



Working TOWARD Wellness

LIVE BETTER. LIVE LONGER.

PROVIDED BY HEART HEALTH ACTION WINDSOR-ESSEX
AND THE WINDSOR-ESSEX
COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

GET ACTIVE BE ACTIVE!



Each and every day we see and hear messages that encourage us to be more physically active, yet most of us choose to remain inactive. Why is it so important to lead an active lifestyle? What does being “active” and “leading an active lifestyle” really mean? How much physical activity (P.A.) should we do each day, and how hard do we need to work? The answers to these questions may be enough to convince you that building P.A. into your busy life is well worth the effort. There are too many benefits of regular physical activity to list in this brochure. However, regular P.A. can reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as: heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis and certain forms of cancer.

Being physically active is not as hard as many people think. The idea is to move your body more often. Build P.A. into your day...take the stairs instead of the elevator, clean the

garage, play road hockey with the kids, go for a walk at lunch time or work out at the local fitness club. The key is to find activities that you enjoy and fit them into your lifestyle.

P.A. really is a great value. For an investment of as little as 30 minutes a day, four days a week, you can get benefits that money just can't buy. P.A. can also improve sleep, fight depression and improve overall mood. It is also a key factor in reaching and keeping a healthy weight. This brochure has been designed to provide you with information about the benefits of being active, tips to help you get started and stay motivated, and some ideas on how you can be more active at work.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

- | | T | F |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. For good health, you should try to fit in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on at least 4 days of the week. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Only 38% of Windsor-Essex County residents are active enough to make a difference in their health. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. You can use your work time breaks to “fit” physical activity into your day. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of breast and colon cancer. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. You have to buy a gym membership in order to start being more active. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Being active with a buddy helps you to stay motivated. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. All 30 minutes of daily physical activity must be completed at one time. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. You can use the “talk test” to tell if you are being active at a moderate intensity. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. You should check with your physician before you start a new physical activity program. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. People who are active on a daily basis are better able to cope with stress, fall asleep faster and sleep better. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Note the Benefits

SHORT TERM

- Stronger muscles and bones
- More flexible joints
- More energy
- Cope better with stress
- Fall asleep faster and sleep better
- Feel better about yourself

LONG TERM

- Live longer by up to 2 years
- Decrease your risk of early death
- Reach & keep a healthy weight
- Lower your risk of certain chronic diseases such as:
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Type II diabetes
 - High blood pressure
 - Colon cancer
 - Breast cancer
 - Osteoporosis

see answers on back panel

Why SHOULD I BE MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE?

According to the latest research, only 38% of Windsor-Essex County residents are active enough to improve their health. This research also tells us that women are less active than men and that as we get older, we become less active. However, it's not all bad news. If we are moderately active for at least 30 minutes a day for four days a week, we can affect our health and our well being. The 30 minutes of physical activity doesn't even have to be all at the same time – we can take part in activities in blocks of time of at least 10 minutes and add them up over the course of the day. For example, a recent study in the U.S.

found that people who walked for a total of one hour a day (in 10 minute blocks) at a moderate intensity:

- Cut their risk of adult onset diabetes by almost 50%;
- Decreased by 20% their chances of breast cancer;
- Decreased by 30% their chances of having a heart attack.

What does moderate activity feel like? Most experts agree that you should work at a pace that increases your breathing, but not to the point that you can't talk. This is often referred to as the "talk test".

How CAN I BECOME MORE ACTIVE

START OFF

- It is important to set goals that are realistic and within your reach. Start with short term goals that will help you get to your long term goal. For example, start with a 15 minute walk on two days of the week. Each week, increase how long you walk and how often you walk, working toward a 30 minute walk on 4 to 7 days of the week. Then work on increasing the intensity of your walks.
- Give yourself a chance to be successful. Try scheduling physical activity into your day, just like you would a meeting or doctor's appointment. Once you set a goal to be more active, make it a priority. Don't let physical activity get bumped from your busy schedule.
- Remember, being physically active pays off in the long run, but it also pays off right away! Your muscles and joints will feel better, you won't be as tired by late afternoon, you'll have energy after dinner to go out on the

town or play with your kids, and you'll sleep better and wake up feeling well rested. Remember, it's never too early or too late to start leading a physically active lifestyle!

TAKE STEPS

Once you have a goal and you know where you want to go, you need to start moving toward your goal. The key is to find activities that you enjoy. If you have a hard time fitting a structured session into your day, try to include physical activity into your regular routine:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator;
- Walk to the store;
- Rake the leaves or pull some weeds;
- Take a walk at lunch time or during one of your work breaks;
- Enjoy active play with your kids!

Try to use any available free time to "fit" physical activity into your day. Don't let lack of time, lack of money or

childcare interfere with your plans to be more active.

Becoming physically active doesn't necessarily mean buying a gym membership. There are many ways to be active in Windsor-Essex County that don't take a lot of time, don't cost a lot of money and that you can enjoy with your family and friends. For example, you could...

- Take a bike ride or go for a walk along your nearest trail.
- Rediscover your youth and head to your local park to play on the playground equipment with the kids.
- Head to the county and visit a heritage site.
- Explore your local neighbourhood during an after dinner walk.
- Lace up your roller blades or skates and head out to the nearest paved trail or rink.

Use Canada's Physical Activity Guide for help and ideas. Different versions

What AM I UP AGAINST?

With today's busy schedules, it can be difficult to find the time to be physically active. Some days, we can feel too tired at the end of the day to think about doing anything other than sitting on the couch and watching TV.

On these days try focusing on the reasons you have chosen to get more active and the benefits that are

important to you. It all starts with your attitude towards physical activity.

If you miss a couple of days or get off track, don't let it derail your commitment to being active. Get back to your routine as quickly as you can. Remember, being active is not a short term program-it's a lifestyle!

Go for it!

RESOURCES

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit
258-2146 x 3100

Windsor-Essex County Active Living Coalition
258-2146 x 3100

Windsor Leisure & Recreation
253-2300

Your local recreation department
(check white pages)

YMCA of Windsor-Essex County
258-9622

Essex Region Conservation Authority
(parks & trails)
776-5209

WEBSITES

Canada's Physical Activity Guide
www.paguide.com
(children, youth, adults and older adults)

Active Ontario
www.activeontario.org

Trail Info
www.trailpaq.com

Essex Region Conservation Authority
www.erca.org

Windsor Leisure & Recreation
www.city.windsor.on.ca/parkrec

www.wehealthunit.org and at
www.windsor-heart-health.com

ON A DAILY BASIS?

are available for children, youth, adults and older adults (55+). For a copy, call the Health Unit or visit the website. See the "Go for it!" section for contact information.

STICK TO IT

- Variety is the spice of life. Mix up the kinds of activities you take part in to keep from getting bored; try something new each week.
- Make an appointment with yourself to be active. Schedule physical activity and commit to it.
- Find places to be active that are convenient for you; find a gym close to where you live or work or plan a walking route through your neighbourhood. If you go away on vacation, walk during sight-seeing trips, or rent a bike and explore your destination on two wheels.
- Stay on track by keeping a journal or a written record of your what you do.

If you see "on paper" how active you really are, it will motivate you to keep moving!

- Find a buddy to be active with and support each other. Your "buddy" could be your significant other, a friend, a family member, a neighbour or a co-worker.
- If you miss a day, don't worry. Every day brings new challenges, and some days are more challenging than others.

CELEBRATE!

Make sure you give credit where credit is due! It is not easy starting a program and sticking with it - you deserve a pat on the back!! Reward your hard work! If you're active with a "buddy", send them a small token of your appreciation, or plan a special event with your "buddy" to celebrate your success!

CLIP & KEEP THIS INFO!

GET MOVING

- Pick activities that you enjoy and stick with them.
- Set realistic goals – give yourself time to succeed.
- Begin slowly and increase how long you are active and how hard you work over time.
- Build physical activity into your schedule and make it a priority - you're worth it.
- Plan active outings with friends and family - have fun and be social!
- Don't feel guilty if you miss a chance to be active. Get back on track as soon as you can.
- Use every opportunity to be physically active: take the stairs, rake the leaves or walk to the store or post office.
- Remember, your 30 or more minutes of activity doesn't have to be done all at once. You can build up your active minutes in blocks of at least 10 minutes.
- Becoming more active is very safe for most people. However, if you are not very active right now, you should talk to your doctor about your physical activity plans.

Make it happen at your workplace!

Here are some suggestions to encourage and support successful New Year's resolutions in your workplace:

Employees Can:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Bike to work or take a brisk walk at lunch or break time
- Encourage your co-workers to join you during your "activity breaks". It's a fun way to get active and socialize at the same time.
- Share information about local recreational activities. For example; adult hockey, baseball or golf, free swimming and skating or dance classes.
- Organize a "sports equipment swap" among co-workers.
- Park further away from work to walk the extra distance.

Employer Can:

- Post signs beside elevators that encourage people to take the stairs.
- Offer a contest to encourage employees to skip the elevator, and award a prize for the winner.
- Install bicycle racks to promote biking to work.
- Agree to build showers to allow employees to clean up after breaking a sweat.
- Consider offering flexible work hours to help employees become and stay more active.
- Offer financial incentives to employees who purchase activity-based memberships.

*"At work, at home or at play,
be active, your way, everyday!"*

Unknown

Copyright © 2003 The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and Heart Health Action Windsor-Essex: 360 Fairview Avenue West, Suite 215, Essex, Ontario, N8M 3G4 Phone: 519-258-2146 x 3100, Fax: 519-776-6102, www.wehealthunit.org. This brochure may be reproduced in its entirety without written permission. The Workplace Health Promotion Program is dedicated to providing current and accurate health information as it relates to Windsor-Essex County workplaces. Please keep in mind that this newsletter is not intended to diagnose or treat illnesses. Please consult your physician regarding personal health problems or major changes in diet or exercise. Revised January 2004.

Answers (from front page): 1-T • 2-T • 3-T • 4-T • 5-F • 6-T • 7-F • 8-T • 9-T • 10-T

For more information about the Workplace Health Promotion Program,
contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 258-2146 x 3100



Pass it on!

Please feel free to copy any articles in this brochure as long as you acknowledge the source.

This brochure and others in this series available online at:
www.wehealthunit.org and at www.windsor-heart-health.com