

# FITT — Frequency, Intensity, Time, and Type of Activity

When you put a lot of effort into increasing physical activity, you want results! Whether you are a beginner or have experience, FITT will help you build your physical activity program. By following FITT, you are striving to manage your weight and improve your health.

## FREQUENCY

*How often are you active?*



### Everyone:

- Be active 5 or more days of the week.
- Start slowly and gradually increase your physical activity.

### Beginners:

- Start with 2-3 days of aerobic activity (activity that increases your heart rate). Gradually increase to at least 5 days/week.

### Experienced:

- Continue with aerobic activity 5+ days/week.
- Add in 2 days (Tuesday, Thursday) of strength training.

## INTENSITY

*How hard are your heart and muscles working?*



### Everyone (including Beginners):

- Always warm-up, cool-down, and stretch.
- Be active at a moderate intensity (like a brisk walk or gardening).
- Be active at a rate that allows you to talk.
- Slow down if you have trouble breathing or if you can't catch your breath.
- You should stretch after aerobic or strength training. A stretch should never be painful. Some discomfort is normal. You want to feel a slight pull of the muscle.

### Experienced:

- Build intensity for aerobic exercise by increasing speed (fast/sprint walk for 30 seconds followed by 1 minute brisk walk) and/or incline/resistance (hills on treadmill, greater workload on bike).
- Increase intensity for strength training by adding weight or only resting 30 seconds between sets.

## TIME

*How long are you active?*



### Everyone:

- Try to stay active for at least 10 minutes without stopping. Remember, some activity is better than no activity. It is okay to build up to 10 minutes.
- Aim for a total of at least 30 minutes of activity throughout the day. For weight loss, increase this to 60 minutes per day.
- Set a goal for the week based on total minutes of physical activity.
- Increase the length of time you are active before increasing the intensity of the activity.
- There are no time goals for strength training.
- You should stretch after aerobic or strength activity. For muscles that were used, hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds. Repeating stretches will increase flexibility.

## TYPE

*What are you doing?*

### Everyone:

- All types of physical activity are important...so mix it up.
- Aerobic—these make your heart beat faster—bicycling, dancing, swimming, mowing the lawn.
- Strength—carrying wood, lifting dumbbells.
- Flexibility—seated stretches, yoga.

## DEFINITIONS



**Aerobic activity** is when the body's large muscles move together and your heart beats faster than usual. Examples include aerobics, swimming, running, walking, kickboxing, dancing, and cycling. This type of activity burns the most calories and promotes weight loss.



**Strengthening activity** is when the body's muscles work against a force or weight. Examples include elastic bands, weights, or body weight.



**Flexibility** lengthens a muscle while increasing range of motion. Examples include self-stretch, yoga, Pilates, and chair stretching routines.



**Lifestyle activity** occurs during normal, everyday activity such as vacuuming, walking the dog, mowing the lawn, participating in a walking meeting at work, or dancing.