



## Easy Exercise, Better Health

**In 2010, the government released new physical activity guidelines for aerobic (cardio) and muscle-strengthening activities.**

AEROBIC exercise involves nonstop, rhythmic activities several times a week. For example, you can walk, jog, swim, play tennis or use an exercise machine. **Here are your guidelines:**

- **2 hours and 30 minutes per week of moderately intense aerobic activity** – such as five 30-minute brisk walks.  
OR
- **1 hour and 15 minutes per week of vigorously intense aerobic activity** – such as three 25-minute jogs.  
OR
- **Mix it up** – do some **moderate** and some **vigorous** activities.

**Good to know:** You can be active in increments as short as 10 minutes to reach your daily goal.

**Strengthen muscles at least twice a week.** Try to work all the major muscle groups – legs, hips, back, chest, abdomen, shoulders and arms. Per exercise: Do 1 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions each – or as many as you can do with effort in good form. You can lift weights or use resistance bands. Include vigorous gardening or other chores.

**Note:** Check with your provider before significantly increasing your activity level.

**Stretching is important, too.** >> *Turn to the other side to learn more.*

## Weight-Loss Goals: For Real

**Set small goals.** Losing weight, even just a few pounds, can boost your confidence, your energy and your desire to succeed.



>> *Continued on the other side.*

**Have small, nutritious meals and snacks.** It's the best way to keep your energy and metabolism elevated and your appetite low.

**Plan every meal and snack.** Without a plan, once your hunger strikes, you're very likely to make choices that slow down weight loss.

## How to Talk to Your Provider



**Like any relationship, success with your health care provider takes effort.**

Open communication is the best way to improve your treatment and your health.

**Prepare.** List your top 3 or 4 concerns for discussion. Keep a file to track your care. Include a medications log. Also record any over-the-counter drug or supplement you use. Carry this file to every provider visit.

**Speak frankly.** Share any symptoms you can identify, even topics you find hard to discuss (such as depression or weight).

**Get answers.** Listen closely and take notes. If you still aren't clear, speak up.

**Ask about online services.** Many practices use email and online portals to help patients manage their health care. It's convenient and saves time.

*“Always do your best. What you plant now, you will harvest later.” – Og Mandino*

## QuikQuiz™: Focus on Cholesterol



**September is Cholesterol Education Month.**

How much do you know about this substance that's critical to heart health? Test your knowledge.

1. T  F  Your body needs cholesterol.
2. T  F  The best time to begin checking cholesterol levels is age 40.
3. T  F  You want your cholesterol numbers to show a high LDL and a low HDL, and your total cholesterol to stay below 250.
4. T  F  Lack of exercise is a risk factor for elevated cholesterol.



>> *Turn the page for the answers.*



# Fruits and Vegetables – Are you getting enough?

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

If your plate is always half-filled with vegetables and you snack on fruit between meals, you are likely getting the recommended minimum of 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables you need daily. But many Americans fall short of this goal.

**Getting enough vegetables and fruit can help combat** high blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar – all heart disease risk factors. Spruce up your plate:

**Start with salad.** Use dark green leafy lettuces (spinach, romaine, kale) and add your favorite vegetables or fruit on top.

**Add vegetables where there were none before.** Try layers of meaty mushrooms and eggplant in lasagna, or squash in macaroni and cheese.

**Enjoy fruit for dessert.** Try tropical fruit salad, cinnamon-baked apples or spiced poached pears.

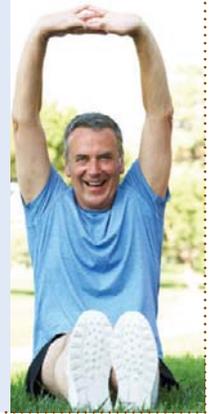
**Roast those vegetables.** Add some olive oil and balsamic vinegar to purple cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, beets or broccoli, and cook until tender-crisp, about 30 minutes.

**Keep sliced vegetables handy.** Studies show we eat 29% more vegetables when they are in our sight line.



## Regular stretching is essential for flexibility and protection from injury. Always exercise for 5 to 10 minutes before stretching.

Never stretch cold muscles. Hold each stretch position at least 10 to 30 seconds; repeat 2 to 4 times. Stretch your back, side, hip and leg muscles. Stretch slowly and smoothly only to the point of mild strain. Also stretch after you exercise, while your muscles are still warm. Bouncing while stretching is not recommended.



## Aspirin: New Uses for an Old Medicine



By Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

Aspirin has been widely used as an over-the-counter medication for decades. It reduces pain, fever and inflammation. More recent uses include these conditions:

- **Heart disease** – Aspirin is often used to prevent heart attacks in people with heart disease or other factors that raise heart attack risk. Emergency personnel may give it to patients with suspected heart attacks.
- **Stroke** – People who have had a transient ischemic attack or ischemic stroke are sometimes advised to take aspirin – either immediately or long term to prevent a recurrence. But it's not recommended if there is any bleeding in the brain.
- **Artery disease** – Aspirin may prevent clots from forming in small arteries.
- **Colon cancer** – Early evidence suggests aspirin may help prevent the formation of colon polyps and colon cancer.

**Always get your provider's OK before taking aspirin.** Aspirin isn't for everyone, especially those with conditions such as aspirin allergy or an ulcer. Children and teens with viral infections should not take aspirin.

### ANSWERS

*Continued from the other side.*

1. True – The body needs cholesterol to function normally. However, too much of the LDL (bad) cholesterol can build up in and block your arteries, putting you at risk for heart disease and stroke.
2. False – Experts advise adults to have their cholesterol checked every 5 years starting at age 20.
3. False – Desirable cholesterol levels: LDL below 130 mg/dL, HDL above 40, and triglycerides (a blood fat) below 150. Strive to keep your total cholesterol below 200.
4. True – Exercise routinely, lose excess weight, don't smoke, reduce intake of processed foods containing saturated or trans fat, and take prescribed medication.

## Weight Loss Goals: For Real

*Continued from the other side.*

**Include favorite foods.** Severely limiting food choices doesn't aid weight loss. Just eat high-calorie favorites less often and in smaller portions, and fill up on fruits and vegetables.

**Weigh weekly.** People who weigh themselves once a week are more likely to meet their weight-loss goals and keep the weight off.



**Exercise.** You need to do regular physical activity beyond what you do ordinarily each day. Try to burn at least 100 extra calories a day.

**Track your food and activity for a few weeks.** You'll find eating behaviors that may sabotage your weight goals, and those which help you succeed.



Smart Moves toolkit is at [www.personalbest.com/extras/Sept13tools](http://www.personalbest.com/extras/Sept13tools).

Next Month: Going Vegetarian