

PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



MAY 2018

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: PARENTS NEED EXERCISE, TOO!



With the already busy schedule of a parent, it is hard to think about adding time to be physically active. Your needs often come second to the needs of your children. As a parent, finding time to exercise becomes a much more difficult task. In addition, many parents feel guilty taking time away from the kids to do a structured workout.

However, parents need to carve out that time to establish healthy habits. Parents are the number one source influencing the way children feel about living a healthy lifestyle. The bottom line is that your children are watching your every move and mirroring your actions — if as a parent you are sedentary, there is a good chance your children will be too. However, if

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➔ Continued from page 1

you are a parent who eats healthy and exercises on a regular basis, you are teaching your children valuable lessons on how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Benefits of physical activity

You owe it to yourself and your family to stay as healthy as you can. Here are just a few benefits of physical activity for adults:

- Can lower the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers
- Can give you more energy
- Can improve your mood
- Can make you healthier and keep your body able to play with your children

Ways to be physically active

The CDC recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week. Even 10-minute increments make a difference, and getting your kids and partner into exercise makes it that much easier.

Here are some ideas to help you turn every day into an opportunity to get fit and have fun as a family:

- **Go for pre- or post-dinner walks.** Make it a fun family event and play eye-spy as you walk.

- **Have a weekly sports night.** Every Wednesday, for example, get everyone up and moving. Think of physical activities that your family loves to do together, such as basketball, soccer, hiking, skiing, bike riding, rollerblading, canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, swimming, skating, playing golf or tennis or even twister.
- **Trade off workout days/times with your partner.** Take turns watching the kids on weekdays to carve out some exercise time for you both.
- **Combine errands and exercise.** Bike ride with your child, pull your child in a wagon, put him in a back carrier or walk to the places you need to go. When shopping, park at the furthest end of the parking lot.

It is never too late to start a healthy habit! It may take a little effort, but just remember to start slowly. Every minute of activity helps.

REFERENCES:

- https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/policies_practices/physical_activity/guidelines.htm
- https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/policies_practices/physical_activity/strategies.htm

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