

Increase Activity Decrease Inactivity

Take a 30 Minute Physical Activity Challenge

Only 18% of youth in British Columbia participate in exercise seven days a week.¹ Most children exercise less as they get older.

Children and adults alike should be getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day to maintain and promote your health.

Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Children and for Youth says, over 5 months, children should increase their exercise time to 90 minutes per day. The same goes message applies to adults.

Parents who lead a healthy active lifestyle support their children through the example they live for their children.

So make exercise a family pursuit.

Suggestions to help families get started

- Record your daily physical activity on a chart
- Take the stairs rather than the elevator
- Go for a walk after dinner - make the walk an adventure
- Walk, run, or ride a bike instead of driving the car
- Try a new sport with a family member or friend
- Hold a stairs challenge - everyone counts the number of stairs they climb in a day to increase the number each week
- Limit TV time - exchange TV time for physical activity time
- Take 5 or 10 minute activity breaks to stretch or walk around when sitting at the computer or TV

Benefits of exercise



There are enormous benefits to getting in regular exercise:

- builds strong bones and strengthen muscles
- maintains flexibility, achieve a healthy weight
- maintains good posture,
- strengthens the heart
- improves self esteem
- improves sleep quality
- increases relaxation
- provides opportunities to meet new friends

In addition to the benefits above, maintaining an active lifestyle will help to protect you from chronic health conditions.

Treatment of chronic conditions costs the healthcare system millions of dollars each year.

Resources

HeartSmart Active Fun Kit for Families - To order free of charge call the Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. & Yukon at 1-888-HSF-INFO or 1-888-473-4636 free of charge.

¹ Adolescent Health Survey Provincial and Regional Report 2003, McCreary Centre Society, Vancouver, BC, 2003