



## Three Types of Exercise



move  
to feel  
better

The American Heart Association recommends moderate exercise for 30 to 60 minutes most days each week. If you can't get 1 full hour of exercise and activity, try splitting it up during your day. Go for a 30 minute walk in the morning and another one in the afternoon.

Exercises are physically-exerting activities done to make your muscles, heart and lungs stronger. There are three basic kinds of physical activity: aerobic, resistance and strength training, and balance and stretching.

- **Aerobic** exercises speed your heart rate and breathing. It helps improve your heart and lung fitness. Examples include brisk walking, hiking, jogging and swimming.
- **Resistance, strength training and weight-bearing** exercises help build and maintain bones and muscles. Examples include free weights, weight machines and walking (your own body weight).
- **Balance and stretching** exercises enhance your stability and flexibility. Examples include gently stretching, dancing, yoga and the martial arts.

Some exercises may not be safe for certain types of congenital heart defects. Talk with members of your adult congenital heart team to determine if your exercise routine and choices are right for you.

When done on a regular basis, exercise helps increase your tolerance for activity, improves your overall health and reduces your risk for heart disease. It also helps you handle and recover from stress.

If you move your body, you will most likely feel better. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week. Even a little exercise is better than none at all.

## How To Increase Your Exercise

- Use stairs instead of the escalator or elevator.
- If you drive, choose walking or biking more often.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Use a push mower to cut your grass.
- Rake leaves instead of blowing them into a pile.
- Walk the dog.
- Ride a stationary bike while watching TV.
- Clean the house.
- Join a walking group.
- Walk regularly at a local mall.
- Dance.
- Take a 10-minute break at work to go for a brisk walk.
- Do water aerobics.
- Build weekend family activities around physical activities.

### New to Weight Training?

- **Warm up:** Do light aerobic activity for 3 to 5 minutes.
- **Choose the right amount of weight:** Choose an amount you can do for up to 15 repetitions without stopping.
- **Repetitions (reps):** Start with 10 to 15 reps of each exercise.
- **Sets:** Do 1 to 2 sets of each exercise for the first couple of sessions/weeks.
- **Frequency:** Strength train 2 to 3 times each week. Rest 1 day between full body strength training sessions to allow your muscles to recover.



### Why Exercise?

#### Exercise:

- helps you lose excess weight and maintain an ideal weight
- increases your muscle strength, tone and flexibility
- increases your balance
- helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints
- helps control your appetite
- helps control your blood pressure and glucose
- helps increase HDL (“good”) cholesterol
- makes you feel better, increases your self-esteem
- reduces your stress
- lowers your risk for heart disease, colon cancer and diabetes.

