

Your Health Matters

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND OLDER ADULTS: RECOMMENDATIONS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Physical activity has many benefits for those over the age of 65. Have you noticed changes in your attention or memory? Have you or a loved one been diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's disease?

By being physically active you can:

- ✓ Improve memory and attention
- ✓ Increase independence and performance of daily living activities (toileting, dressing, etc.)
- ✓ Reduce the chances of developing dementia and Alzheimer's disease
- ✓ Slow the progression of dementia and Alzheimer's disease
- ✓ Help manage responsive behaviours
- ✓ Reduce depression
- ✓ Reduce caregiver burden

WHAT IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Physical activity is any task that you can do to help maintain your health and improve your brain activity. Physical activity can include low-intensity activities (vacuuming, laundry, setting the table, etc.) or moderate-intensity activities (brisk walking, light home repairs, etc.) depending on your health and fitness levels.

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Healthy older adults (age 65+) should aim to achieve 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. Physical activity should be performed in sessions of 10 minutes or more.

Remember to only participate in activities your doctor or therapist has indicated. Follow their instructions and use proper equipment, as recommended.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, GUIDELINES AND ACTIVITY IDEAS

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults:

http://www.csep.ca/cMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP_PAGuidelines_older-adults_en.pdf

Alzheimer's Society Canada: <http://www.alzheimer.ca/>

Mississauga/Halton LHIN (fitness & recreation programs):

<http://www.mississaugahaltonhealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10175>

905-855-9090 ext 5989 or 5988

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LOW TO MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are some household activities and exercises that may offer physical activity benefits. These activities should be completed as recommended by your therapist.

Please note that you will experience slight breathlessness with moderate physical activity. These activities should be completed in 10-minute sessions or longer whenever possible.

LOW AND MODERATE INTENSITY HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

Watering plants	Vacuuming	Dusting
Laundry	Sweeping	Setting the table
Cooking	Mowing the lawn	Raking leaves
Shoveling light snow	Gardening/weeding	Using stairs

LOW INTENSITY EXERCISE (refer to additional handouts as needed)

- ◇ Walk for _____ (use assistive aid if recommended). Repeat _____ a week. Slowly increase as tolerated. If walking outdoors, only walk $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total distance and turn around. This is safer than walking all the way and being too tired to walk back.
- ◇ Stretch and hold exercises. Hold stretches for approximately 30 seconds each time. Repeat _____ times a day. Repeat _____ times a week.
- ◇ Total body exercises. Move your legs, arms and body to keep active. Repeat _____ times a day. Repeat _____ times a week.
- ◇ Seated exercises. Done from a seated position on a chair or a couch. Repeat _____ times a day. Repeat _____ times a week.
- ◇ Balance exercises. Hold onto a secure surface. Repeat _____ times a day. Repeat _____ times a week.

MODERATE INTENSITY EXERCISE (refer to additional handouts as needed)

- ◇ Take a brisk walk or hike outdoors. Walk with a friend or family member. Consider carrying a phone with you in case you need to contact someone immediately.
- ◇ Peddling on a stationary bike.
- ◇ Do strengthening exercises. Simply add weights to suggested total body exercises and/or seated exercises.
- ◇ Consider joining a fitness and recreation program in your area.

Note: If you have any questions or concerns about doing any of these activities, please consult your doctor. If you experience any sudden shortness of breath, dizziness, chest pain/pressure, numbness/tingling in arms or legs, or nausea/vomiting while doing these activities, please consult your doctor.