PATIENT INFORMATION · OSTEO+

Movement that makes a difference.

WHO recommendations for adults – clearly explained.

WHO KEY MESSAGE	**Movement does not have to be perfect. Every move counts – and some physical activity is better than none.**

For healthy adults, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a combination of regular aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening activities and limiting prolonged sitting. These recommendations are a guide to health, not a performance target.

Your week: the WHO recommendations at a glance

150–300	75–150	2+
minutes per week	**minutes per week**	**days per week**
MODERATE-INTENSITY AEROBIC	VIGOROUS-INTENSITY AEROBIC	MUSCLE STRENGTHENING

Choose either of the two aerobic options, or combine both. What matters is your activity across the week.

WHO RECOMMENDATION	**For adults, WHO recommends 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per week. Add muscle-strengthening activities on at least two days.**

01 AEROBIC ACTIVITY

What does the right intensity feel like?

“Cardio” is a common term. WHO uses the terms moderate-intensity and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. These are activities that increase your heart rate and breathing.

150–300 MINUTES

Moderate intensity

Your breathing becomes noticeably faster, but you can still speak in full sentences. Examples may include brisk walking, leisurely cycling, hiking or aqua fitness.

75–150 MINUTES

Vigorous intensity

Your breathing becomes much faster and speaking in longer sentences is more difficult. Examples may include jogging, fast cycling, brisk swimming or energetic sports.

You can combine both.

Moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity can be combined. For example, walks, bike rides and occasional more energetic sessions can make up your active week together. It does not all have to happen in one long workout.

In everyday life

Walking, taking the stairs, cycling for transport, and active housework or gardening all count.

In your free time

Walking, dancing, swimming, hiking and sport can all be aerobic activities.

At work

Physically active work and regular movement breaks also contribute to your overall activity.

FITS YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE

The best activity is one that fits your everyday life and that you can do regularly.

02 STRENGTH & EVERYDAY LIFE

Build strength. Limit sitting. Start gradually.

As well as aerobic activity, WHO recommends muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days per week. These are exercises for the major muscle groups – you do not necessarily need to train at a gym.

Strength training

For example, exercises using your body weight, resistance bands, weights or exercise machines.

Major muscle groups

Include your legs, core, back, chest, shoulders and arms across the week.

Sitting time

As often as possible, break up long periods of sitting or lying down with movement.

A good start is small and regular.

If you have not been very active, start with an amount that feels manageable and gradually increase the duration or intensity. Even short periods of activity are worthwhile. You can work towards the recommendations in small steps.

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE	**It is not all or nothing: consistency matters more than a perfect plan.**

The key points to take away

Aerobic activity

150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity per week – or a combination.

Strength

Strengthen the major muscle groups on at least two days per week.

Keep moving

Every move counts. Limit sitting time and choose a starting point that suits you.

Please note: WHO recommendations are general guidance for adults. If you have new, more severe or unexplained symptoms, have had surgery, or have specific health circumstances, individual medical or therapeutic advice may be helpful.

Questions about movement and training?

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Sources: World Health Organization (WHO). WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour (2020), and Physical activity – Fact sheet (updated 2024). www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240015128 | www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity