

May



National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

Federal Lead: President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition
(<http://www.fitness.gov>)

Regular physical activity is good for everyone's health, and people of all ages and body types can be physically active. National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is a great time to spread the word about the benefits of getting active.

Here are just a few benefits of physical activity:

- **Children and adolescents** – Physical activity can improve muscular fitness and bone and heart health.
- **Adults** – Physical activity can lower risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer.
- **Older adults** – Physical activity can lower the risk of falls and improve cognitive functioning (like learning and judgment skills).

Communities, health professionals, and families can work together to create opportunities for everyone to get more physical activity.

Make a difference: Spread the word about fun ways to get moving!

How can National Physical Fitness and Sports Month make a difference?

We can all use this month to raise awareness about the benefits of physical activity.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage families to make small changes, like taking a walk after dinner or going for a bike ride.
- Motivate teachers and administrators to make physical activity a part of every student's day.
- Identify youth leaders in the community who can talk to their peers about the importance of being active.

How can I help spread the word?

- Add information about physical activity to your newsletter.
- Tweet about National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.

- Host a community event where families can be active and learn about fun fitness activities.
- Add a Web badge to your website, blog, or social networking profile.

Get the Word Out

Sample Announcement for Newsletter, Listserv, or Media Release

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or media release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

[Your organization] is supporting the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition in honor of National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. During the month of May, we challenge all adults to get 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

Did you know that regular physical activity increases your chances of living a longer, healthier life? It also reduces your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, and some types of cancer. Yet in **[state]** nearly **[local statistics]** don’t get the recommended amount of physical activity.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults:

- Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week. Moderate activity includes things like walking fast, dancing, swimming, and raking leaves.
- Do muscle-strengthening activities – like lifting weights or using exercise bands – at least 2 days a week.

Physical activity is for everyone. No matter what shape you are in, you can find activities that work for you. Together, we can rise to the challenge and get more active during the month of May!

- **[Add details about your local activities.]**
- **[Include quotes from your organization.]**

For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.

Sample Tweets

- Follow [@fitnessgov](https://twitter.com/fitnessgov) on Twitter for the latest news and events from the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition!
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/43cr2>
- Fitness Tip: Start at a comfortable level. Then add a little more activity each time you exercise.
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/YHD6N>
- Can you name 7 benefits of being active? We can: <http://1.usa.gov/XS2YIT>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/m97j1>
- Ready to get more active? Sign up for the President’s Challenge: <http://bit.ly/iB88l2>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/0H2De>
- Q. Is physical activity for everyone? A. Yes! Find out why: <http://1.usa.gov/129s5HM>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/wRXFg>
- How much physical activity do you need each week? Find out here: <http://1.usa.gov/14vkhzB>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/bvS8f>
- Fitness Tip: Do crunches and push-ups while you watch TV tonight.
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/AEgmV>
- Take steps to get active. Find your fitness level and get tips on how to move more: <http://1.usa.gov/VnBfJs>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/4fpaX>
- Interested in how organizations promote physical activity? Read the Be Active Your Way blog to stay up to date: <http://bit.ly/1mx5AHk>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/tx1rc>
- Get quick tips for increasing your physical activity with the Be Active Your Way health widget: <http://1.usa.gov/1htQBrM>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/lcPO4>

E-cards

- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way in 2015 (#1)
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/StayConnected/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=4>)
- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way in 2015 (#2)
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/StayConnected/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=5>)
- healthfinder.gov: Be Active Your Way in 2015 (#3)
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/StayConnected/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=29>)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) E-cards

- Be Active!
(<http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=40&category=199>)
- Walk to be Active
(<http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=650&category=160>)
- Walk at Work
(<http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=649&category=160>)

Web Badge

- National Physical Fitness and Sports Month – Get Moving!
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#may>)

Get Involved

Take action to promote physical fitness in your community.

1. Be a community leader. (<http://www.letsmove.gov/be-leader-your-community>). Encourage community groups and families to support physical activity programs for kids.
2. Host an information night featuring community members who have increased their physical activity. Ask people to share their stories and tips for success.
3. Motivate others to increase their physical activity and sports participation by taking the President's Challenge. (<http://www.presidentschallenge.org/>) Sign up individually or as a workplace or other group.
4. Ask fitness facilities to offer discounted memberships or free guest passes. Work together to share free information about physical fitness and health.

Adapted from the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition (<http://www.fitness.gov>) and healthfinder.gov (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/>).

For more information and materials, contact the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition (<http://www.fitness.gov/>) at fitness@hhs.gov.

Share These Resources

Health Topics

- Eat Healthy
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/eat-healthy>)
- Get Active
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/get-active>)
- Help Your Child Stay at a Healthy Weight
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/nutrition-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/help-your-child-stay-at-a-healthy-weight>)
- Watch Your Weight
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/watch-your-weight>)

Healthy People Topic Area

- Physical Activity
(<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=33>)

Personal Health Tools


- Be Active Your Way Widget
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/StayConnected/HealthWidgets.aspx#bayw>)
- Help a Loved One Get More Active: Quick tips
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/diabetes/help-a-loved-one-get-more-active-quick-tips>)
- Stay Active During Pregnancy: Quick tips
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/nutrition-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/stay-active-during-pregnancy-quick-tips>)
- Stay Active with a Disability: Quick tips
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/nutrition-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/stay-active-with-a-disability-quick-tips>)
- I Can Do It, You Can Do It!
(<http://www.fitness.gov/participate-in-programs/i-can-do-it-you-can-do-it/>)

- Screen Time Tracking Chart [PDF - 141 KB]
(<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/screen-time-log.pdf>)
- Food and Physical Activity Tracker
(<https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/>)

Other Resources

- Physical Activity
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=657>)
- Yoga
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=14454>)

Find More Information

- President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition
(<http://www.fitness.gov/>)
National Physical Fitness and Sports Month Federal Lead
- The Adult Fitness Test
(<http://www.adultfitness.test.org/default.aspx>) 
President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition
- Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans
(<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>)
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity Among Youth
(<http://health.gov/paguidelines/midcourse>)
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- BodyWorks: A Toolkit for Healthy Teens and Strong Families
(<http://www.womenshealth.gov/bodyworks/>)
Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women’s Health
- Fitness and Nutrition for Women
(<http://womenshealth.gov/fitness-nutrition/>)
Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women’s Health
- Tai Chi: An Introduction
(<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/taichi/introduction.htm>)
National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- We Can! Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition
(<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/>)
National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
- Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging
(<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/exercise.htm>)
National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging

- Go4Life
(<http://go4life.nia.nih.gov/>)
National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging
- Let's Move!
(<http://www.letsmove.gov/>)
The White House

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure they are available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.

- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.
- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library, post office, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.

Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.


Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic e-mail alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer e-mail alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event,

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remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/Healthfinder>) .



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