

How To Keep Moving While Staying At Home: *Suggestions from your HTC Physical Therapists*

For most of us our typical physical activities and exercise routines have been cut back or even put on hold to follow important physical distancing guidelines. Staying at home doesn't have to mean sitting still, and you don't need a home gym or special equipment to get started. Here are some ideas to help you figure out ways to take care of your physical fitness at home.

How much exercise do you need?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends:

Preschoolers

- Preschool-aged children (3-5 years old) should be physically active throughout the day to enhance growth and development.

Children and Adolescents

- Children and adolescents (ages 6-17 years old) should do 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.
- Most of that activity should be aerobic, but it should also include muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities at least 3 times a week (each).

Adults

- Adults should do at least 150 minutes to 300 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes to 150 minutes of vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity, or any equivalent combination of the two, spread throughout the week.
- Adults should include muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.
- In general, remember to sit less and move more. Some physical activity is better than none, and adults who sit less gain health benefits.

For more information on current physical activity guidelines visit <https://health.gov/our-work/physical-activity/current-guidelines> or go to <https://health.gov> and click on the "Physical Activity" icon.

Need some ideas for how to exercise?

Here are some examples of the many different ways to exercise:

- **Aerobic Activity Outside:** brisk walking, cycling, jogging, hiking, riding a scooter, roller blading, walking while pushing the stroller, walking while pulling a wagon, throwing a baseball back/forth, running between bases, soccer ball drills.
 - *Note: Be sure to practice physical distancing consistent with the most current instructions for your location when enjoying outdoor activities.*
- **Aerobic Activity Inside:** Walking laps, stair-stepping, dancing, plyometrics (for advanced exercisers/athletes), online exercise classes (Live stream and video yoga classes, Tabata training, Orange Theory, etc.)
 - *Note: Specific programs listed have not been formally evaluated by HTC PT. Contact your care team if you have questions before starting a new program.*

- **Family-fun Activities:** Obstacle courses (use toys, couch cushions, etc.), dance parties, exercise sessions with Mom or Dad (do it together!), kids' online exercise classes (Cosmic Kids Yoga, Fitness Blenders workouts, Kidz Bop Dance Along Videos, YMCA Health & Fitness videos, etc.)
- **General Fitness Program:** It is important to continue to maintain flexibility of your upper and lower body musculature and the strength of your upper body, lower body, and core musculature. We have included 3 documents below that together can be used as a starting point for a general fitness program:
 - <Link for Upper Body Stretches>
 - <Link for Lower Body Stretches>
 - <Link for Strengthening Exercises at Home>
- Here's another great resource from the American College of Sports Medicine for even more ideas and specific guidance for physical activity during this stay-at-home period:
 - <http://www.acsm.org/read-research/newsroom/news-releases/news-detail/2020/03/16/staying-physically-active-during-covid-19-pandemic> or got to <http://www.acsm.org> and click on the "Tips: Staying Active at Home" icon.

New routines are not easy! Here are some suggestions to help you succeed.

1. **Find a workout buddy.** Either someone in your household or a friend you can exercise with remotely (Facetime, Zoom meeting, etc.).
2. **Write out your schedule and check it each day.** This kind of dramatic change of routine can be a bit disorienting. Having a schedule can help keep you on track.
3. **Be patient with yourself.** Miss a day? Four days? You're a real human! Don't beat yourself up. Dust yourself off and keep going.
4. **Celebrate your successes.** Did you stretch today? Awesome! Thank yourself for taking the time to care for your health and wellbeing.
5. **Embrace humor.** Having trouble with that yoga pose you've been working on? Take a picture of how you are "nailing it" and send it to a friend. You will both appreciate a shared laugh, and it will help prevent you from becoming discouraged. AND benefits of laughter include relaxing the body, releasing endorphins, and boosting the immune system.

We sincerely hope you found this information helpful. Thanks for reading—it's your first step toward a new fitness routine. Well done!

Disclaimer: These are general exercise and activity guidelines and routines. Always take into consideration your own fitness level, comfort level and health considerations. Please contact your care team with any questions, concerns, or for ideas on how to tailor a program to meet your individual needs. HTC PT Line: (303)-724-0724