

How Many Minutes Should I Get?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify the recommended minutes of daily physical activity they should do for good health.
- Recognize the role that physical activity plays in reducing their risk of certain chronic diseases.
- Recognize physical activity as an important element of a healthy lifestyle.
- Use the *Physical Activity Scoreboard* handout to track their progress toward meeting their physical activity goals.

MATERIALS

- The *Recommended Minutes of Physical Activity for Adults* handout (p. H – 6)
- The *Health Benefits of Physical Activity* handout (p. H – 7)
- The *Physical Activity Scoreboard* handout (p. H – 8)

PREPARATION

1. Become familiar with the content of each handout prior to implementing the lesson. Photocopy the *Recommended Minutes of Physical Activity for Adults*, *Health Benefits of Physical Activity*, and *Physical Activity Scoreboard* handouts for each participant.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute the *Recommended Minutes of Physical Activity for Adults* handout to each participant. Begin by asking participants the following questions:
 - How many minutes of physical activity should you get every day?
 - What counts as physical activity?
 - If you aren't physically active every day, why aren't you?
 - What makes you want or not want to be physically active?
2. Explain to participants that to maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases, adults need at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day.
3. Explain that for most people, greater health benefits can be achieved by doing more physical activity. For example, to help manage body weight and prevent gradual weight gain, adults need 60 minutes of moderate-to vigorous-intensity physical activity on most days of the week. To sustain weight loss, adults need 60 to 90 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day. Note that some people may need to consult with a health care provider before participating in this level of activity.

4. Discuss the variety of activities that make up physical activity, and review the definitions of moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity:

Moderate-intensity physical activity – gets you up and moving and makes your heart beat faster (e.g., brisk walking, biking, taking the stairs, dancing, and raking leaves).

Vigorous-intensity physical activity – makes you breathe hard and sweat (e.g., running, jogging, playing soccer, fast dancing, jumping rope, playing basketball, and fast biking).

5. Ask participants to share the types of physical activity that they like to do. Also have participants share ways that they can increase the amount of physical activity they get every day.
6. Distribute the *Health Benefits of Physical Activity* handout to each participant. Review the information with the class, and have participants share their impressions.

7. Conclude the lesson by distributing the *Physical Activity Scoreboard* handout. Talk with participants about using the handout to keep track of their progress toward meeting their physical activity goal for a week. Direct their attention to the weekly goals section of the handout, and discuss with participants some helpful tips for meeting their stated goals. Talk with them about teaming up with a friend or family member to be more physically active. Mention how social support can make living a healthy lifestyle much easier.

Expansion Ideas

Photocopy and distribute the *Keeping FITT* (p. H – 25) and *Physical Activity Pyramid* (p. H – 26) handouts to participants. Encourage participants to use the handouts to create a weekly physical activity routine for themselves and their friends or family members.

