

Considering More Physical Activity for Your Child



Overview

One of the best things you can do for your child's health is to help your child be more active. But some children have a hard time with exercise. They may prefer to read, interact with social media, or play games on their screens. There's nothing wrong with those activities. But too much sitting around isn't good for your child.

You and your child may not be sure that there's time for physical activity in your busy lives. Start by thinking about the benefits. Being active can help your child have more energy and confidence. And it can help your child stay at a healthy weight. It can also help prevent serious health problems later on. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes.

To be more active, your child could ride a bike with friends, play actively at school, or walk with the family. Or your child could play school sports or play basketball outside. Check local schools, the YMCA, and other community resources for safe places to be active. Try to imagine what your child's life could be like with more physical activity.

It may help to know that your child doesn't have to make big changes right now. Think about trying one or two small changes at a time. In time, a good goal for your child is to get 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Your doctor can give you and your child the support you need to reach this goal.

How can you help your child think about being more active?

- Think about what being active could mean for your child and your whole family.
- Think about how you could be more active as a family.
- Make one or two changes, and see how it works:
 - Cut back your child's screen time by 2 or 3 hours a week for 1 week.
 - Have your child do something active in that time. Go for family walks. Or have your child ride a bike, play soccer, or toss a ball with friends.
- You may find after a few weeks that your child likes being more active.

- Remember that you can decide how and when to make changes. And you can control how fast you make them. Small, slow changes often work better and last longer than big ones. And they are easier to keep doing. You can find a way that works for your family.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **Y102** in the search box to learn more about "**Considering More Physical Activity for Your Child**".

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