



Physical Activity and Healthy Aging

Why are physical activity and exercise important to healthy aging?

Being active and exercising regularly is very important to health and independence as you age. Regular exercise can:

- Improve your strength, flexibility, and fitness.
- Improve balance and walking ability, and help to prevent falls.
- Help you sleep better, reduce stress, and help you feel better.
- Help to prevent or control diseases such as diabetes, as well as heart and lung problems.

Physical activity and exercise are an important part of staying healthy, maintaining independence and quality of life, and reducing health costs associated with disease and disability.

How much exercise should I do?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Surgeon General recommend that all adults, even people over the age of 65, get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity such as brisk walking almost every day. Specific exercises to improve strength and flexibility should also be done at least 2 to 3 times a week.

Even small amounts of exercise are good for your health. The important thing is to start and stay with it.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

For appointments, call between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday:

8-East Physical Therapy:
206-598-4830

Roosevelt Exercise Training Center:
206-598-2888

Appointments are scheduled daily between 8:15 a.m. and 3 p.m.

How can I get more activity every day?

There are many ways to increase your daily physical activity. For example, you can:

- Go for a walk.
- Rake leaves.
- Sweep the porch.
- Go dancing.
- Park farther away from the store and walk more.
- Get off the bus early and walk home.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

You can also participate in an exercise program at a local senior center, YMCA/YWCA, church, or community center. You can even exercise at home by yourself or with a friend.

How should I begin?

If you have not exercised in a long time, or have health problems, talk to your health care provider about what kinds of exercise are best for you. Your health care provider can also refer you to physical therapy for evaluation and exercise instruction. Medicare covers this.

The important thing is to start! Think of exercise and physical activity as fun and healthy, and make it a part of your daily routine.

Notes

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