

*From the Health Team:*                    The Value of Exercise, even while Social Distancing

Regular aerobic exercise helps the heart, the blood pressure, muscle tone, weight control, the brain and mental health. The recommended amount of exercise is 30 minutes 5 times a week or 150 minutes total during a week. If you cannot do 30 minutes at one time, do a few minutes several times a day.

While some venues such as the gym, the swimming pool, or the Senior Center for older adults, may not be available during this time, there are ways to get regular exercise while social distancing:

- Stretching exercises help limber up the muscles before you start. Move each joint 10 times through its normal range of motion up to, but not beyond, the point of discomfort.
- If you have not been exercising regularly, work your way gradually up to the recommended amount. Start with 10 minutes each day and each week add another 10 more minutes per day.
- Any exercise is better than none. Stand up frequently. While watching a TV program, use commercials as a time to do knee extensions, ankle circles or marching in place. Every hour or even every 30 minutes, stand up and walk around the house.
- On nice days, walk 1 or 2 miles outdoors. WEAR A FACE MASK, OF COURSE, AND KEEP AT LEAST 6 FEET AWAY FROM OTHER PEOPLE.
- Walk around inside the house or in your yard 10 or 20 times. Yes, it may not be as interesting as a longer walk, but a TV or radio (or singing, if you are so inclined, or talking on your cell phone) may help.
- Go up and down a flight of stairs building up to 10 times a day. Once again, maybe with the help of radio or TV. Cell phones are not recommended as you must keep your eyes on the steps!
- Exercise with the coaching of a TV exercise program.
- Then there is always housework, yardwork or cleaning closets! Just keep moving!

If your mobility is limited, it is also possible to exercise while seated:

- Do range of motion of all joints while seated. Then you can add weights. For example, lifting 1-pound weights (or cans of soup). You can also use Velcro weights on wrists and ankles.
- Raise your arms and knees repetitively while seated. Then practice raising your legs straight out in front of you, gradually building up to 10 repetitions. You should stabilize yourself by holding onto the chair arms.
- Stand up and sit down repetitively, again holding onto the chair for balance.
- Holding onto a piece of furniture, march in place, flexing your knees alternately, and raising them repeatedly to waist level.
- Holding onto a piece of furniture with both hands, practice lifting 1 foot at a time and holding it to the count of 5. This can be done repetitively.

Stay active & Be well!

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