

Healthy Living: Beating Barriers to Physical Activity¹

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Being active can help you function better and maintain your independence. It also can reduce your risk for getting some diseases, such as diabetes, and help you manage health problems you may already have. If you're not active, what's stopping you from getting started? Read on to learn how to overcome some common barriers!

- **I don't have time to exercise for 30 minutes every day.**

Do as much as you can. Every bit of activity adds up! Start with 10 minutes a day and gradually add more time. You don't have to be active for 30 minutes all at once. Try spreading your activities out throughout the day.

- **It's not safe to walk in my neighborhood.**

Find an indoor activity, such as an exercise class at a community center or walking at the mall. You can even walk around your house!



Figure 1. Exercising with a friend or family member can encourage you to be active more often. Credits: Pixland

- **I don't like to exercise in a group.**

Choose something you can do on your own, such as walking outside or following an exercise program on TV or DVD.

- **Physical activity is boring.**

Find an activity you enjoy. Ask a friend to be active with you. Vary your routine.

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- **It's too hot outside.**

Walk inside a shopping center or grocery store or use an exercise DVD at home.

- **I don't have the right clothes.**

Wear anything that is comfortable! Be sure your shoes fit well and your socks don't irritate your skin.

- **Walking hurts my knees, and I have bad balance.**

Try chair dancing, swimming, or water aerobics.

- **I'm afraid I'll make my condition worse.**

Talk with your health care provider to learn what activities are safe for you.

- **I can't afford to join a fitness center or buy expensive equipment.**

All you need is a good pair of walking shoes and socks!

- **I'm afraid I'll get low blood glucose.**

If you're taking medication that can cause low blood glucose, talk to your health care provider about how to exercise safely.

When doing any physical activity remember to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated!



Figure 2. Different types of physical activity work for different people. Water aerobics is a safe and fun way to be active if you have access to a class. Credits: Jupiterimages, © Getty Images