healthy+weight%3A&url=http://1.usa.gov/u92XMk>

### Send e-cards

- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way in 2012 (version 1)  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=4>)
- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way in 2012 (version 2)  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=5>)
- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way – Rise to the Challenge  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=18>)
- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way this Summer  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=19>)
- CDC: Be Active!  
(<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/message/message.asp?cardid=40&category=199>)
- CDC: Fashion to Fitness  
(<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/message/message.asp?cardid=189&category=203>)
- CDC: Youth Sports Safety  
(<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/message/message.asp?cardid=127>)
- View More E-Cards (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/cards.aspx?jscript=1>)

### Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#may>) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.

## Get Involved

Take action to promote physical fitness.

1. Be a community leader (<http://www.letsmove.gov/be-leader-your-community>). Encourage families and communities to get active and empower them to make better choices.
2. Host an information night featuring community members who have increased their physical activity. Ask people to share their stories and tips for success.
3. Display these Physical Activity Guidelines posters (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/posters.aspx>) to encourage people to get active.
4. Encourage others to increase their physical activity and sports participation by taking the President's Challenge (<http://www.presidentschallenge.org/>). Sign up individually or as a workplace or other group.
5. Ask local retail stores and fitness facilities to offer discounted memberships or free guest passes and to share free information about physical fitness and health.

Adapted from the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition and [healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov) (<http://www.healthfinder.gov>).


Contact the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition (<http://www.fitness.gov/>) at [fitness@hhs.gov](mailto:fitness@hhs.gov) for more information and materials.

### Related Tools on [healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

- Eat Healthy (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=21>)
- Get Active (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=22>)
- Help a Loved One Get More Active: Quick tips (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=45>)
- Help Your Child Stay at a Healthy Weight (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=62>)
- Stay Active During Pregnancy: Quick tips (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=29>)
- Stay Active with a Disability: Quick tips (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=50>)

- Take Steps to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=73>)
- Watch Your Weight (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=25>)

### Personal Health Tools

- Assess Your Food Intake and Physical Activity (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker/default.aspx>)
- Be Active Your Way Widget (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/widgets/>)
- Physical Activity Selector (<http://www.shapeup.org/interactive/phys1.php>) 
- Reduce Television Screen Time Log for Children (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/screen-time-log.pdf>)



### More Information (Health A-Z)

- Exercise and Physical Fitness (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=657>)
- Yoga (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=14454>)

### Resources

- President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition (<http://www.fitness.gov/>)  
National Physical Fitness and Sports Month Sponsor
- President's Council on Fitness, Sports, & Nutrition, The President's Adult Fitness Test (<http://www.adultfitnessstest.org/default.aspx> ) and the PCPFS National Physical Fitness and Sports Toolkit (<http://www.fitness.gov/resources/toolkit/index.html>)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/default.aspx>)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, :  
BodyWorks – A Toolkit for Healthy Teens and Strong Families (<http://www.womenshealth.gov/bodyworks/>)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, Fitness and Nutrition (<http://www.womenshealth.gov/FitnessNutrition/index.cfm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Tai Chi (<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/taichi/>)



- National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Physical Activity: Are You Ready? (<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/salud/pa/index.htm> )
- National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, We Can! (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging, Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging (<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/exercise.htm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging, Go4Life (<http://go4life.niapublications.org/> )
- The White House, Let's Move! (<http://www.letsmove.gov/>)



## Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

### Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

### Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure they are available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.

- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library, post office, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

### On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.


### Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic e-mail alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer e-mail alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at [healthfinder.gov](http://healthfinder.gov). You can contact us at [info@nhic.org](mailto:info@nhic.org) or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/Healthfinder>) .

