

Weight-Loss Aid: Exercise

What matters most for losing pounds is consuming a healthy diet. Exercise is also essential — it helps you lose weight faster, maintain your weight loss and keep it under control.

Exercise goal: To aid weight loss and protect health, adults need at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (such as brisk walking) per week. It's not as daunting as you may think. You can accumulate this time in increments of 10, 20 or 30 minutes throughout your day.

For example, 20 minutes on a treadmill, a 15-minute lunchtime walk, 30 minutes of yard work or household chores and 15 minutes of lifting weights add up to 80 minutes of calorie-burning activity.

- **Any physical activity** that gets you moving and raises your heart rate counts. *Bonus:* Being active throughout your day helps raise your calorie-burning rate.
- **To stay aware of your goal**, get an app or a wearable device to track your steps — pace while you talk on the phone, watch television or take the dog for an extra walk.
- **Use an app to log activity** — this helps you reach your weekly exercise target.
- **Gradually work up to 60 to 90 minutes** of exercise most days of the week. Get your health care provider's OK if you're sedentary, obese or have a chronic condition such as arthritis or type 2 diabetes.
- **Fit in muscle-strengthening activities** 2 to 3 times a week. *Bonus:* More muscle means more calories burned.
- **Exercise adds energy**, mobility and motivation to succeed with your weight-loss plan.

People who make exercise a habit make time for exercise.