

Motivating Your Patients To Be Active

Some of your patients probably can't imagine a day without exercise and physical activity.

For others, exercise may be the last thing on their minds. Many patients are probably somewhere in between. Here are a few tips to help your patients get started and keep going.

Exercise? Me? No Way!

- Ask these patients about their daily activities. They may be doing something physically active without realizing it, such as walking the dog or climbing stairs. Encourage them to continue these activities and explore new possibilities.
- Talk about benefits that will mean the most to them. The possibility of reducing or eliminating certain medications or improving one's ability to do favorite daily activities can be powerful motivators.
- Introduce the tips below for getting started.

I'm interested but I don't know how to get started.

- Encourage them to try all four types of exercise (endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility).
- Work together to create a plan for safe physical activity (what, when, how).
- Discuss how to accommodate any health conditions so they can exercise safely.
- Suggest reading success stories on the **Go4Life** website—hearing from others can be very motivating.

I'm active regularly and I love it!

- Congratulate and encourage them.
- Review activities and explain ways they can continue making progress.
- Discuss safety issues and how to accommodate any health conditions.
- Encourage them to share their exercise story at the **Go4Life** website.
- Talk about dealing with interruptions to their exercise routine.

 **Quick Tip**

Ask regular exercisers for their “success tips.” Share them with your other patients to help them become and stay active!

VISIT
www.nia.nih.gov/Go4Life

- Print useful tools.
- Order free exercise guides, DVDs, and posters for your waiting room.

