



## Physical Activity for Older Adults

### COVID-19 and Physical Activity: Staying Fit While Staying Home

Physical activity has many health benefits and is a great way to prevent falls. You can still stay fit while you stay home and practice physical distancing. Below you will find aerobic, muscle-strengthening and balance exercises. that can be done at home. You can also search online for Tai Chi or other fitness classes that can be done at home. It is also safe to go outdoors for solitary walks or jogs, or to spend time in your own yard.

- COVID-19: Prevention and Groups at Higher Risk

Regular physical activity is one of the best ways older adults can protect and improve their health. Finding the time to get active every day can keep you mobile and independent and reduce the risk of many health problems.

To improve your health and lower your risk of falls, it is important to regularly do:

- Moderate and intense aerobic exercises
- Muscle-strengthening exercises
- Balance-training exercises

### Recommended Amount of Activity

Each week, older adults should try to do at least:

- 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise
- 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise
- 2 days of muscle-strengthening exercise
- 3 days of balance-training exercises

For aerobic activities, exercise for 10 minutes at a time, spread across at least days each week. Two minutes of moderate-intensity activity counts the same as 1 minute of vigorous-intensity activity.

For muscle-strengthening, exercise until it becomes difficult to continue. Target legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms.

Remember, more activity is always better, but any amount is better than none.

## Exercises

For aerobic exercises, you can:

- Walk/jog
- Dance
- Swim
- Take water aerobics or other exercise classes
- Ride a bike
- Golf without a cart
- Garden, rake or push a lawn mower

To strengthen muscles, you can:

- Work with exercise bands or hand-held weights
- Carry groceries
- Dig, lift or carry items while gardening
- Do pull-ups, push-ups, sit-ups or other resistance exercises

To improve your balance, you can:

- Walk backwards, sideways, on your heels and on your toes
- Stand up from a sitting position
- Take a tai chi class

## Exercise: Getting Started

- CDC Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults
- Tips to Incorporate Physical Activity into Daily Life
- Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging

## Additional Resources

- NYC Department for the Aging offers additional fitness resources including programs at some senior centers
- Shape Up NYC offers free fitness classes every week in each of the five boroughs
- Bicycling in New York City
- NYC Parks offers a variety of local programs for older adults
- City Parks Foundation offers free tennis lessons, yoga, instruction and fitness walking
- YMCA offers a variety of classes specifically designed for older adults
- Exercises for Arthritis
- National Institute on Aging – Go4Life Exercises

## More Information

- [Preventing Falls in Older Adults](#)
- [Fall Prevention Main Page](#)
- [Manage Your Medicine](#)
- [Manage Chronic Conditions](#)
- [Vision and Hearing in Older Adults](#)
- [Caring for Your Feet](#)
- [Reduce Fear of Falling](#)
- [In Case of a Fall](#)