



Community Conversations

Additional information and resources for 'Community Conversations: Getting and Staying Active' on October 19, 2022.

Watch the recording here: <https://youtu.be/dWGup1t4410>

Stay up to date with the series here:

<https://parachute.ca/en/program/for-seniors-by-seniors-community-conversations/>

Parachute would like to express their appreciation of Taylor Nicholls and Caitlin Dundee for their work on this resource.

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Why?

Regular physical activity provides significant benefits for health, such as¹:

- Improving and preserving muscle mass and bone health
- Preventing and slowing progression of health problems and chronic diseases (cardiovascular, hypertension, type 2 diabetes)
- Reducing the risk of developing Alzheimer's and dementia while improving cognitive function
- Preventing falls and fall related injuries (decreased fracture risk, loss of physical function and increased independence)
- Improving mood, preserving mental health, and boosting energy
- Reducing anxiety and depression
- Helping to reduce the risk of several forms of cancer
- Helping to maintain a healthy body weight
- Increasing life expectancy through a better overall quality of life

¹ World Health Organization (2022). [Physical activity](#).

What?

There are many ways for people to remain physically active as they age. Talk to your physician or other health care professional to find out if these activities are right for you.

- *Being active* - movement that increases your heart rate, makes you feel warm and breathe deeply.
- *Exercise* - muscles moving in the body that burns energy
- *Strength training*² - building healthy and strong bones and muscles to fight weakness, preserve strength and energy. This allows for independence while improving balance and posture.
- *Flexibility training*³ - exercises that stretch, lengthen, and build muscles and tendons to allow for an increased freedom of movement while improving blood circulation.
- *Balance training*⁴ - Exercises that strengthen the muscle to keep you upright which improves stability and reduces risk of falls. Focused on keeping proper posture through a series of movements.
- *Endurance training*⁵ - exercises that gradually increase your stamina by increasing your heart rate and breathing. This will help make it easier to walk down multiple flights of stairs in emergencies, playing with your grandchildren, and grocery shopping.

How?

Each week, aim for at least 2.5 hours of moderate to vigorous activity. It is beneficial to build muscle mass and strengthen bones through activities aimed at using the major muscle groups at least twice a week. These exercises and activities will improve your posture and balance⁶.

Be mindful of how much time you spend inactive and sitting down. Experts say to limit this to 8 hours a day⁷.

*Two ways to think about getting activity into your life*⁶:

- Formal classes/structured activities: cycling, dancing, strength training, walking/jogging/running groups, yoga or seated yoga, golf, skiing or cross-country skiing, swimming or water fitness, bowling or lawn bowling, hockey, pickleball, badminton, art or pottery classes, bird watching, curling, etc.
- Everyday activities: walking around your home, taking the stairs, cooking and baking, gardening, raking the leaves, carrying your groceries, walking to the mailbox, playing with your grandchildren, walking the dog, cleaning the house, shoveling, fishing, berry/fruit picking, etc.

² American Heart Association (2018). [Strength and resistance training exercise](#).

³ American Heart Association (2018). [Flexibility exercise \(Stretching\)](#).

⁴ American Heart Association (2018). [Balance exercises](#).

⁵ American Heart Association (2018). [Endurance exercise \(Aerobic\)](#).

⁶ Government of Canada (2019). [Physical activity tips for older adults \(65 years and older\)](#).

⁷ Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (2021). [24-hour movement guidelines](#).

Tips on maintaining physical activity:

- Start slow and listen to your body⁶
- Every step and minute of movement counts (even just standing vs sitting counts)⁷
- Spread out the activities in 10-minute sessions (or more) so that you are moving everyday⁶
- When you spend a long time sitting or inactive, try to get up and get some small movement to break up inactivity, such as walking up and down the hallway⁷
- Combine your physical activities with your social ones by joining a class, going to your community center or getting your friends/family active with you⁶
- Getting enough sleep and eating well will impact your energy levels & work with physical activity to improve quality of life⁸

Resources

Below is a list of websites from Parachute, the Canadian Government, the Government in the United Kingdom, and Canadian province specific that focus on tips to stay active, benefits of staying active, as well as programs, services, education, and activity videos for older adults.

Parachute

Parachute, Adding movement to your at-home routine

This resource provides how-to instructions on movements that will improve strength and balance which are important factors in preventing falls in older adults.

<https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Seniors-exercise-poster-UA.pdf>

Parachute, Brittlestar and his mom: Fall prevention exercises are easy (for some people)

Parachute has partnered with Brittlestar, “The Internet’s Favourite Dad”, to produce a series of short videos featuring Brittlestar and his real-life mom having humorous conversations to convince her to exercise and take other actions that will prevent falls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ae8li5oivTk>

Canada

Public Health Agency of Canada

Canadian Government's tips to get active, health benefits of being active, definitions of various forms of activity.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/physical-activity-tips-older-adults-65-years-older.html>

⁸ HealthlinkBC (2020). [Healthy aging](#).

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Adults aged 65 years and older

A guideline for adults aged 65 years or older who should be physically active each day, minimize stationary behaviour, and achieve sufficient sleep to stay strong, mentally fit and independent.

<https://csepguidelines.ca/guidelines/adults-65/>

Active Aging Canada, Physical Activity for Older Adults

A resource that tells older Canadians how to engage in safe, successful physical activity in partnership with Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology and Exercise is Medicine® Canada.

<https://www.activeagingcanada.ca/participants/get-active/active-agers-in-canada.htm>

National Health Services, United Kingdom

Overview of activity guidelines, examples of different types of activities, and links to other activity resources from the National Health Services, including exercise videos.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-guidelines/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/>

British Columbia

Government of British Columbia

Reviews what kinds of exercise is recommended, links to the BC 55+ games, links to chronic conditions and the impact of physical activity on them, and links to other resources for BC.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/health-safety/active-aging/physical-activity>

Health Link BC

Goes over “what is healthy aging”, normal changes you can expect with age, and advice on healthy aging which they consider: physical, mental, emotional, sexual, nutritional, and medical.

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/more/aging-well/healthy-aging>

Alberta

Healthy Aging CORE

Community-based organization with discussion groups and social/recreational programs and support services for seniors.

<https://corealberta.ca/>

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism

Links to organizations that contribute to the physical fitness of older adults. Fitness, health and active aging resources and programs with tips to stay active in Saskatchewan.

<https://skseniorsmechanism.ca/fitness/>

Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, Forever in Motion

Programs and services to help older adults become physically active in their community through volunteer, peer or staff led physical activity groups and workshops.

<https://www.spra.sk.ca/programs-services/foreverinmotion/>

Manitoba

Healthy Aging in Manitoba

Not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of active aging opportunities for all older Manitobans to enhance their health, mobility, and continuing participation in their community.

Offers programs, services, awareness and education.

<https://activeagingmb.ca/>

Ontario

Government of Ontario, Find a seniors active living centre near you

Type in your address or postal code to find a seniors active living centre near you. There are over 300 programs across Ontario that offer social, cultural, learning and recreational programs for seniors that promote health, well-being and social connections.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-seniors-active-living-centre-near-you>

The Older Adult Centre's Association of Ontario

Quality services, resources, education, conferences and support for community-based older adult centres.

<http://www.oacao.org/>

Quebec

Government of Quebec/Montreal Health, "Le GO pour bouger!"

Physical activity program videos for seniors. Has 5 levels of physical fitness programming based on ability. Explains the benefits of physical activity with the consequences of inactivity.

<https://santemontreal.qc.ca/en/public/advice-and-prevention/physical-activity-for-seniors/>

Nova Scotia

Government of Nova Scotia, Positive Aging Directory

Comprehensive information directory for Nova Scotians to access the many programs and services available for seniors, plus additional resources

<https://novascotia.ca/seniors/directory/>

Prince Edward Island

Government of Prince Edward Island, Senior Recreation and Leisure

Suggested ways to stay active in your community, continuing education, and staying socially connected. Includes information and programming for Adult Day Programs, Outreach Libraries, Senior Grants, and events for seniors.

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/senior-recreation-and-leisure>

Go! PEI

Go! PEI homepage which has programs for physical activity, recreation and walking groups that are community based. They also have a page on their website on staying active and links to resources.

<https://gopei.ca/>

New Brunswick

Government of New Brunswick, Social Supports

Describes benefits to staying active, how to stay active, Ability New Brunswick phone number, and links to other resources for staying active.

https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/simple_page/stay-active-home

The Wellness Movement

Seniors Wellness page within the Wellness Movement website which has local wellness groups, tools and resources for seniors.

<https://www.wellnessnb.ca/seniors/>

Newfoundland and Labrador

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Health Promotion and Wellness

Link to government's health & wellbeing plan, links to different health topics where there are resources for that topic (including physical activity) , and general information on the health & wellbeing plan.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/wellnesshealthyliving/>

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Seniors' Organizations and Retiree Groups

List of links to seniors organizations and retiree groups in Newfoundland and Labrador, some of these groups will host programs for active aging.

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/cssd/seniors/info/seniorsorganizations/>

Yukon

ElderActive

Homepage to Elder Active which has information on the 55+ games, and programs offered that are meant to engage mind, body and spirit.

<https://www.elderactive.ca/>

Government of Yukon

List of the community recreation centres, clicking on one will bring you to information on that centre's address and what is available at that centre.

<https://yukon.ca/en/arts-and-culture/sports-and-recreation/find-community-recreation-centre>

Northwest Territories

NWT Recreation and Parks Association, Elders in Motion

Elders in Motion is a training program for leaders in community to be able to teach exercises to Elders in their community. It also links online resources for Elders on physical activity.

<https://www.nwtrpa.org/elders-in-motion>

NWT Seniors Society

Homepage for the NWT Seniors Society who has programs, events, services, information, resources, and Seniors' Information Line for older adults in the Northwest Territories.

<https://www.nwtseiorssociety.ca>

Nunavut

Inuusittiarngniq Living well together, Department of Health

Resource centre from the Government of Nunavut with advice on a variety of topics in health, mental health, and healthy eating. First topic under health is active living.

<https://livehealthy.gov.nu.ca/>

Nunavut Public Library Service

List of the address and contact information for the community centres in Nunavut.

<https://publiclibraries.nu.ca/en/recreation>