

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

For Adults 65 Years and Older

Older adults gain a lot by staying physically active. Even if it is hard for you to stand or walk, you can still exercise and get health benefits. In fact, you may have a lot more to lose by not being active! You should do **aerobic, muscle-strengthening and balance training** activities *every week*. Below are *minimum suggested guidelines* for each.

Aerobic Activities (Exercise)

Try to do **2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes)** of **moderate-intensity** aerobic activity each week.

— or —

Do **1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes)** of **vigorous-intensity** aerobic activity each week.

- ◆ Identify your current activity level and **slowly build up** over time.
- ◆ **Start with light- or moderate-intensity activity** for short periods of time (for example, 5-10 minutes of walking once a week).
- ◆ Build up over 3-4 weeks and then **spread the sessions throughout the week**.
- ◆ You can add your minutes together through the day. **Aim for at least 10 minutes at a time.**



Muscle-Strengthening, Flexibility and Balance-Training Activities



Do activities to keep your **muscles** strong at least **2 days per week**.

- ◆ Try to work **as many parts of your body as you can**—your legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, shoulders, and arms.
- ◆ **Repeat exercises** for each muscle group **8-12 times per session**.

Do **stretching exercises** after warming up to keep yourself flexible for daily life activities.

Do exercises to maintain or improve your **balance** at least **3 days per week** to reduce your at risk of falling.

- ◆ Examples of **balance exercises** are standing on one foot, heel-to-toe walk, and doing Tai Chi.
- ◆ **Local fall prevention programs** are held at Mills-Peninsula Hospital (650) 367-5998), Sequoia Hospital (650) 367-5998 and Stanford University Medical Center (650) 724-9369, or check the San Mateo County Fall Prevention Taskforce website at www.smcfallprevention.org.



Examples of Aerobic Activities

Do these activities for 10 minutes or more at a time:

Moderate-intensity

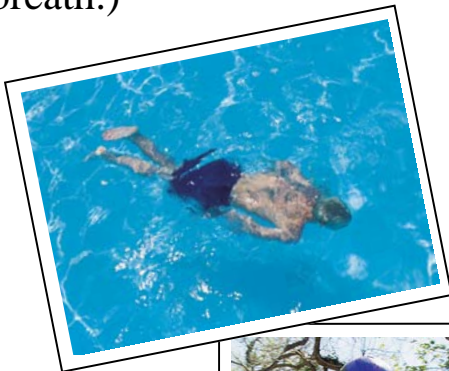
(I can talk while I do them, but I can't sing.)

- ◆ Brisk walking
- ◆ Line Dancing
- ◆ Yard work (raking, trimming shrubs)
- ◆ Tai Chi and Qi Gong
- ◆ Biking slowly on flat ground
- ◆ Using your manual wheelchair
- ◆ Water aerobics
- ◆ Yoga
- ◆ Baseball, volleyball or softball
- ◆ Tennis (doubles)
- ◆ Golf without a cart



Vigorous-intensity

(I can only say a few words without stopping to catch my breath.)



- ◆ Swimming
- ◆ Aerobic dance
- ◆ Biking faster or on hills
- ◆ Fast dancing
- ◆ Heavy gardening (digging, hoeing)
- ◆ Hiking uphill
- ◆ Jumping rope
- ◆ Race walking, jogging or running
- ◆ Basketball, hockey or soccer