

Physical Activity

Physical activity protects against breast cancer. The less time we spend sitting and being inactive, the lower our risk of breast cancer.

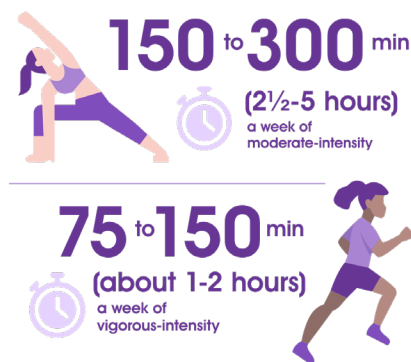
Science Summary

Maintaining physical strength and agility into old age is crucial for overall health and disease prevention. Vigorous physical activity (activity that significantly increases heart rate and rapid breathing) is the most protective against breast cancer. Exercise at any age is beneficial and is especially protective during adolescence and early adulthood. The more we create systems that give everyone the opportunity to exercise safely and to their best ability, the healthier our communities will be.

What can I do for my own body and health?

Aim for at least 150 to 300 minutes (2½-5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity, or 75 to 150 minutes (1-2 hours) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination. Pick something fun that you enjoy, and listen to music or your favorite podcast.

If you're finding it hard to find time to exercise, start with small lifestyle changes. Take the stairs, walk or bike instead of driving, park farther away from your destination, or take work breaks to stretch — you can even get some exercise while waiting in line or talking on the phone!



What can I do to support the health of my family and friends, and my community?

Group exercises may be more fun or motivating than working out by yourself. Ask friends, family, or colleagues to join you regularly. Commit to a workout challenge together.

How can I navigate and get support with any systemic barriers to my health?

Physical activity is something we can all do individually, but it's important to look at factors that impact access to the time, resources, and spaces to be physically active. These barriers are often more pronounced in communities of color and include a lack of green spaces, safe and walkable neighborhoods, childcare support, and time outside of work that doesn't compete with other responsibilities.

In schools, physical activity among adolescents is declining, largely due to a lack of physical education (PE) teachers and classes. Black and Latino school districts disproportionately lack PE teachers.

How can I help advocate for and support systemic change to remove barriers to health?

Physical activity at any age is protective against breast cancer and should be facilitated from childhood through adulthood by systemic policies at local, regional, and national levels. We can work together to improve systems so that it's easier for everyone to increase physical activity.



Work with your local school districts to ensure K-12 schools have the resources they need to offer universal physical education classes.



Support policies at the state, county, and school board levels to limit screen time in childcare centers and after-school programs.



Encourage initiatives that provide continuing education and training for K-12 teachers to incorporate body movement that amplifies learning.



Collaborate with local organizations to provide physical activity opportunities in after-school, camp, or recreation programs.



Develop workplace physical activity programs that promote movement (e.g., taking stairs, active commutes, and on-site exercise classes).



Increase free physical activity options in underserved communities by creating culturally tailored programs across the lifespan (for example, walking programs and Zumba in the Park).



Learn more and get involved.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN
MAKE CHANGE!**

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCPP) is the leading science-based advocacy organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposure to toxic chemicals and other environmental exposures linked to the disease.



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