



FIVE WAYS TO ADD HEART-HEALTHY EXERCISE TO YOUR DAY

As special and important as your heart is, it's still a muscle. And like most muscles, you can exercise it and make it stronger and more fit.

Even better, the physical activity that helps your heart beat better can also improve other heart risk factors like blood pressure, body mass index and cholesterol levels.

Putting a Number on Physical Activity

There are health benefits to many forms of physical activity, but the American Heart Association is clear that for overall cardiovascular health, **30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise at least five days a week is ideal.**



If you're particularly concerned with your blood pressure and/or cholesterol level, you may get more benefit from 40 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity three to four times each week.

But remember: Getting some physical activity into your day is better than no exercise.

5 Heart-Healthy Exercise Options

Some people love running, while others enjoy sports that provide a good level of intensity for heart health. But even if you're not a natural athlete and have no plans to join a gym anytime soon, there are ways to include more exercise in your day.

Breaking your daily activity goal into smaller chunks may make it easier to fit into your busy schedule.

Other tips to help you get your 30 minutes include:

- **Take a hike:** The Pacific Northwest is full of beautiful places to enjoy the great outdoors, from city parks and natural areas to nearby waterfalls, forests and mountains.
- **Walk it off:** An energetic walk with the dog, your family or a friend around your neighborhood is a fun way to get some exercise and enjoy each other's company.
- **Climb the corporate ladder:** Even if you're not aiming for upper management, you are likely to find regular opportunities throughout your day to skip the elevator or escalator and choose the stairs instead.
- **Stop circling:** Parking a little farther out in a parking lot and walking swiftly to your destination will add a little activity to your day and likely save you time over driving around hunting for a closer spot.
- **Earn your screen time:** Don't want to miss your favorite show but know you need some more activity in your day? Make sure you get some exercise while you watch TV. Jog in place while you watch, or try jumping on a mini trampoline. If you have room, invest in a treadmill or stationary bike.



One Heart-Healthy Step at a Time

Just one step in the right direction toward more physical activity is a great way to start on a path of heart-healthy fitness.

Give your heart the exercise it needs to be healthy, and it will repay you by doing its job better for longer. So take that first step today.

