



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SCREEN TIME

Staying Active

For children and teens to grow up healthy, it's important they are physically active and eat healthy foods every day. To help children develop habits that will last a lifetime, an active, healthy lifestyle must start early in life. Physical activity has benefits at every age, and helps kids:

- keep their heart and lungs strong and healthy
- become more flexible
- develop strong bones
- keep a healthy body weight
- lower the risk of several diseases and health problems
- improve their mood and self-esteem
- do better in school
- feel better about their bodies
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“Sedentary behaviour” means time spent doing very little physical activity, such as sitting at a computer, playing video games, or watching television. Children and teens should spend less time on these activities and more time being active.

How To Get Active

Your child learns the most about healthy active living from you. Include the whole family in regular physical activity and healthy eating. It's easier if families do things together as part of the daily routine.

- Choose activities that suit your child's age and stage of development.
- Give your child or teen lots of time to be active in both structured activities, like organized sports, and unstructured activities, like playing in a playground.
- Keep activities fun!

Activity Recommendations

Daily physical activity can include free play, games, sports, transportation (walking, cycling), recreation, and physical education.

- **Vigorous-intensity activities** make children sweat and feel “out of breath,” so that they can only speak a few words between breaths. These can include activities like running and swimming fast or for a long time.
- **Moderate-intensity activities** also make children sweat more and breathe a little harder but they can still talk while they move their bodies such as fast walking or a bike ride.
- **Activities that strengthen muscles and bones** can include jumping rope and running, or sports like tennis and basketball.

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	How Much Each Day?	Ideas For What to Do
Infants 0-12 Months	Should be physical active several times a day	Floor based activities like tummy time, reaching, pushing, pulling, crawling
Toddlers (1-2 years) and Preschoolers (3-5 years)	180 mins of physical activity throughout the day Gradually progress to at least 60 minutes of moderate-vigorous activity by 5 years of age	Activities should be fun! Try walking, running, playing tag, swimming, dancing, throwing and catching. As they grow older, try skipping and bike riding. Children this age aren't ready for organized sports.
Children (6-9 years)	At least 60 mins of moderate-vigorous activity every day : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigorous activity 3 days a week • Activities to strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days a week 	Sports should have short instruction times, flexible rules, free time in practices, and focus on fun! Try playing tag, walking to school, soccer, baseball, gymnastics, skating, skiing.
Children (10-12 years)	At least 60 mins of moderate-vigorous activity every day : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigorous activity 3 days a week • Activities to strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days a week 	Usually ready to participate in team sports that focus on skill development, equal participation, and fun. Can start strength training with lighter weights and proper supervision. Try martial arts, hiking, pushups, situps.
Teens (13-17 years)	At least 60 mins of moderate-vigorous activity every day : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigorous activity 3 days a week • Activities to strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days a week 	Teens are ready to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal fitness • Active transportation • Household chores • Competitive or non competitive sports

Screen Time

Limiting screen time is very important for your child to develop a healthy, active lifestyle. "Screen time" includes TV, computers, video games, and hand held devices. The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends limiting screen time to:

- No screen time for children less than 2 years
- Less than 1 hour screen time for children 2-5 years
- Less than 2 hours screen time for children over 5 years