

From: [Meeks, Sara R.](#)
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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



Live Healthy Live Well

Hello Challenge Friends,

This message talks about the benefits of moving more, but don't worry, you don't have to start a new exercise program – every little bit of physical activity counts! The tips below provide some ideas for small ways you can add more activity to your day.

Yours in Wellness,

Sara

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Move More

With all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, exercise may be the last thing on your mind. While I'm not here to tell you that you should start an exercise program during this already busy time, you can reap many health benefits by simply increasing your physical activity level. Remember

to move more and sit less.

You may be wondering what the difference between physical activity and exercise is. Any activity that raises your heart rate and lasts for at least 10 minutes counts as [physical activity](#). Even if you are not moving for at least 10 minutes, the more you move, the more health benefits you obtain. Exercise is a type of planned, structured, and repetitive physical activity intended to condition any part of the body.

Before you jump right in to increasing your activity level, there are [some things you need to consider](#).

1. Talk to your doctor if you have a chronic condition or if you are pregnant. Physical activity can help you manage chronic conditions, but you should always consult your physician before increasing your activity level too quickly or before starting an exercise program.
2. Pick activities that match your fitness level. If you aren't accustomed to physical activity, start with low to moderate intensity activities like walking, yard work, and housework until your body adjusts.
3. Increase activity gradually. Regardless of what your fitness level is, always increase the time and intensity of activity or exercise gradually to avoid injury.
4. Protect yourself by using the right equipment like properly fitted shoes for walking. Check for level sidewalks and good lighting. Finally, pay attention to the weather to be prepared or to adjust the timing of your activity.

[During the holiday season](#), there are many ways you can incorporate more activity in to things you may already be doing.

1. Use shopping to your advantage. Park farther away or take a lap around the mall or store before you start shopping.
2. When you visit loved ones, get out and explore. Take a walk around the neighborhood with your family or friends as long as it's not too slippery.



3. Celebrate the season in your community. Look for events in your area to get you out and enjoy the sights and celebrations.
4. Pass on your screen time instead of your workout. If time is short, skip perusing the internet or the TV and opt for something more active.
5. Don't forget to count what you are already doing. Stringing lights, cleaning and decorating the house, and fetching or returning boxes of decorations all count.

When your body is in motion, you get more health benefits than when it is sedentary. So, if your physician has given you the go-ahead, plan when and how you will be active. If you still find it hard to be more active or to incorporate exercise in to your day, read [my blog article](#) to learn more reasons being active can help increase your overall health and well-being.

Let us know how you MOVE MORE this holiday season.

Reflection - Many people report that their exercise routines bring immediate gratification in the form of mental clarity. Research shows that physical activity is not only beneficial for your physical health, but your mental health, too.

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