



**YOUR BODY**  
**WHERE**  
**YOU**  
*~ Live ~*

**A Guide to Healthy Living for People with Disabilities -Volume II**



---

**YOUR BODY**  
**WHERE**  
**YOU**  
*~ Live ~*

**A Guide to Healthy Living**

**for People with Disabilities**

**Volume II**

The research and preparation of this guide was accomplished through a collaborative effort of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Office for the Prevention of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Disability Services, the Disability, Health and Wellness Program.

Chris Christie  
*Governor*

Kim Guadagno  
*Lt. Governor*

Elizabeth Connolly  
*Acting Commissioner*  
*NJ Department of Human Services*

Joseph M. Amoroso  
*Division Director*  
*Division of Disability Services*

Jonathan Sabin  
*Director*  
*Office for the Prevention of*  
*Developmental Disabilities*

Jennifer Shore  
*Researcher*

Harry Pizutelli, Traci Burton, Colleen Roche and Gianna Marchesi  
*Authoring and Editing Team*

---

---

## Partner Agencies

### Division of Developmental Disabilities

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) funds services and supports for eligible individuals with developmental disabilities. These services are offered in the community by more than 200 agencies and in five residential developmental centers administered by the division. DDD assures the opportunity for individuals with developmental disabilities to receive quality services and supports, participate meaningfully in their communities and exercise their right to make choices.

[www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/index.html)

### Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities

The mission of Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (OPDD) is to reduce the frequency of occurrence of severe chronic mental or physical disabilities that originate during pregnancy or early childhood. Preventing developmental disabilities begins long before a woman gets pregnant and continues long after her children are born. OPDD addresses the many facets of prevention by using the life cycle paradigm which includes: preconception health, prenatal health and infant and child health.

[www.state.nj.us/humanservices/opmrdd/home/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/opmrdd/home/index.html)

### Division of Disability Services

The Division of Disability Services (DDS) is designated as the “single point of entry” for information about and access to services for people with disabilities living and working in New Jersey. DDS administers programs that allow people with different types of disabilities to live more independently in the community, and in many cases, avoid the need to move into an institution. DDS does not have disability specific eligibility criteria and thus operates as the cross-disability, human services organization for state government.

[www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/home/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/home/index.html)

### Disability, Health & Wellness

The New Jersey Disability Health & Wellness (DH&W) Program is a unit within the Division of Disability Services. The DH&W Program consults and collaborates on projects that seek to promote healthy living and prevention of secondary conditions for people with disabilities. The DH&W Program works with policy makers, health educators, public and private agencies, and experts in the field of health and wellness to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities into the general health promotion activities which currently exist throughout the state.

[www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/projects/dhwi/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/projects/dhwi/index.html)

The DH&W Program encourages individuals with disabilities to be proactive in their healthcare. In taking on a healthier lifestyle, you can elevate your overall health and wellness and possibly prevent secondary conditions. In support of these goals, the *Your Body Is Where You Live: A Guide to Healthy Living for People with Disabilities, Volume II* provides multiple wellness resources for individuals with disabilities. For additional healthy living tips and disability specific resources join us for “Wellness Wednesdays” on the Department of Human Services Facebook page at: [www.Facebook.com/NJDHS](http://www.Facebook.com/NJDHS)

---

# Preface

## Health and Wellness for People with Disabilities: Why is it Important?

Our first guide, *Eat Well. Live Well. Be Well. A Guide to Healthy Living for People with Disabilities*, focused on nutrition and healthy eating. While promoting this guide, we met individuals with disabilities throughout the state and fielded many questions about exercise and adaptive sports. It became clear that we needed to dedicate a second guide to the topic of physical activity.

As they say, a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. Creating a healthy lifestyle doesn't happen overnight. For most of us it is a life-long process that requires lots of adjustments along the way. This guide is for people with disabilities who are saying to themselves, "I want to live a healthy life, but it seems so complicated; where should I begin?" In addition to discussing fitness, health and nutrition, this guide will also provide some information on disability specific exercise techniques that you can do from the comfort of your own home.

Why is wellness so important and what does your disability have to do with any of it? The truth is wellness, or making healthy choices in all areas of your life, is really important and disability can play a big role in your ability to stay well. In fact, this topic is so important, there is a program which sets out to "improve the nation's health" called, Healthy People 2020 (HP 2020).

Healthy People 2020 has four main goals:

- To live longer, healthier lives
- To improve the overall health of everyone
- Create social and physical environments that promote good health for all
- To promote healthy behaviors throughout a person's lifetime

One of many topic areas within HP 2020 is "Disability and Health," which specifically focuses on the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities. According to the most recent U.S Census, about 1 in 5 people in this country have a disability. That's more than 50 million people! People with disabilities are more integrated into their communities than ever before. Therefore, equal access to all health related services is important. Such services include: medical care, public health activities, intervention/preventative care, dental care vision care and reproductive care.

People with disabilities often have more difficulty accessing healthcare than their non-disabled peers. As a result, they are more likely:

- To be overweight
- To smoke
- To have high blood pressure
- To not exercise
- To have fewer social supports

Having a disability may also put you at risk for developing secondary health conditions, which are conditions that are brought on, in part, due to your disability. Conditions like osteoporosis, or weakening of the bones, bed sores, asthma, cardiovascular or heart disease and arthritis are all fairly common secondary health conditions people with disabilities may develop. While there is no known "magic pill" to prevent the onset of these conditions, making the decision to live a healthier life and get your body moving will help in more ways than one.

As you look through this guide, remember changing habits can be difficult. No one expects that you will be a fitness instructor by next week. But, if slowly but surely, you incorporate one tip into your meal planning here and there and a little more movement into your daily routine, you might be surprised at what a difference it makes. As you look through this guide, remember changing habits can be difficult. No one expects that you will be a chef or fitness instructor by next week. But, if slowly but surely, you incorporate one tip into your meal planning here and there and another into your daily routine every once in a while, you might be surprised at what a difference it makes.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this guide is for educational purposes only and should not replace the care and/or advice of your doctor and healthcare providers. It is important to talk to your doctor before making any big changes to your physical activity levels.

This guide offers health, fitness and nutritional information and is designed to familiarize you with the basics of a healthy lifestyle. It is not medical advice. If you have any concerns or questions about your health, you should always talk with your doctor or healthcare providers.

If you think you are having a medical or health emergency, call your doctor, or 911, immediately.

*Editor's Note: Having the tools and information to make healthy choices and knowing how to prevent illness are key components of staying well. This guide is intended for people with disabilities who may be considering exercise for the first time. The majority of the exercise suggestions contained within this guide can be done in the comfort of your own home or neighborhood at little to no cost.*

## Nutrition and Physical Activity Go Hand in Hand

Physical activity provides long-term health benefits for everyone, adults and children alike! By being active, you will burn calories. The activity can be walking the dog or something more rigorous such as wheelchair rugby. Staying active may also improve your sleep patterns and prevent serious secondary health conditions like heart disease, osteoporosis (weakening of the bones) or bed sores. Providing opportunities for children to be active early on puts them on a path to better physical and mental health, but don't worry—it's never too late to start leading a healthy lifestyle.

Here are some facts about disability and physical activity from the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition:

- Approximately 56 million people in the US have a disability.
- The obesity rate for children with disabilities in the U.S. is 38% higher than for children without disabilities.
- The adult obesity rate for adults with disabilities is 57% higher than for adults without disabilities.
- Adults with disabilities are physically active on a regular basis about half as often as adults without disabilities (12% vs. 22%).
- Significant disparities (barriers) exist in access to health care. 29% of people with disabilities have unmet healthcare needs compared to 12% of people without disabilities.

Why do these statistics matter? Diet and nutrition are not enough to stay fit. In order to remain healthy, it is critical for all people to adopt both a nutritious diet and an active lifestyle. For more information on fitness visit: [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov).



**LESS THAN  
5% of adults  
participate in  
30 minutes of  
physical activity  
each day; only  
one in three  
adults receive  
the recommended  
amount of physical  
activity each week.**

---

# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Command Central: Your Body	Page 1
Brains...	
...And Braun	
No Bones About It	
Chapter 2: Let's Get Moving!	Page 8
Set Goals: Be Successful	
"Is That Really Me?" Benefits You Can See	
Chapter 3: Healthy and Nutritious, Being Active and Eating Delicious	Page 20
An Apple a Day: Let's Talk About Nutrition	
Be Creative: Designing an Active Lifestyle	
Don't Forget!	
Tracking Your Progress	
Chapter 4: Mind, Body and Spirit: It's All Connected	Page 28
Living in the Moment	
Stress Is a Mess: How Are You Feeling?	
Catch Some Zzzzs: Are You Getting Enough Sleep?	
The Power of Love	
Chapter 5: The World Is Your Oyster!	Page 32
Couch to Community: Being Active Within Society	
People Need People	
Learning from Each Other: Sharing Your Talents	
Chapter 6: Tools of the Trade: Items That May Help Further Your Success	Page 34
What to Use: Adaptive Activity Equipment	
Sports Chairs and Hand Cycling	
And Now a Bit on Prevention	
Saying Farewell... To the Old You	
Glossary	Page 38
Appendices	Page 40

---



# Chapter I

## Command Central: Your Body

### Your body is where you live.

Think about it, not only is your body a physical support structure, it also contains your mind and soul. To be healthier, it is important to exercise both your mind and body. Your body is made up of many parts including bones, muscles, and organs to name just a few. Just as a house isn't a home until you fill it with things that are important to you; what you do and fill your body with effects how you look and feel.



Filling your body with junk food, preservatives, and artificial ingredients changes you on the inside in ways you might not be able to see. Your organs struggle to process things that are foreign to them and health conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart problems and high cholesterol can silently creep into your life. On the outside, an unhealthy lifestyle can lead to weight gain and skin problems. Did you know that skin is your largest and fastest growing organ? Not only is it your body's "coat", but healthy skin is also our first line of defense against illness and infection! Therefore, you need to be sure to eat cleanly and add a little bit of physical activity into your daily routine in order maintain a healthy appearance from the inside out.

Like the skin, your digestive system also plays an important role in keeping you healthy. If your gut does not recognize what you are feeding your body, and you do not provide it with enough water or nutrients, your whole entire body will feel the effects. No one can change their diet overnight, but there are a few quick and easy changes you can make today to start the process. First, make sure your body is getting enough water. Try replacing sports drinks and soda with water this week. Second, try to switch out a few packaged snacks with fruits and vegetables like apples or celery. You will see the phrase "eat the rainbow" mentioned several times throughout this guide; what on earth does that mean? Exactly what it sounds like. The more color fruits and vegetables you bring to your meals and snacks, the better they will be for you. Sugary, salty and highly processed foods are often white! So, try to avoid candies, snacks and drinks that have artificial colors. By eating healthier foods, the body will absorb necessary nutrients and have more energy. If the body has more energy, physical activity may become easier. Eating healthy and physical activity do go hand-in-hand, and by putting a little of each into your daily routine, you will become a healthier you.

Being "healthy" is not just about your physical body, and how it does, or does not function. Health is state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being – not just the lack of being sick. Paying attention to your mental and spiritual health is often the first step in creating a healthier lifestyle. As an added bonus, doing so does not require you to move a single inch.

**If you have a computer, car, bike, or even a wheelchair, you try to take care of it so that it will work properly, right? Do you take the time to take care of YOU too? If not, just like an old car you don't keep up with, your body it will start to stall, break down, fuses may blow and it just won't "go" like it used to.**



I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.  
-Michael Jordan

### **Why mention this at the beginning of the book?**

Anyone, regardless of their abilities, can take steps to live healthier! **Yes, even you.** You can do this! If you commit to listening to your body and making small and steady positive lifestyle choices today, the difference you see in yourself one month, or even a year from now might surprise you. What do you have to lose? Give it a try. "Been there, done that, doesn't work", you say? The most successful people in life fail many, many times before they succeed. Focusing on things that make you feel alive and content can help you to "zero in" on the positives in your life. Over time, you can begin to use these positives to slowly "crowd out" some of the negatives which might be weighing you down today. Remember, as John Donne wrote, "No man is an island." No one lives alone in a vacuum. We all depend on each other in one way or another. You have something to offer the world that no one else does! Don't hide it.

### **Brains...**

The brain is your body's command center. It controls your thoughts, feelings, actions and movements. The first step in creating a healthier you, is to harness the power of your mind. Did you know that your brain releases chemicals into your body that affect your emotions and how you feel? Believe it or not, your diet, exercise and the people you surround yourself with can have a big impact on your overall wellbeing. It is unrealistic to think every day is going to be a great one. In fact, some days are going to be tough, but it is important to remember that if you make it to the next minute, hour or day you are still here and have gotten from where you were, to where you are right now. That is progress! Every day is an opportunity to try something new. Don't underestimate the power of your mind to get the ball rolling. Many agree with Gandhi, who said, "Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, and your values become your destiny."

A healthier lifestyle does not have to even involve the gym, though if you can afford a membership, gyms can be great places to workout. A healthier lifestyle can often start by taking time out of your busy rushed life to be still and quiet. Although we will discuss all of these points in more detail later on in the guide, here are just a few things you might want to consider as you begin to think about what a "healthy lifestyle" looks like to you:

### **Nourish Your Mind**

🍷 **Know what makes you happy** - What do you really love and enjoy doing? What are you good at? What relaxes you? What makes you want to get out of bed? When you develop a sense of purpose, you often can look forward to the things to come in life. Take time out of each day, even if only a few minutes, to do whatever it is that gives you a sense of purpose.

🍷 **Stay active** - You can gain so much from constantly moving around doing many little things here and there. Most of our older relatives and elders were always moving. A ton of daily "screen time" has replaced movement for most of us if we are being honest. No one expects you to go from watching television for hours at a time to a marathon runner, but you can make small changes over time to increase your physical activity levels every day. Why not try to stretch during commercial breaks, or contracting all of the muscles in your body at 5 counts each until the show comes back on? If physically moving is difficult, or painful, what can you do to keep your brain sharp? Word puzzles, reading, singing, drawing and writing are just a few things that can keep your mind active. What activities can you think of that will help you to stay active?



**Clear  
your mind  
of can't.**  
-Samuel  
Johnson



**Strive  
for  
progress,  
not  
perfection.  
-Unknown**

🍷 **Form healthy relationships** - When it comes to relationships with others, previous generations did not have the benefit of technology to forge new bonds with others that we often do. If you wanted to get to know someone, in most cases, you had to interact with them live and in person. We rarely see these types of interactions in our busy lives today. Even though it may be difficult and awkward to do sometimes, studies show that the more natural support systems and healthy relationships people have, the healthier they tend to be. It is important for all of us to know that we are not alone on our paths of life.

🍷 **Have an Attitude of Gratitude** - Try to form the habit of giving thanks for something each day, perhaps once when you wake up and once before going to sleep; if coming up with something every day is too difficult, how about trying once per week? Some people find it helpful to write down the things they are thankful for...they start to add up. And, if you are having a bad day, you can look over your list and remind yourself of the positives in your life. It may make you feel better!

🍷 **Write and Journal Your Thoughts** - If something is upsetting you, record one thing you are going to do today to address the issue. If you are unable to write or type, there are computer software devices that can help you write from voice to text, or you can record your thoughts on an audio recorder. The day after you write/record a thought, go back and ask yourself, did I address yesterday's issue? If not, try again today.

🍷 **Write a book, poem, song or make up a story.** Again, if you do not have the ability to write or type with your hands, use software like voice to text or an audio recorder.

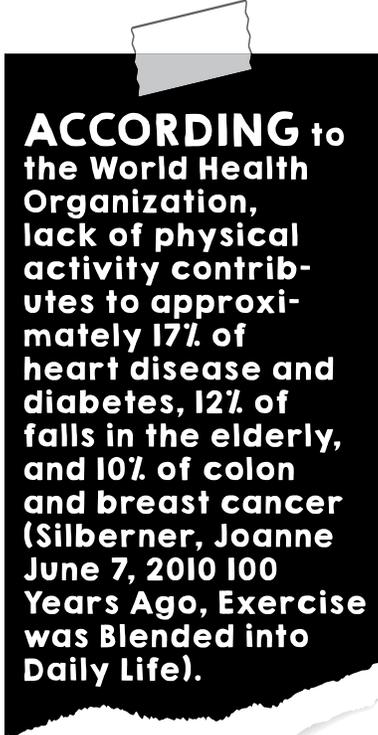
🍷 **Listen to Music** - Music can sometimes be a great stress reliever because it often reminds us of people, places and things. We hear a song and think back to what we were doing while it was playing, and begin to relive conversations and experiences we've had with family and friends... Not all memories will be good ones, but many of them will be.

## **Nourish Your Body**

🍷 **Socializing at Mealtime** - Some of the healthiest people in the world treat mealtime as a social event that can last for hours. In the US, most of us don't make mealtime a priority. Instead, breakfast is often skipped in favor of a few more precious minutes of sleep, lunch might be a quick sandwich, burger or snack from the vending machine on the go and dinner a frozen pre-packaged meal you pop in the microwave. There is nothing wrong with quick and easy meals, but sharing a meal together with someone actually has great health benefits. By eating more slowly, you have time to enjoy your food and your body has time to process it. Have you ever noticed that you feel "full"

more quickly when you are not in a rush to eat? For some, mealtime is also a great way to catch up with friends and family. For others, the process of planning and preparing a meal is not only fun, but also a great way to get to know someone better than you already do.

🍷 **Having Drinks and Appetizers** - About twenty minutes before you eat dinner, take some time to relax, have something to drink and sit down with friends or family. Before the main



**ACCORDING to the World Health Organization, lack of physical activity contributes to approximately 17% of heart disease and diabetes, 12% of falls in the elderly, and 10% of colon and breast cancer (Silberner, Joanne June 7, 2010 100 Years Ago, Exercise was Blended into Daily Life).**

course, think about having a light appetizer like a salad, grapes or maybe even a gluten free breaded and baked string bean appetizer. Your brain starts to process that you are eating twenty minutes AFTER you have actually begun eating. If you eat an entire meal in 10 minutes, your body does not even have the time it needs to let you know that you are full. Take your time and enjoy your meal.

🍴 **Change it up. Make it a buffet** - When you make a meal, or share one with family and friends, keep the serving dishes you have prepared away from the dining area. Fix yourself a plate being mindful of your serving sizes, have a seat and enjoy your meal. People are often less tempted to help themselves to seconds or thirds if they have to get up again to get it. Remember veggies should take up a little more than half of the room on your plate!

🍴 **Drink more water** - Without water, we cannot live. Always keep water nearby. It is a great way to stay hydrated, has no calories or fat and can help to fill you up. Next time you feel hungry; try having a glass of water before you go to the pantry for a snack. People often mistake mild dehydration (not having enough water in your body) for hunger. Instead of dairy at every meal, try a glass or two of water. Keep the pitcher at the table for easy refills.

🍴 **Taking care of yourself** - Life can get busy. Do not forget to carve out some time for yourself and the people you care about most. Do things you enjoy doing together. Maintaining friendships, natural support systems and relationships is important, but we have to make time in our schedules to nurture and grow them continually.

### ...And Braun!

Everyone knows that physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Many people do not exercise because they think it is too hard, or impossible to do. Disability or not, people get into ruts and have trouble sticking with an exercise routine. Do not let those ruts prevent you from trying again. Almost all people regardless of their limitations can do some form of activity. It may take time to develop an exercise routine that works well for your body, but it can happen. Regular activity helps to maintain and increase your strength, stamina, endurance, and agility. Exercising the mind and brain by doing color or number conditioning activities are a great ways to improve your memory. Have someone write words and numbers down on a dry erase board, turn it over so you can look at it for 10 seconds, then flip it again. Now, try to call out all the numbers and words you saw on the board. Your brain can sometimes be your strongest and most reliable tool. Don't be afraid to use it.



Data from 2009-2010 indicates that over 78 million U.S. adults and about 12.5 million (16.9%) children and adolescents are obese.

Recent reports project that by 2030, half of all adults (115 million adults) in the United States will be obese.

## So, Physical Activity Is Good for Me...

### But How Do I Get Started?

**1. First thing's first** - Before you begin making big changes to your lifestyle, speak to your doctor. They will give you the ok to begin your exercise routine, or refer you to see a physical therapist or personal trainer for more specific assistance if needed.

**2. Time to get moving** - In order to develop a regular activity routine, you have to try different types of physical activity to see what works best for you. If you need support from a personal trainer or physical therapist, work with one until you feel comfortable and safe exercising on your own or with friends and family. Ask questions about routines and equipment if this is new to you. Remember the only stupid question is the one you do not ask.

**3. Get creative** - Put yourself out there. If you have limited to no mobility, perhaps work with a physical therapist, or a professional that practices non-traditional treatments like acupuncture. Increasing your range of motion, blood flow and strength will not only make you healthier, but it may also reduce pain levels as well. This is actually great for everyone.

**4. Find a workout buddy** - If you are new to physical activity, it may be useful to have a friend or a workout partner to help you get into proper positions, for certain exercises. They can help keep you motivated and you can motivate them. Working out with someone also makes people less likely to skip exercising. You are accountable to one another. This is a good thing!

**5. Take an exercise class** - Get motivated. Many communities offer free exercise classes to their residents so call a friend to go with you or go alone. You might make new friends. Are you worried that you will not be able to keep up with your non-disabled classmates? That is completely understandable, but the key thing to remember is to do what you can and keep moving. Don't let fear, or lack of ability keep you stuck in a rut. Feel free to adapt routines to suit your needs. You know your body better than anyone else does. There are also many great adaptive programs out there tailored to meet the needs of people with specific disabilities. Adaptive sports and leisure activities are becoming more and more popular and affordable. There's an activity out there for you whether you have full mobility, or none at all. If you can think of it, someone has probably found a way to adapt it so people with disabilities can participate. Meditate, do some deep breathing exercises, stretch, join a seated yoga class, or go for a stroll in the park- the possibilities are endless. See pages 8-15 and 21-23 for information on adaptive sports and recreation programs.

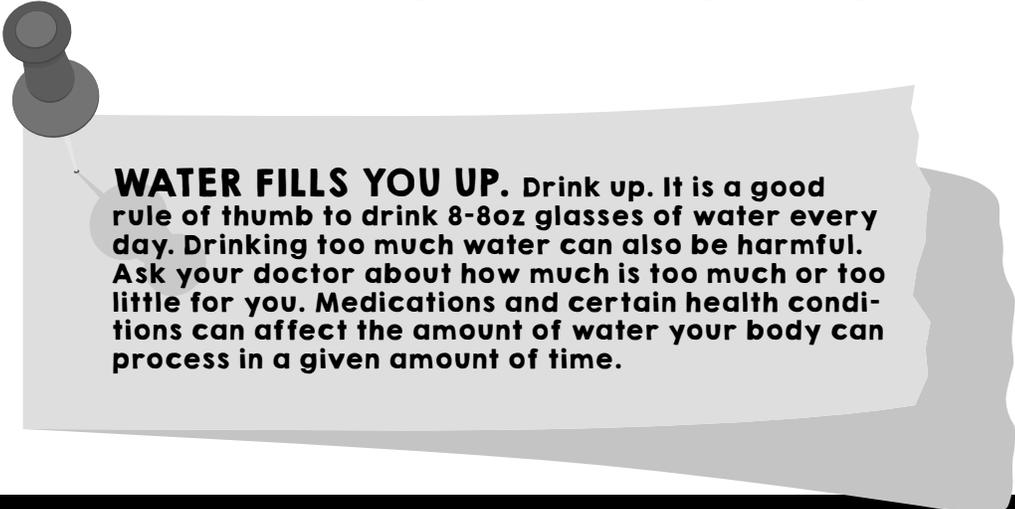
**6. Join a gym** - If your finances and mobility allow, this is one way to catch the fitness bug. Sometimes it is so easy to feel self-conscious at a gym if you are new to exercising. Gyms have personal trainers that can help you reach your fitness goals, just make sure they are certified by a recognizable place. It is best if they are also certified to work with people who have disabilities, but that's certainly not required. When you are shopping around for a gym, feel free to ask the staff if their trainers are certified, and if so, from where. If you do choose to work with a personal trainer, be sure to tell them your fitness goals and disability related needs up front.

**Think outside of the box and be willing to move in ways you never have before; do things you have always wanted to try and create experiences you never imagined were possible.**

**Do what works for you, and listen to your body.**



**DON'T LIKE WATER? Add fruits or lemons to water if you do not like it. Squeeze them into or mix in with a spoon, for more flavors to infuse.**

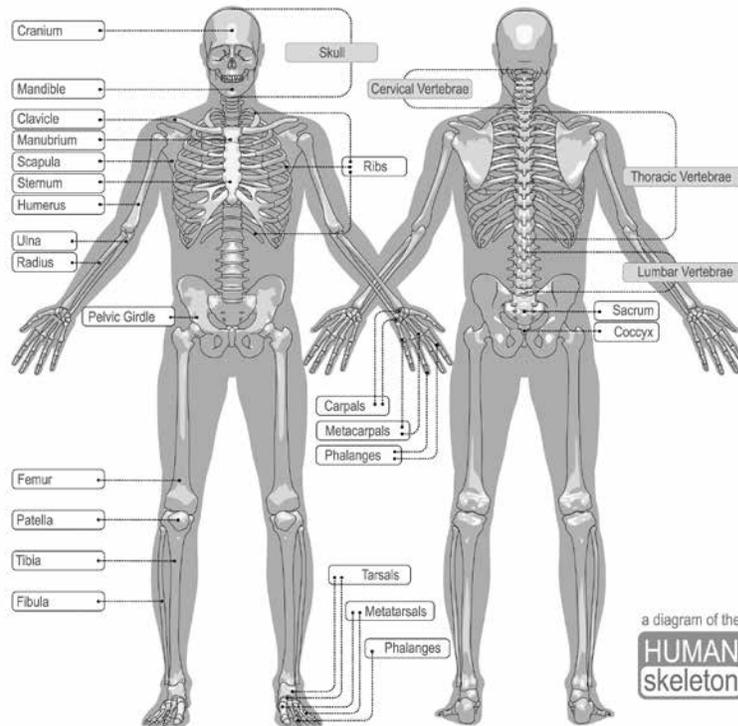


**WATER FILLS YOU UP.** Drink up. It is a good rule of thumb to drink 8-8oz glasses of water every day. Drinking too much water can also be harmful. Ask your doctor about how much is too much or too little for you. Medications and certain health conditions can affect the amount of water your body can process in a given amount of time.

Secrets about dairy... Most people think dairy products are great for your bones. Would you believe the complete opposite is true? Dairy is actually a calcium absorber. When you digest dairy products, calcium actually is drawn out of your bones.

## No Bones About It

Your skeletal system is the foundational framework of your body and includes all of your bones, joints and teeth. Bones are the anchors and points of attachment for almost all of your muscles; they support your weight and help create safe and comfortable movement. They also act as the body's warehouse for calcium, iron and energy. Regular physical activity is critical to keeping bones strong and healthy as you age. A healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight will not only keep your bones healthy, but it also decreases the risk of injuries due to falls and conditions like arthritis and osteoporosis. We are all living in the bodies we have been given; let's be good to what we got!



You may be asking yourself, "If I limit how many dairy products I eat, what other foods are high in calcium and good for my bones?". Try some of the calcium rich foods listed below and use extra virgin olive oil, or coconut oils, while cooking. Your bones and body will thank you!

Eat them raw or cook them on the stove top with a bit of one of the oils just mentioned:

Broccoli	Broccoli Rabe	Kale	Edamame	Sardines
Collard Greens	Okra	Figs	Oranges	Bok Choy
White Beans	Tofu	Almonds	Salmon	

## Chapter I Summary

➡ Your body is your physical support structure and where you live. Being “healthy” isn’t just about your physical body and how it does or does not function. Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being- not just the lack of being sick. Paying attention to your mental and spiritual health is often the first step in creating a healthier lifestyle.

➡ Maintaining a mind body connection is a key component of creating a healthy lifestyle. It is important to exercise both your mind and body. For a healthy body, we must have a healthy mind as well. Your body is made up of many parts including bones, muscles, organs to name a few. Regular physical activity is critical to keeping bones strong and healthy as you age.

**“You don’t have to be great to start,  
but you have to start to be great.” - Zig Ziglar**

**Notes:**



## Chapter 2 Let's Get Moving!

### Set Goals: Be Successful

A good plan starts with a good idea of what you would like to accomplish. The same is true with physical activity. In order to become more fit, you'll want to figure out what your overall goals are, and then create a workout plan to achieve them. Physical activity can be broken down into two broad categories: aerobic and anaerobic activities. This will be discussed further in the following paragraphs. In order to stay fit and healthy, your body needs different types of exercise. Each exercise targets a different area of the body and a balanced weekly exercise plan should work on each of these areas.

If the idea of working out with weights seems overwhelming or is not possible, just start with simple cardiovascular activities; these are also known as aerobic activities. In the next few pages, various types of physical activity will be covered. After a week or two of aerobic activity, begin incorporating anaerobic activity into your work out. Start slowly, adding new activities into your plan as you master each. This will help you to create a weekly workout plan that contains a variety of physical activity. Doing more today than yesterday, is one step closer to a healthier you! Schedule physical activity into your daily routine; make it as enjoyable as possible. Remember you are taking steps to change your lifestyle, not just "going on a diet and exercising." These new healthy habits have the potential to become part of your everyday life.

#### GOT PAIN?

Water aerobics is a great gentler alternative to a traditional aerobics class. Can't swim? An aqua belt can be used to keep your head above water while you perform the exercises in a pool. Moving in the water is a great cardio workout that causes very little stress on joints and muscles.

### Types of Physical Activity

There is a glossary towards the end of this guide, in case you are stumped or confused by some of this unfamiliar exercise lingo. It can get messy.

So let's get started:

#### Aerobic Activity

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines aerobic as "living, active, or occurring only in the presence of oxygen." What does that mean? Anything that gets your heart rate up and may make you sweat are considered aerobic activities.

#### Here are some examples of aerobic activities:

- running
- jogging
- rowing
- swimming
- Zumba/dancing
- walking
- basketball
- boxing
- pushing your wheelchair

Try some of these activities.

Your goal should be to eventually be able to keep moving for 30 minutes at a time.

### Know Your Heart: Is My Heart Beating Like a Drum?

Concentrate for just a moment. Sit alone in silence. Feel and listen to the beating of your heart. Touch your heart with your hand and hold it there while sitting in complete silence for a minute, maybe two. Relax. Get to know yourself. Notice how you are feeling, feel the rhythm of your heart beat- that pace is your normal heart rate. After starting any aerobic exercise, your heart will begin to beat faster. If you feel like it's beating too fast, it most likely is. Slow down or take a break for a minute before continuing your workout. You know your body. You know your limits.

Follow your gut/instinct. If something feels bad to you, or you are in pain, get help wherever you are. If you ever feel like you are going to faint, fall over, or pass out, get into a seated position on the floor immediately. Yell for help.

## Anaerobic Exercises

Anaerobic activities are strength building activities that can be done with either your own body weight or free weights, like a soup can, water bottle, book or dumbbell. Anaerobic exercises are quick movements that cause your muscles to contract, creating increased muscle strength. With this type of exercise, you should keep going until you no longer can. Your body will let you know when to stop.

**Here are some examples of anaerobic activities:**

→ Push-ups    → Sit-ups    → Pull ups    → Sprinting    → Lifting weights

## Sets and Reps...What's the difference?

A rep, or repetition, is the number of times you do a particular movement. For example, if you were to get a set of dumbbells, and lift them 8-12 times, this is called a rep. A rep is the number of times you lift the dumbbells.

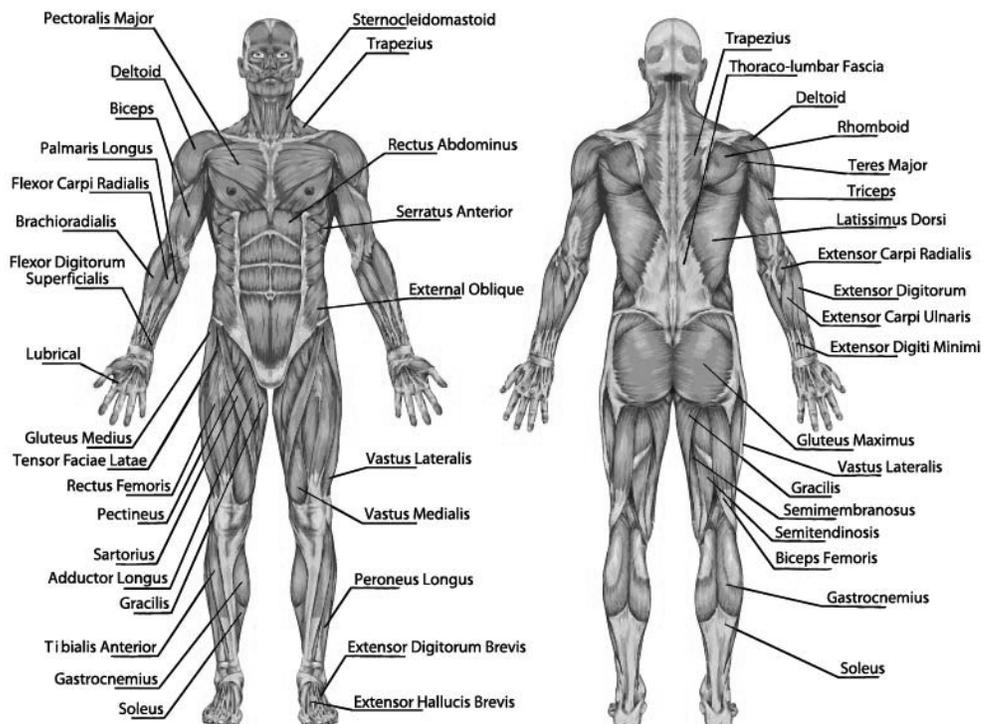
A set is the number of times you do a series of reps. Back to lifting the dumbbells, if you repeat the process of lifting those dumbbells for 8-12 more times, this is a set. A set is when you do a particular workout 3 or 4 times.

## Muscles

In order to create an effective workout plan, you also need to understand a little bit about muscles and muscle groups. An upper body workout usually includes the following muscles, or muscle groups: chest, back, triceps, biceps, forearms, deltoids, trapezius, lats, abs and torso.

A lower body workout usually includes the following muscles: buttocks, quadriceps, hamstrings, abductor, and adductor muscles (the inside of legs, opposite of abductor), and calves.

If you join a gym and use their equipment, the machines will have labels on them to show you what muscle group that particular machine works on. The label will also describe how to use the machine.



## Ready To Create a Workout Plan

If you use a wheelchair, have cognitive disabilities or have limited to no mobility, there are physical activities for you. You can workout at home in a chair, in bed or standing up. You know your body best, so do what you can. Wheelchair users with mobility can do independent lateral transfers may wish transfer to a weight bench or machine to work out. If you rarely do transfers on your own, practice doing them a lot, starting with assistance. This will help give you more strength to get from your chair to a piece of equipment safely. Always be sure to lock your wheelchair so that it does not move. If you need help or assistance in transferring to a machine at the gym, ask for the help.

For beginners it is often best to incorporate full-body workouts into their daily activity routine. After becoming comfortable with basic movements and allowing the muscles to get used to weight resistance training, you may want to shift to more advanced workouts.

You move different muscle groups when you do daily physical activities. These muscle groups are your chest, back, shoulders, biceps (front of arm), triceps (back of arm), quadriceps (front of legs), hamstrings (back of upper legs), calves (back of lower legs), and abdominals (your stomach area). The workouts below work all of these muscle groups. For bigger muscle groups (chest, back and legs) it is best to do a maximum of 60-120 total reps per week. For smaller muscle groups (triceps, biceps, and shoulders) about 30-60 total reps is recommended. It is best to aim for the 6-12 rep range for each set. Anything lower than six reps focuses mostly on strength. Anything higher than twelve is typically for endurance. For your muscles to fully recover, you should rest about two minutes between each set.

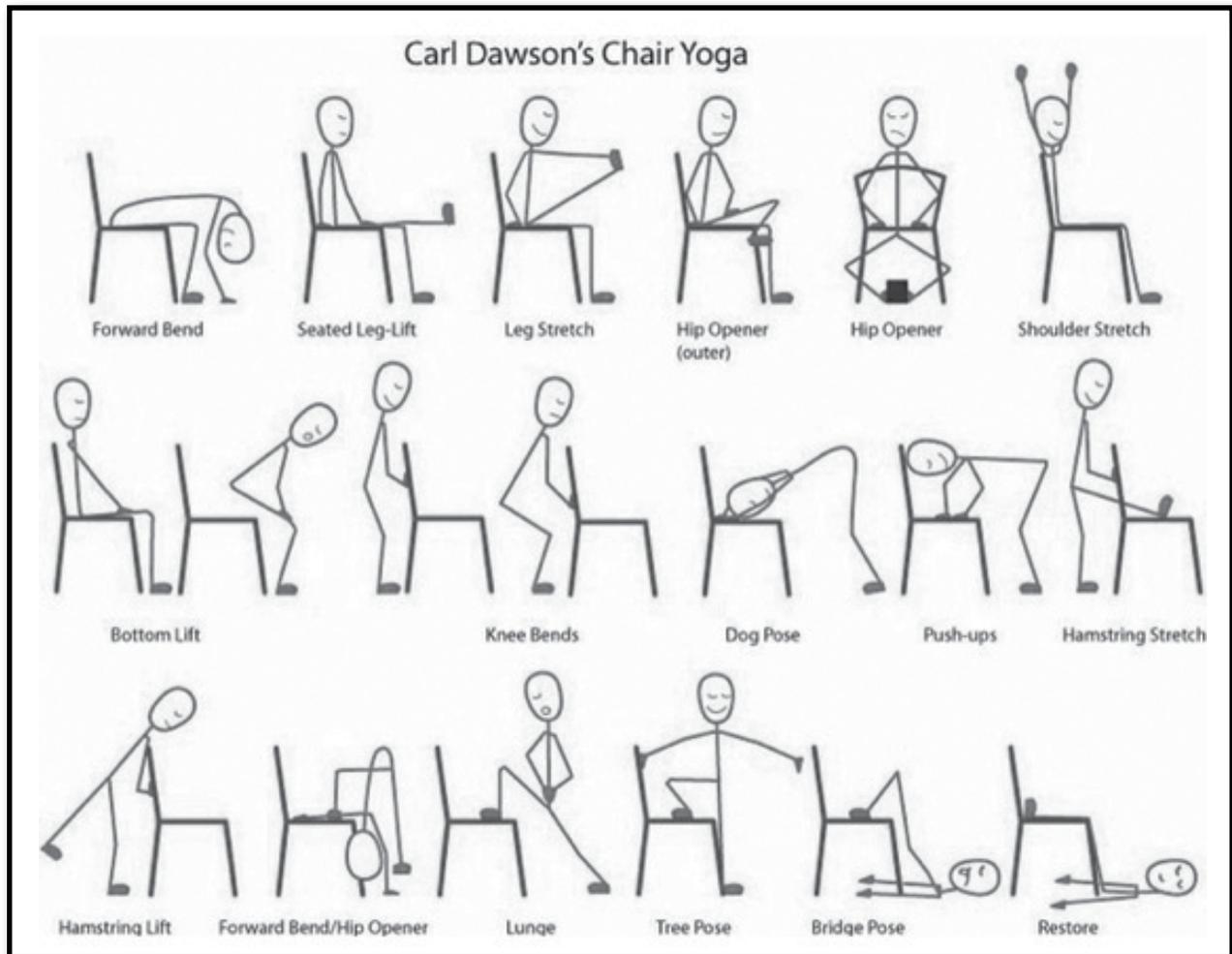
Using the workouts below, you can either create a full-body workout, or work one or two muscle groups in the comfort of your home, at a park or perhaps a gym. Your workout, or physical plan of activity, may use workouts from this book, or you can get creative and design your own plan. Think outside the box as you do your household chores. Find ways to stimulate each muscle group while cleaning. When you're washing dishes, try focusing on your whole arm; try holding up heavier pans and bowls as long as possible while you wash. Exercise your mind by letting your creativity flow!

***The levels below are based on the Special Olympics Skills Assessment functionality chart. It may help you figure out where you are physically, and mentally with regard to doing certain physical activities.***

### SKILLS ASSESSMENT CHART

<b>Level 1</b> The inability to perform any given exercise	If you are unable to perform the exercise, do not get discouraged. There are workouts here for you too. Just do them to the best of your ability with help.
<b>Level 2</b> The ability to attempt any of the given exercises.	Attempting to try the exercise to the best of your ability means that you and your brain want to push and challenge your body. That's awesome!
<b>Level 3</b> The ability to perform or try the exercise with the physical or verbal assistance from someone else.	If you can, do the exercise with the assistance of another. That's great!
<b>Level 4</b> The ability to perform the exercise without someone's physical assistance, or with no assistance at all.	If you are able to perform the exercise to the best of your ability, that's awesome! With some repetition, you will be a level 5 in no time.
<b>Level 5</b> The ability to perform every exercise with no assistance, and showing progress each week.	If you are at a level 5, you're a pro. You are aware of just how to do the exercise and can do them on your own.

Now, begin applying the levels in the chart on the previous page to examples of different exercises. Skill levels will be noted by a number by each workout. If your skill level number is listed, do the exercise to the best of your ability. If your level number is not listed, there will be another exercise for you to try directly below that exercise.



Courtesy of [www.fibromyalgia-natural-relief.com/yoga-positions-for-chair-yoga-its-not-just-for-seniors](http://www.fibromyalgia-natural-relief.com/yoga-positions-for-chair-yoga-its-not-just-for-seniors)

Yoga is an activity that includes controlled breathing, meditation and specific body postures, as seen in the picture above. If you can do the yoga shown in the picture above in standing position, you'll maximize your results given your capability.

Chair yoga is yoga as defined above, but seated. For those of you who cannot perform yoga while standing, perform the exercises sitting.

**Levels 1 & 2** - If you are unable to perform the exercises, do the yoga with assistance. Be sure you and whoever is helping you knows how your body can and cannot move. Do not push too hard, or overexert yourself.

**Levels 3, 4, 5** - Perform the activity to the best of your ability. Remember try- to keep a clear mind while doing the activity. Do not over think things, just be in the moment and feel good about the exercises that you are doing.

**All Levels:** Exercising the mind, lungs and diaphragm!

*There are many instructional videos on the internet for chair yoga and other seated exercises like the routine shown above. You can also go on YouTube and search chair workouts, or type in the name of your disability + workouts.*



**Meditation** helps many people to have a more active and healthy lifestyle, by allowing them to relax. An essential part of meditation is breathing. Taking fuller and longer deep breaths really opens and exercises our minds, lungs and diaphragms, the muscle under our lungs that helps us take deep breaths. People take this important step in life

for granted. Many of us breathe subconsciously, and rarely do we ever think about it. However, thinking about it and doing it for short periods of time each day may help you form new habits in deep breathing. Try doing this for ten to even thirty minutes per day. Meditation can be found on page 24 in chapter 4: Living in the Moment.

*For each workout, refer back to the level chart to pair the level with the workout that works best for you.*



## The Soup Can Workout

This workout is for those with a lot of mobility. No weights? No problem! Instead of weights, you can use soup cans!

Do 5 sets for each exercise. The exercises below are for **Levels: 3,4,5.**

### ***Soup Can Squats:***

- ➔ Hold a soup can in each hand
- ➔ Stand with your feet apart so they are in line with your hips
- ➔ Keep your head straight
- ➔ Bend your knees and squat down like you are sitting on a chair
- ➔ Keep your shoulders back and your hands facing forward
- ➔ As you stand up, reach your arms out to the side reach your arms all the way up over your head to the sky and rise up onto your toes
- ➔ Hold for 2-3 seconds before lowering back down again into the squat

Repeat 15-25 times for each rep

### ***Side Lunge with Soup Scissors:***

- ➔ Hold a soup can in each hand
- ➔ Start with your feet spread apart wider than your shoulders
- ➔ Point toes forward and stand tall
- ➔ Bend your right knee and keep your left leg straight.
- ➔ Bring your hips back, like you are going to sit in a chair
- ➔ Reach your right arm forward and your left arm back as far as possible. Keep your arms straight and do not bend your elbows.
- ➔ Come back up by squeezing your glutes, and stand tall like you did at the start.
- ➔ Alternate from one side to the other; 10 times each
- ➔ Stack two cans on top of each other
- ➔ Stand on one leg, keeping your knee slightly bent. The other leg should not touch the floor. You may find it easier to rest the bottom of your foot right below the knee of the standing leg.
- ➔ Keep your eyes on the soup cans at all times and slowly reach your right arm out to the side. Don't take your eyes off the soup cans!
- ➔ Bring your right arm back to center (still looking at cans) and switch the cans to your left hand
- ➔ Switch from side to side for 3 full passes
- ➔ Switch legs and repeat for another 3 full passes (this is a one count)

Do this 8 times each

### **Soup Can Teaser:**

Hold a soup can in each hand

- ➔ Lay down on your back and put your hands in the air
- ➔ Keep your shoulders forward, but relaxed
- ➔ Loosely bend your knees, and press the heels of your feet into the ground
- ➔ Take a deep breath and as you let it out, rise up to a full sit up. Move slowly.  
If you are on a hard floor, or have any spinal issues, then rise only a little bit off the floor.

### **Criss-Cross a Can of Sauce:**

- ➔ Hold a can of soup in one hand
- ➔ Sit on the bony part of your bottom with your legs loosely bent and lean back a little. You will be seated in a "V" position with your back straight. Holding your abdominal muscles tight will help you hold this pose. (If this is not comfortable for your lower back, sit up straighter. You can also sit on a couple of rolled up towels or blankets.)
- ➔ Pull one knee up and reach the soup can under the leg. Grab it with the other hand.
- ➔ Pull the other knee up and reach the soup can under the leg.  
Grab the can with the first hand.
- ➔ Move slowly and repeat. You should be able to hold your abdominals tight the entire time.  
Count 10-15 passes, take a mini break, and repeat for 4 more sets  
Don't forget to breathe!

### **Soup Can Superman:**

- ➔ Hold a can of soup in each hand
- ➔ Lie on your stomach, and pull your abdominals in tight. You should still be able to breathe.  
Your head should be resting on the floor
- ➔ Lift your head and chest, arms and legs
- ➔ Your legs should be out long behind you and your arms are stretched out in front of you.  
You will look like Superman does when he is flying.
- ➔ Use your back to open your arms out to the side like airplane wings
- ➔ Use your back to move your arms to the sides of your body.  
Your hands will be near your hips.
- ➔ Try to lift your chest a little higher
- ➔ Slowly lower your back down as you move your arms to stretch back out in front of you.

Repeat 10-15 times in each set.

### **Levels 1,2**

*Feel the stretch. When you're talking to the person who's helping you work out, let them know when to stop the stretch. You know your body; they are just helping. Make sure to communicate clearly so you don't get hurt. Assistance can be provided by family, friends, caregivers or anyone who is willing to help you.*

🍷 Laying down flat on your back, have the assistant help you to stretch to your range of motion. Have them pick up your legs so your knees are at a 90-degree angle, and push both legs slowly towards your body.

🍷 Laying down again flat on your back, have your assistant help you to pick up your leg so your knee is at a 90-degree angle, and push one leg at a time slowly in towards your body, and back out again.

🍎 Laying down flat on your back, have two assistants help you- one to hold your feet flat on floor with legs bent, and the other assisting you in holding up your back and making sure your neck is stable. Your upper body will be brought up to your knees, if possible. Try contracting your muscles while you are at the top. Slowly come back down to laying position.

🍎 Lay flat on your back with both legs bent at a 90-degree angle, have your assistant place your hands on your knees, and begin moving your knees outwards away from your body.

🍎 Lay flat on your back with your legs straight and relaxed. Have your assistant bring your legs up until your legs are in an upright position, with your legs as straight as they can be. Next, have your assistant rotate your legs from side to side. At each side, hold for ten counts before rotating back to the center, then repeat on the opposite side.



## The Pillow Workout

Got a pillow? It can also be used for exercising! If you would like to add extra weight, find a book or something that can go in place of the pillow. Adding weight will make things more advanced. Do 5 sets for each exercise.

### **The Pillow Press:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Hold pillow out in front of your chest with elbows bent
- ➔ Raise the pillow above your head and lower back down
- ➔ Repeat the exercise 20 times each set, moving slowly on your way up and the again slowly on your way back down.

#### **Levels 1,2**

*Sitting straight, have your assistant help you grip the pillow, and assist you through the pillow press. Do as many as you are comfortable with.*

### **Pillow Squats:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Holding the pillow behind your head
- ➔ Hold your feet apart so they are aligned with your shoulders
- ➔ Keep your head straight
- ➔ Bend knees and go down like you are sitting on a chair
- ➔ Come back up like you are straightening out your body, thrusting your hips forward, squeezing your glutes.

Repeat this process 10 times for each set

#### **Levels 1,2**

*Laying down flat on your back, have your assistant help you to stretch to your range of motion. Have them pick up your legs so your knee is at a 90-degree angle, and push both legs slowly towards your body. Repeat this process 10-12 times, or as many times as you are comfortable with.*

### **Pillow High Knees:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Begin by holding the pillow flat in front of your chest
- ➔ Stand straight and look forward
- ➔ Bring one knee up to the pillow and then let it down
- ➔ Bring the other knee up to touch the pillow and back let it down
- ➔ Repeat this process 10 times for each set

## **Levels 1,2**

*Laying down flat on your back, have your assistant help you by picking up your leg so your knee is at a 90-degree angle, and push one leg at a time slowly in towards your body, and back out again. Keep repeating, one leg then the other.*

### **Pillow Strikes:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Begin standing straight holding the pillow
- ➔ Bring the pillow up and out to your right side
- ➔ Swing the pillow to the left (Imagine you are swinging a baseball bat)
- ➔ Now challenge yourself and try the opposite side. Do 20 times for each side in each set

#### **Levels 1,2**

*Sitting up straight, have your assistant help you grip the pillow, and slowly strike to the opposite side of your starting position. This is stretching your torso and back out. Repeat 20 times on each side or as many times as you're comfortable with.*

### **Pillow Lunges:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

#### **Make sure you have enough space to do this exercise**

- ➔ Keeps your upper body straight, holding the pillow to your chest
- ➔ Keep your head and chin up (look straight ahead)- stare at something ahead and don't take your eyes off of it (this helps keep you balance during a lunge)
- ➔ Step forward with one leg and push the pillow out in front of you
- ➔ Lower your back knee towards the floor but do not touch the floor
- ➔ Your front knee and ankle should be in a straight line. In other words, your front knee should not be in front of, or behind, your ankle.
- ➔ Keep your weight in your heels when you do this exercise and as you push back up to your starting position, bring the pillow back to your chest.
- ➔ Alternate each leg to be the front leg.
- ➔ Repeat 20 times in each set

#### **Levels 1,2**

*Laying down flat on your back, have your assistant help you by picking up your legs so your knees are at a 90-degree angle. Push one leg at a time slowly in towards your body, hold a 10 second count, and back down again. Keep repeating, one leg then the other, for as many times as you're comfortable with.*

### **Press the Pillow:**

#### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Lay on your back on the floor
- ➔ Have your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor
- ➔ Fold your pillow
- ➔ Place folded pillow in between knees
- ➔ Push both knees toward the pillow holding for 5 second holds
- ➔ Release and begin again

Repeat 10 times in each set

## **Levels 1, 2**

*Have your assistant help you with this by holding their hands on your lower legs away from your knees, pushing your legs towards the pillow with two fingers. If you are able, try to contract your leg muscles in toward the pillow while your assistant is guiding them through the motion.*

## **Work Out to Gain Muscle Tone and Strength**

**Any of these workouts can be done with soup cans, dumbbells, wrist/ankle weights, books or any kind of weight you can get your hands on. You can also use thera-bands for many workouts for added resistance.**

## **Abdominal Exercises: Crunches and Sit-ups**

Do 5 reps of each from below.

### **Levels 4,5**

- ➔ Lay with your back on the floor, knees bent, and the bottom of your feet on the floor, feet should be aligned with your hips.
- ➔ Place your hands behind your head with your thumbs behind your ears. Do not interlock your fingers – that will put stress on your neck and you do not want to use your arms or hands. Don't pull your head.
- ➔ Elbows should be out to the sides, but shoulders should be relaxed.
- ➔ Tilt your chin slightly down towards your chest, but leaving a few inches in between the two.
- ➔ Tighten and pull your abdominals in toward your back like you are sucking your stomach in, but contracting your muscles at the same time.
- ➔ Come up off of the floor with your head, neck and shoulders raised. Your mid back stays on the floor. (This is a crunch.)
- ➔ Coming up off the floor this time, unlike the crunch, this time your back also leaves the floor.
- ➔ When coming up off the floor, your chest should meet your knees, chin above knees. (This is a sit-up.)
- ➔ Hold for a 1.2.3 count and slowly lower yourself back down.

*Repeat this 10 times; this is 10 reps. Do as many as possible in each set. If you do not wish to/can't be on the ground you could also do the same movements on a ball, with your feet on the floor and your knees at a 90-degree angle.*

### **Levels 1,2,3**

*Have your assistant help you with this workout. You should have two people assist you on this one- one to hold your legs in place, and the other to help you lift your body while not letting your neck drop. Try squeezing your abdominal muscles, or think about it in the least.*

## **Cardio**

### **Levels 2,3,4,5**

Try playing wheelchair basketball. It's a fun activity that will raise your heart rate, endurance and it might even increase your social circle. To get good at throwing and catching, try taking medicine balls, throwing them straight up and catching them. You can also buddy up with someone else and do tosses with the medicine ball. Another activity is to throw the medicine ball at the ground, someone else picks it up and tosses it back to you. Repeating all these processes until your body wants to quit will improve your agility. Level 2, if you are unable to do cardio, refer to level 1.

### **Level 1**

*Have your assistant put your feet on a stationary peddling machine and have them move your legs in the motion of peddling a bicycle. No stationary peddles? Rest your feet on your assistant's hands like they are the peddles, and have them move their hands to move your legs in a peddling motion. This is good help! If no assistance is available, sit this one out.*

## **Squats**

### **Levels 3,4,5**

- ➔ Placing feet shoulder width apart, with your body straightened holding your chin up, looking forward, knees slightly bent.
- ➔ Lower yourself like you are sitting in a chair.
- ➔ Hold for 1.2.3 count.
- ➔ Come back up to your starting position. Some find it easier to do this when they place their hands on their hips, others find it's easier if they hold their arms straight out in front of them.
- ➔ Repeat 10-30 reps.

**Level 1,2** - Follow pillow squats exercise with assistance.

### **“Is That Really Me?” Benefits You Can See**

When most of us begin to increase our physical activity, we think that we will see results right away; this does not usually happen. In order to stay motivated and on track with your fitness plan; it is important to understand that living a healthy lifestyle is not a passing fad, but rather a lifelong commitment. Change takes time. After you lose those first few pounds, it does take time to keep losing weight. Our bodies just do not continue dropping the pounds at the same rate over time. If you lose three pounds every week for the first month, but then only lose a pound each week for the next month, do not give up. You are doing great. It will happen. Just think about how many years you haven't been exercising and eating like you should be. When you do not exercise, or lack a steady exercise routine, and eat poorly, the pounds pile on, your energy levels take a nosedive and your muscles start to disappear. Exercise and eat well, and soon enough, you may start feeling and looking better!



### **Flexibility or Stretching:**

Flexibility is key, for a proper range of motion. When you stretch it promotes blood flow, helps your muscles to expand which, in turn, makes it easier to move. Increased flexibility also helps you move better during your workout/activity routine. This will increase your overall fitness and maximize your workout results. If you cannot stretch on your own, ask for assistance. Stretching is important for everyone, no matter what!

### **How to Prevent Injury During Your Workout**

#### **Warm Up & Stretch**

It is important to always warm up before each and every workout. It will get your body to a warm state, which can help prevent injuries during your workout. Stretching after you are warmed up will ensure your muscles get enough blood flow and give you better range of motion. A warm up is anything aerobic; it gets your heart rate pumping. Pushing your manual wheelchair, walking quickly and throwing punches into the air are great ways to warm up. Just like you have to warm up your voice before singing, or your car before driving, you must warm up your body before working out!

After your workout, don't skip that stretch! Your body is still warm. This too, is important to once again give your body proper blood flow, range of motion and it also will help relieve muscle tension. You can look up some basic stretches, but be sure they are safe and work for you.



## Hydration

Trying to exercise without drinking water before and during your workout is like trying to drive a car without gas. Staying hydrated will help your body get the most out of every workout.

If you drink at least eight, 8oz glasses of water per day, you should be well hydrated. If you want to challenge yourself to drink that much water in a day, get a half gallon container and fill it with water.

Did you know that drinking water at the right times during the day maximizes its effectiveness on your body? It's true!

- Two glasses of water in the morning helps to wake up your organs.
- One glass of water 30 minutes before each meal will help you digest your food.
- One glass of water before a bath or shower will help lower your blood pressure.
- One glass of water before bed will help you keep your heart healthy and avoid a stroke or heart attack.

## Nutrition

As they say, food is fuel. In order to give your body the fuel and energy it needs for a workout, you need to make sure you are getting the proper nutrients. Eating a meal high in carbohydrates at least one to three hours before a work out, but never within the hour, and a meal high in protein after a workout will help your body stay strong throughout your routine. Carbohydrates give you energy to get you through a workout and the protein you eat right after your workout will help to replenish your body-especially your muscles.

## Rest

Avoid over-exercising and take at least one rest day each week. You should also take a break if you feel extremely sore, exhausted, or if you are in a lot of pain. Listen to your body! After working hard, muscles need time to rest and recuperate before the next workout.

## Injury Protocol

If you hurt yourself, stop working out, rest, elevate, and put ice on the injured area for 20 minutes, then follow it with heat for another 20 minutes to help relax the muscle, keep alternating between ice and heat for 20 minutes each.

If the injury is giving you any pain or discomfort after 2-3 days, get medical attention, and call your doctor. If the injury is more severe, get medical attention right away. Be sure not to walk on, or use the injured areas to prevent further injury. You can get back to your workouts when small injuries feel completely better; but for more serious injuries, it's best to get your doctor's approval before starting to exercise again.

**Obesity is also a growing threat to national security - a surprising 27% of young Americans are too overweight to serve in our military. Approximately 15,000 potential recruits fail their physicals every year because they are unfit.**

## Chapter 2 Summary

- ➡ **Aerobic / Cardiovascular Training:**  
These are activities that increase your heart rate and may cause your body to sweat.
- ➡ **Anaerobic / Strength Training:** By forcing muscles to work very hard for short periods of time, you are able to increase muscle strength.
- ➡ Stretching helps to improve flexibility, range of motion, and increases blood flow to muscles.
- ➡ It is important to do a combination of aerobic and anaerobic exercises to stay healthy.
- ➡ It is important to warm up before each stretch and workout to make sure your muscles get enough blood and nutrients in order to be able to exercise.
- ➡ Stretching your muscles after your warm up increases your flexibility while giving you a longer and leaner appearance.
- ➡ Staying hydrated will help your body get the most out of every workout.
- ➡ If you get hurt while walking, or during a workout follow the Injury Protocol.

**Notes:**



## Chapter 3

# Healthy and Nutritious, Being Active and Eating Delicious

### **An Apple A Day: Let's Talk About Nutrition**

People used to believe that an apple a day would help keep the doctor away; but what we know now is that it takes a healthy lifestyle, proper nutrition and a regular exercise routine to stay well. We also know that compared to people without disabilities, people with disabilities have an increased risk of obesity, high blood pressure diabetes and many other secondary health conditions.

Good nutrition is one of the cornerstones to a healthy lifestyle. Preparing well-balanced meals for yourself and others may also help lower your risk of developing some of the secondary health conditions mentioned above. When you begin making healthy food choices and start preparing some of your meals from scratch, it can seem time consuming and overwhelming. Here are a few healthy quick recipes you might want to try. Some of these recipes are from our first guide, *Eat Well. Live Well. Be Well.* Get your hands on a copy today!

### **Never Too Early to Start**

The importance of providing nutrition services to infants, children and adults with developmental disabilities and special health care needs was addressed in a position statement from the American Dietetic Association. It stated that nutrition services are essential components of comprehensive care for those with developmental disabilities and special health care needs.

Nutrition services should be provided throughout the life cycle in health care, educational, and vocational programs in a manner that is interdisciplinary, family centered, community based, and culturally competent. People with developmental disabilities and special health care needs frequently have nutrition problems, which include poor feeding skills, dependence (partial or total) on external or parenteral nutrition, or medication-nutrient interaction. Poor health habits, limited access to services, and long-term use of multiple medications are considered risk factors for additional health problems. Nationally credentialed dietetics professionals are best prepared to provide appropriate nutrition information as it pertains to wellness and the maintenance of good health and quality of lifestyle. The responsibility of the dietetic professional is to assess the clinical, biochemical, and anthropometric measurements, as well as dietary concerns and feeding skills. It is recommended that medical nutrition therapy be a reimbursable service as part of the comprehensive health care for people with developmental disabilities and special health care needs. (*A Good Beginning: Nutrition During Pregnancy*, Alyce Thomas, RD, Perinatal Nutrition Consultant, St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center)

### **Pre-Work Out Snacks**

If you chose to eat before a workout, a pre-workout snack should be healthy and light, and eaten within 1-3 hours before your workout. The benefit to eating before a work out is gaining more energy to have a great workout. Though there are benefits to pre-work out snacks,

In case you have an allergy or sensitivity to peanut butter and dairy, here are some food substitutions. Instead of peanut butter substitute sunflower butter, cashew butter, almond butter, or soy butter. For milk and dairy, try almond milk, coconut milk, rice milk or soymilk.

remember to count the calories as part of your daily intake, if you don't count calories, just be mindful of what and how much you are eating.

Here are some suggestions for pre-workout snacks:

- 🍏 Oats in milk
- 🍏 Greek Yogurt and Fruit smoothie
- 🍏 Peanut Butter Apples
- 🍏 Dried Fruit and Cottage Cheese
- 🍏 Hardboiled Eggs and Toast
- 🍏 Peanut Butter Toast
- 🍏 An Apple

The recipes in the Eat Well. Live Well. Be Well. guide were a huge hit and we are often asked to make them again. A few of the recipes found in the sections below are from our first guide. We have also added a couple new ones. In this section, the Yogurt Parfait and the Nutty Chocolate Bar both make wonderful pre-workout snacks!

## • Recipe •

### The Nutty Chocolate Bar

- |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 cup in total of your favorite nuts<br><i>(We like using a mixture of cashews, almonds, walnuts, Brazil nuts, and occasionally peanuts)</i> | ¼ cup of organic shredded unsweetened coconut                                                         |
| 1 handful of your favorite berries<br><i>(We use cranberries)</i>                                                                            | 2-3 tablespoons of honey nut butter<br><i>(We rotate between peanut, sunflower and almond butter)</i> |
|                                                                                                                                              | Half to a whole baking bar of dark chocolate                                                          |

#### Preparation

1. Mix the nuts, berries, and coconut together
2. Heat 2-3 tablespoons of honey on the stove top until warm and non-crystallized, should be a liquid consistency
3. Add honey into the mixture, mix in well
4. Take one cup of peanut butter, almond butter, sunflower butter, whatever you'd like to use for the mixture
5. In a square baking dish fill in the square, press the mixture down evenly
6. Melt some dark chocolate, preferably a higher percentage between 70-95%. Spread over the Nutty Bars
7. Melt some extra nut butter and drizzle a pretty design over them

### Yogurt Parfait

- 1 cup of yogurt
- ½ cup of granola
- ½ cup of berries or 1 sliced bananas

#### Preparation

In a 4-ounce juice glass layer yogurt, granola and fruit in layers until the glass is full.

### Post-Workout Snacks

Eating food high in protein will help with muscle recovery. Recovery helps your body prevent injury. When we workout we sweat, when we sweat we lose water and must replenish ourselves with fluids, such as water. We also need to get proper nutrition as well. The best way to take in protein after a workout is through liquids, because they absorb into your body faster. Drink a protein shake. Fitness experts recommend that you eat a protein rich snack within 20-30 minutes of completing a workout.

There are different types of protein powders on the market, talk to your doctor, or nutritionist to see which one might work best for you.

- 🍏 Tuna salad and crackers - Use little to no mayonnaise on the tuna with light pepper; that way, it will remain low fat and tasty.
- 🍏 Hummus and Carrots
- 🍏 Peanut (or another) butter and carrots
- 🍏 Take pieces of celery about 3-4 inches long and fill with a nut butter or low fat cream cheese and add raisins or dried cherries in the filling.
- 🍏 Rice cake with peanut or another butter
- 🍏 Pears and low fat cheese

## ENERGY BUILDERS:

Avocado	Brown Rice	Hard Cheese	Chicken	Brussels sprouts
Cantaloupe & Cottage Cheese		Bananas	Lean Beef	Beans
Broccoli	Collard Greens	Eggs	Flax Seeds	Sweet Potatoes
Oatmeal	Oranges	Peas	Spinach	Kale
Salmon	Soybeans	Tuna	Turkey	Quinoa
Wheat germ	Coconut Milk	Almond Milk	Almonds	Walnuts
Sprouted Bread	Peanut, Cashew, Soy, Sunflower or Almond Butter			

The foods listed above are not only great snack ideas, but good to pair up with your meals as well. Eating three meals per day which include a protein, fat, and veggie with water to wash it down, plus, two snacks is the average recommended daily intake for most adults. Note: One snack should be after breakfast and the other should be after lunch.

The good news is that starting a healthy lifestyle means you get to eat MORE over the course of a typical day than you probably do now, as long as they are healthy food choices and eaten in moderation.

## ENERGY DRAINING FOODS: Eliminate These Empty Calories

Artificial sweeteners	Soda	Corn syrup (HFCS)	Frosting
Juices	Sports drink	Energy Drinks	White bread
Nicotine	Alcohol	Refined sugars	Fried foods
Cereal	Cereal Bars	Most Protein Bars	

### Sports Drinks: Do You Need Them?

Are sports drinks necessary if you are working out? No, not at all. Nothing is more hydrating than water. Generally, a person should be consuming 4 to 6 ounces of water for every 15 minutes they exercise. Sports drinks are also high in calories. Consider this: if you work out for 30 minutes and then drink three bottles of sports drinks, you are consuming far more calories than you burned during your workout. If your goal is weight loss, you are not going to help yourself at all. There is no substitute for water if you want to stay hydrated and not load your diet with empty calories! Do not be fooled, sports drinks are no good. They are chemicals and contain a ton of sugar that just does your body no good. The nutrition is in the good food choices you make - not the sports drink you guzzle down.

Exercise and healthy eating need to occur together if you want to see dramatic improvements in your fitness or weight loss plans. Many people think that exercising is enough to compensate for an unhealthy diet, but that is not typically the case. It is important to still watch what you eat in order to stay healthy. Here are a few healthy meal suggestions. Some, but not all of them can be found in the first guide, *Eat Well. Live Well. Be Well.* It's still not too late to get yourself a copy!

### Notes:

## •Recipe•

### Three Can Chili

- |                                                                               |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 can beans, low-sodium undrained<br>(pinto, kidney, red, or black 15 ounces) | 1 can crushed tomatoes, undrained (15 ounces)<br>chili powder (to taste) |
| 1 can corn, drained<br>(15 ounces, or 10-ounce package of frozen corn)        |                                                                          |

#### Preparation

1. Place the contents of all 3 cans into a pan.
2. Add chili powder to taste.
3. Stir to mix
4. Continue to stir over medium heat until heated thoroughly.

## •Recipe•

### Beefy Pasta

- |                                         |                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  | 1 white onion peeled and chopped, or already chopped onion from the store         |
| 1½ lbs of lean ground beef              |                                                                                   |
| 2 jars of tomato sauce                  |                                                                                   |
| 2 cans of crushed tomatoes (low sodium) | 1 box of either protein pasta, spinach pasta, zucchini pasta or whole wheat pasta |

#### Preparation

1. Boil water in a large pot on the stove
2. Add in the pasta once it reaches a rapid boil and lower the heat to medium

#### Beefy Sauce

3. Place a pan on another burner and sauté the onions with 1 tablespoon of the oil for about 1 minute
4. Add another tablespoon of oil, add the ground beef and cook until browned all the way through, approximately 5 minutes.  
As it is cooking, break the beef into small pieces so it looks ground up.
5. Turn to low heat
6. Drain the water from the canned tomatoes and pour in the tomatoes to the beef
7. Drain water from pasta once that is cooked, follow the directions on the box for time
8. Add the beefy sauce to the pasta
9. Add the jars of sauce to your liking. *(We like ours saucy so we use 2 jars, others like their pasta to have just enough sauce, so they may use 1 to 1 ½ jars)*
10. Mix all together, and serve.

## •Recipe•

### Vanilla Chia Pudding

- |                                              |                               |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 8 tablespoons chia seeds                     | a pinch of sea salt *optional |
| 2 cup coconut milk                           | 1 tablespoon honey            |
| 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract,<br>or to taste |                               |

#### Preparation

1. In a bowl, combine the chia seeds, coconut milk, vanilla extract and sea salt if desired
2. Give it a good stir until well blended
3. Refrigerate for at least one hour  
*(We like it best after it's been refrigerated for a day or two)*
4. Once you're ready to eat, stir in the honey  
*(Use less honey if you don't prefer sweet things)*
5. Top with your favorite fruits, nuts, or seeds.

#### Chia seeds have great nutritional value.

They are small like sesame seeds and come from a flowering plant in the mint family, but they do not taste like mint at all. When you add chia seeds to a liquid, they expand a little bit. Chia seeds are high in fiber and have other nutrients that are said to help brain functions. They also help to keep your hair nice and healthy, are full of antioxidants, and help level out blood sugar levels. These precious little seeds are good all around!

#### Notes:

**Put yourself in a position to push yourself a little bit each day.**

## **Be Creative: Designing an Active Lifestyle**

Traditional exercise and organized sports are great ways to stay active. Regardless of your shape, size, or disability, daily physical activity is known to add years to your life. Many people are not fans of exercise and sports. Here are some easy ways to increase your daily activity level without really thinking about it. Making small changes to your familiar routines can make a big difference. Everyone is unique in their own way, nothing in life is a one size fits all. You know your body and to what extent you can push yourself. Try your hardest to be as active as possible; each day is different. One day you may only have enough energy to just make it out of bed and get dressed; then the next day you may be able to do more activity. The more you do daily for yourself, the more stamina you may build. Each step you take is for the long haul. Make changes in your life each and every day, for you create what is and will be your very own unique masterpiece – you!

Perhaps this list will help get your creative juices flowing and help you to be more active:

- Take the stairs, if you are able, rather than the elevator or escalator.
- Park your car a little bit further away than you would normally. This may mean only one more spot down, but every little change makes a big difference.
- Clean your home while focusing on muscle groups, like your arms, back and legs. When you're cleaning you are moving and stretching your body in ways that you don't do all the time. Moving your arm from the shoulder while dusting, for example, will work your arm and shoulder. Remember our great-grandparents did not stay fit by going to a gym; they stayed fit by doing everyday activities.

• Pick up gardening or weeding as a hobby. New research has found that gardening is an effective way to exercise. Researchers at Kansas State University determined that gardening is a form of "moderate intensity" exercise. When you garden, you are moving your body. If you work fast, or long enough, your heart rate will probably go up. That's aerobic activity right there without even trying! In addition to the physical benefits gardening, it is also a proven stress reliever. An experiment published in the *Journal of Health Psychology* compared gardening to reading as a stress-relieving activity; test subjects that gardening experienced a more significant decrease in stress when compared to the subjects that were assigned to read. If you don't have the ability to garden at your home, look into opportunities in your area to participate in a community garden. A community garden is a plot of land in a community that is tended to by you and a group of people. Community gardens can help expand your social



People with disabilities may obtain a Free Access Pass for all National Parks. For more information, check out the National Park Service website <http://www.nps.gov/findapark/passes.htm>

network by meeting people who also love plants.

- Plant your own fruits and vegetables. This will help to avoid pesticides and other contaminants that are on a lot of fruits and veggies these days.

Strawberries, cherries, pears, apples, peaches, nectarines, grapes, potatoes, celery, spinach, lettuce and sweet bell peppers are known in the food industry as the "Dirty Dozen." More than others, these foods that are best eaten if organic, and if not organic, try looking for locally grown items. Check out [organic.org](http://organic.org) for more information.

- Limit your screen time in front of the TV, computer, phone, or tablet. Never sit in one spot for longer than an hour without moving some.

- While sitting at a desk or on the couch, make some sort of movement like arm lifts, squeezing and contracting all of your muscles, holding the squeeze for a minute, letting go and repeating until you get up.

- Walk your dog. For people who have trouble making time for themselves, getting into a daily dog walking habit is a good goal. Taking the dog for a walk may seem like less of a chore than going for a walk. Perhaps there's a dog park in your area where you can walk your dog and meet other people in the process.

Staying active is the goal! Any activity is better than no activity, whether it be physical or working a puzzle to exercise your brain. So let's get moving!

## Go Outside

Going outside can increase your overall happiness and health.

**Vitamin D:** Vitamin D is perhaps the most obvious reason to get outside, since the sun supplies us with best source of Vitamin D. It is essential to maintaining a healthy immune system. If you want your body to function properly, get outside.

**Improved Sleep:** Sleep patterns are regulated by an internal body clock called the circadian rhythm. The circadian rhythm is naturally tied to the sun's schedule. Spending too much time inside – away from natural light and with increased exposure to artificial light, can change your circadian rhythm and make it harder to sleep.

**Fresh Air:** According to the California Air Resources Board "indoor air-pollutants are 25-62% greater than outside levels and this difference poses a serious risk to health." Such health risks include heart disease, lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, and asthmatic attacks. A NASA study found common houseplants can improve indoor air quality. Some of these plants include: aloe, snake plant, golden pothos, and chrysanthemum.

**Exercise:** It's hard to go outside without exercising. Even a relaxing walk has big health benefits, especially compared to being inside and doing nothing.

**Improved Mental Health:** Spending time in nature has been linked to improved attention spans (short and long term), boosts in serotonin (the "feel good" chemical in your brain") and such time also increases activity in the parts of the brain responsible for empathy, emotional stability, and love. If you're feeling down, get outside.



## ***Special Considerations for Exercising Outside in the Summer:***

**Sun Protection** - Don't forget to protect yourself from the sun: Wear wide-brimmed hats, always apply water-resistant sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and reapply every two hours. You do not need to buy anything over SPF35; they cost more and offer no more protection.

**Summer Pests** - If you find a tick on you, remove it with a warm, soapy washcloth. How? Keep a washcloth on the tick and begin circling counter clockwise. Never just pull it out, the body can break apart from the tick's head, and stay in your body. This is bad. Call your doctor if you get a tick.

**Hydrate & Nourish** - When you are out in the sun you need to stay hydrated with plenty of water and nourish your body with fruits and vegetables.

### **Listen to your body.**

Take frequent breaks in the shade if you feel tired, or weak.

Heat stroke is a serious health condition that requires immediate medical attention. Call 9-1-1 and get to a cooler place right away if you experience these symptoms: Listen to your body if something seriously seems wrong.

- warm, dry skin with no sweating
- strong and rapid pulse
- confusion and/or unconsciousness
- high fever
- throbbing headaches
- nausea, vomiting or both

## ***Special Considerations for Exercising Outside in the Winter:***

### **Stay Warm, Stay Safe.**

Layer up to stay warm. Try wearing clothes that also let sweat escape so you stay as dry as possible.

### **Layer Correctly.**

Layering with cotton in the winter is a bad idea. Cotton tends to get wet fast, and it also stays wet; it's no good in the cold. Your first layer should be pulling moisture away from your skin, this type of clothing can usually be found in sports clothing sections where you shop, or sporty type clothing stores. Next, add a layer of fleece and if you still need more, put on a thin water-proof layer.

Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below 95°F and your body can't produce enough energy to keep your core temperature high enough for it to continue functioning normally. Avoid getting hypothermia by dressing correctly.

### **Symptoms can include:**

- lack of coordination
- mental confusion
- slowed reactions
- slurred speech
- cold feet and hands
- shivering
- sleepiness

### **Hydrate.**

It's been said before, but don't forget to drink water when exercising. This goes for cold weather too.

### Tracking Your Progress from the start:

- 🍏 Take down your weight if you can.
- 🍏 If you want to get specific results, use a tape measure to measure each section of your body, like waist, chest, arms, etc.
- 🍏 Invest in a smart scale- it will tell you how much you weight, body fat percentage and more
- 🍏 Track your weight and measurement numbers daily, weekly or even monthly. This is up to you.
- 🍏 Take pictures for each new month. You will see big, small or no changes at all each week, but by the end of the year, you'll see the changes.
- 🍏 Invest in a step/roll tracking device, or download a fitness app to your smartphone.

**The annual cost of being overweight is \$524 for women and \$432 for men.**

### Chapter 3 Summary

- ➡ We used to believe that an apple a day will help in keeping the doctor away; but we now know that it takes a healthy lifestyle with good nutrition and a regular exercise routine to avoid many health conditions.
- ➡ The benefit to eating before a work out is gaining more energy to have a great workout. After a workout, eating food high in protein will help with muscle recovery. Recovery helps your body prevent injury and gets you your results.
- ➡ Traditional exercise and organized sports are great ways to stay active. Many people aren't fans of exercise and sports, but there are easy ways to increase your daily activity level without really thinking about it. Making small changes to your familiar routines can make a big difference.
- ➡ Going outside can increase your overall happiness and health. Do not forget to be prepared for seasonal weather and enjoy your outdoor activities!
- ➡ Track your progress! Small changes may go unnoticed unless you are tracking it. Take a monthly picture of yourself, record your weight weekly, invest in a step/roll tracking device or download a fitness app to your smartphone.

**Notes:**



## Chapter 4

# Mind, Body and Spirit: It's All Connected

### Living in the Moment

People who are forgiving of their setbacks and have the confidence to get back on track with their goals will have much success in achieving them.

Being mindful is being totally present in a particular moment- mind body and spirit. Even though it's not always easy to do, sometimes it is healthy to put our long held worries and stresses aside for a few moments to focus on right now-your breath, your heart beat, the world around you, the sounds you hear and the things you feel. It can often help to reduce stress and anxiety levels a bit.

Meditation is another way to reduce stress levels. Meditation is the practice of gaining awareness of your mind, body and spirit by being aware of the deep breaths you are taking, fully inhaling and slowly exhaling. Being in that moment alone with yourself, thinking and visualizing things you love, and things you enjoy. Meditate in a quiet room with no distractions. Silence your phone and other electronic devices. In addition to silence, some people might also prefer to mediate in a dark room with only a small light that doesn't fully brighten the room.

**Example:** Set the mood by lighting a candle you like, or having a scent you love fill the room. Using essential oils by rubbing them on your hands or dabbing a dot on your chest is another great way to set a relaxing tone. Now close your eyes and visualize sitting on a tropical island, where the ocean is calm and you only hear silence and the sound of the water washing up on shore, and you are just laying back and listening to the sound of the ocean and perfect silence. Take a big deep breath in, hold for two seconds, and now slowly exhale. Keep doing this anywhere from 10-30 minutes. You will know you are done when you are very relaxed and a calm sense has come over you.

If you are mediating in a shared space, be considerate of the sensory needs of others. Some people don't react well to changes in lighting and/or may have sensitivities to certain scents and fragrances.

### Stress is a Mess: How Are You Feeling?

#### What is stress?

Stress is your body's way of reacting to a traumatic unexpected situation that is often out of your control. Stress can make us irritable, nauseous and develop headaches, migraines and even anxiety. All of this stress can lead to heart attacks and can worsen existing conditions and illnesses.

If you are stressed and feel like nothing is going your way, you might focus on that and feel worse. On the other hand, if you are feeling well and generally content your stress level will probably decrease. Remember that any form of negativity will put stress on your body and cause your brain to want to turn things off and shut down. Recognize when this is happening. If you find yourself on the negativity train, pick a new positive location to travel to. Your new destinations might include:

- 🍌 Try to think happy thoughts. When people are happy, they tend to be more positive.
- 🍌 See a funny/inspirational movie, or read a book. Different forms of entertainment offer a moment away from real life. You can use this time to relax.
- 🍌 Do some meditating. Focusing inward, and on the breathing- even take a moment to think about something that is calming to you. When you are relaxed you feel better.
- 🍌 Talk about the issue with someone for 10 minutes, then try to begin talking about up lifting things, or making plans to do something fun. Crowd out the negative, it's not welcome.
- 🍌 Spend some time with your pet, if you have one. Petting an animal is calming for a lot of people.
- 🍌 Show love and compassion to others by volunteering, or doing random acts of kindness such as holding the door open for the person behind you.
- 🍌 Engage in some sort of physical activity, like going for a walk, working a puzzle or some form of traditional exercise.
- 🍌 Take a nice warm bath. Epsom salt, found in many stores, is a great salt soak to relax your muscles and pull out unwanted toxins in your body.

**SCHEDULE  
your workout  
time for an  
hour a day  
on the  
calendar.**

### **Ways to Stay Motivated:**

- 🍌 Don't have enough money for a gym membership? Use your home, a park, or your neighborhood to workout.
- 🍌 Begin to cut unhealthy food out of your diet; remember fruits and nuts are your best snack. Veggies and beans are a better main dish with a daily dose of those leafy greens, like spring mixes, spinach and kale.
- 🍌 Ensure you are eating only foods that will nourish your body, and drinking plenty of water. This will give you more energy. Do not forget to bathe and dress for success daily, and sleep 7-9 hours per night.
- 🍌 Exercise. Just be sure to increase your movements each day. If you hate exercising, practice a few specific physical activities for two full weeks; you will probably start to enjoy them.
- 🍌 Set a very realistic weight loss goal. Set a six-month mark for a goal weight and overall mood change and see where you are. Do you need to change up your routine? Make the necessary changes and then keep working toward the one-year mark. A smart scale is good investment. You can see how much of your weight is actual fat and how much is muscle.
- 🍌 Every person should do some form of physical activity. Crossword puzzles are a form of activity. Be creative and find what works best for you!
- 🍌 Do not be bored; make exercise fun by doing what you love. Even if it means playing the active -player video games.
- 🍌 Do not be afraid or self-conscious to get active, the only thing you should be afraid of is not getting healthy.
- 🍌 Be proud of your accomplishments.

## Catch Some Zzzzs: Are Getting You Enough Sleep?

Sleep experts from the National Sleep Foundation recommend working out at least three hours before bedtime so it will not interfere with sleep. Sleep is a very important part of your daily routine. Create a sleep schedule on your calendar of when you will go to bed and when you will set your alarm to wake up. Most people should be getting no less than seven hours of sleep per night, but no more than nine. Making a goodnight routine is a great way for your brain to know when it's bed time. You should never look at a TV, or electronic device before bed-it can throw your entire schedule off. Set an alarm clock to go off daily at the same time. Don't fall away from your bed time schedule, even if you have time off. Do something like this:

**An hour before bed, brush your teeth, wash your face, shower and get ready for bed, then go and read a book, magazine, write. Do something that just gets you to relax. Let the dog out 10-15 minutes before bed, and go back to what you were doing. At your bed time, be sure to go straight to bed.**

A 1999 study from the University of Chicago also showed that not getting enough sleep may make it difficult for people to lose weight, even if their exercising and eating well. For more information, visit the National Sleep Foundation site at [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).

If you have insomnia, be sure to follow a good night routine, do not look at an electronic device or TV at least an hour before bed, and do not have any caffeine after 2pm. Many shops and health food stores sell herbal teas and other natural sleep remedies. Follow the directions listed on the package and check with you doctor to make sure the remedy will not interact with any medications or supplements you may be taking When you are calm and relaxed, you can fall asleep easier.

## The Power of Love

According to an article by Shauna H. Springer (Psychology Today August 04, 2012) our brain produces a chemical when we are in love; this chemical is more powerful than cocaine. Love is like a drug. Love alters our feelings, mood and wellbeing. Love is a good drug. Some people settle for others who do not give them all the things they are looking for in love. When you settle, you create unhappiness for yourself. Some people find what they have always dreamt about and the love lasts, others do not. Find love, fall in love, be vulnerable to love; in the end, love is a risk worth taking.

## So, We're Expecting

*Courtesy of the Center for Disease Control • <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pregnancy/index.htm>*

If you are a healthy pregnant or postpartum (a woman who has just had a baby) woman, physical activity is good for your overall health. For example, moderate-intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking, keeps your heart and lungs healthy during and after pregnancy and poses very little risk to you or your developing child. Physical activity also helps improve your mood throughout the postpartum period. After you have your baby, exercise helps maintain a healthy weight, and when combined with eating fewer calories helps with weight loss.

Healthy women should get at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, during and after their pregnancy. It is best to spread this activity throughout the week. We know 150 minutes each week sounds like a lot of time, but you don't have to do it all at once. Not only is it best to spread your activity out during the week, but you can break it up into smaller chunks of time during the day. As long as you're doing your activity at a moderate or vigorous effort for at least 10 minutes at a time.

Healthy women who already do vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as running, or large amounts of activity can continue doing so during and after their pregnancy provided they stay healthy and discuss with their health care provider how and when activity should be adjusted over time.

Unless you have a medical reason to avoid physical activity during or after your pregnancy, you can begin or continue moderate-intensity aerobic activity. If you begin physical activity during your pregnancy, start slowly and increase your amount gradually over time. While pregnant, you should avoid doing any activity that involves lying on your back or that puts you at risk of falling or abdominal injury, such as horseback riding, soccer, or basketball.

## Chapter 4 Summary

- ➡ Stress is our body's way of reacting to a traumatic unexpected situation that is often out of our control.
- ➡ If you are stressed and feel like nothing is going your way, you might focus on that and feel worse. On the other hand, if you are feeling well and generally content your stress level will probably decrease. Remember that any form of negativity will put stress on your body and cause your brain to want to turn things off and shut down. Learn healthy ways to manage your stress and avoid the negative consequences of stress.
- ➡ Sleep is a very important part of your daily routine. Create a sleep schedule on your calendar of when you will go to bed and when you will set your alarm to wake up.
- ➡ Unless you have a medical reason to avoid physical activity during or after your pregnancy, the exercise is good for your overall health.

**Notes:**



## Chapter 5

# The World Is Your Oyster!

### Couch to Community: Being Active Within Society

We all lead busy lives and there are certain things we need to take into account while planning our weeks and days ahead like, work, school, volunteerism, social activities and family obligations, but there are also those things that we lack, or want in our lives. These things are different from person to person. Maybe it's a new job, a soul mate, a new place to live, or just a friend. Sometimes though, instead of focusing on what we lack all the time, we need to just be. Whether we are sitting alone, meditating, finding our purpose in life, or hanging out with friends and family, we all need to allow ourselves time to be a part of something. That something might as formal be joining a club, organization or house of worship or as simple as being a part of someone else's life. We also need to welcome others into our lives as well. Being; is what allows everything else in life to fall into place. Think about trying to form relationships with others. It's important to have people in your life that you can trust and those that trust you too. When you least expect something and feel at peace with yourself is often the time when new and exciting opportunities come into your life. Maybe the person you've you always dreamt about being with will fall into your lap at worship service, gym, the local baseball game, the grocery store, or wherever it may be. Talk about things you are passionate about. People will notice your enthusiasm. Also, when you care enough to take care of yourself and try to keep a positive outlook on things--- it shows! You may find, your best friend, your lover, soul mate or confidant tomorrow. Just be yourself.

Practice socializing with friends, family, your pet, your plants, or even yourself in a mirror. Being social isn't always easy, but the more you just practice, the easier it might become. If you want to meet know people, the first step is communicating with them. Relax and introduce yourself. Don't think about it too much and don't worry if the person doesn't want to talk to you. We all get rejected from time to time. Eventually, you'll find a person, or people you connect with. Remember all relationships are two way streets, the person you just met may be feeling many of the same feelings you are- so just be yourself and see what happens. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

### People Need People

Volunteer for a cause you believe in. Helping others is a gift and may also increase your self-confidence. A few decades ago, Barbra Streisand became famous singing, "People who need people are the luckiest people in the world," but the reality is, we all need people, and research studies increasingly prove it.

*Consider these findings about the importance of socialization:*

*A landmark UCLA study found that the "fight or flight" response that has long been*

Put multiple minds together for brain aerobics. Doing crossword puzzles or Sudoku is generally a solitary effort, but lots of brain-building activities can be done with others. Board games like Scrabble, Upwords, Trivial Pursuit and Smart Mouth, for example, are fun precisely because they involve combining the power of multiple minds.

*accepted as the normal reaction to stress is generally a male response. Women are more likely to “tend and befriend,” and this alternative may be a contributing factor to their longer life expectancy.*

### **Learning from each other: Sharing Your Talents**

Go to an exercise class, program or fitness center. Don't be afraid to ask others what exercise techniques have worked well for them and feel free to share what techniques have worked for you. Also, you don't necessarily need to limit yourself to disabled/adaptive groups only. Think outside the box. Try something new. Often the best tips in life come from where you least expect them, but until you ask you'll never know.

#### **Some exercise tips might include:**

- When exercising in a chair, choose one that allows you to keep your knees at 90 degrees when seated. If you're in a wheelchair, securely apply the brakes, or make sure the chair is sturdy enough to hold your weight so it doesn't move.
- Try sitting up tall while exercising and use your abs to maintain good posture; good posture will prevent not only injury but scoliosis too.
- Use a pool for aquatic workouts
- Use the pool to swim and release tension from the injuries

### **Safety first!**

If you need it, make sure your pool has a lift to assist you in getting in and out of the pool safely. A water belt can keep you balanced so you can exercise without the fear of drowning. There are also many aqua floatation devices and hydro resistant jogger belts that are designed to meet specific exercise needs. Check with your pool or gym to see if they provide these, or purchase your own.

## **Chapter 5 Summary**

- ➔ Learn to live in the moment and just be.
- ➔ Our lives tend to be hectic and busy. It is important that we take a breath or a minute alone.
- ➔ Pick up some hobbies, and take time out once per week to have some “me time.” Be alone, with friends or family doing something you find fun, and enjoyable.
- ➔ Practice socializing with people by putting yourself out there. Practice talking about your interests in the mirror. Get good at talking.
- ➔ Talk to people about things you know and are familiar with. If you are ready to have a deeper conversation with someone, you will learn more by asking questions about things you don't know.
- ➔ Volunteer for a cause you believe in. Helping others is a gift and may also increase your self-confidence.

**Notes:**



## Chapter 6

# Tools of the Trade: Items That May Help Further Your Success

### What to Use:

#### Adaptive Physical Activity Equipment

Everyone, whether disabled or not, typically uses machinery or equipment to maximize the effectiveness of exercise. Listed below are some common pieces of adaptive equipment that are often helpful to people with disabilities when participating in sports, recreational activities, and exercise. Not all adaptive equipment is covered by insurance, but check with your physician and insurance company before making any purchases out of pocket. With a good justification, they may be covered. You might get lucky and save some money.

#### Sports Chairs and Hand Cycling:

**Court Chair** - A sport wheelchair designed for wheelchair users on the courts- rugby, tennis basketball etc. Typically, they are lightweight and have greater maneuverability than an every-day manual wheelchair.

**Hand Cycle** - A three-wheeled geared cycle propelled by the arms rather than the legs, used as an alternative to a conventional bicycle by some disabled people.

**Push-Rim Racers** - These lightweight chairs are designed for speed and maneuverability and used by competitive track and marathon runners

**Beach Access Chair** - A sturdy, light-weight, all-terrain, specialized wheelchair that can be pushed in sand, snow and other soft soils. Four balloon flotation tires give the chair extra stability that resists tipping and makes travel on rough terrain safer.

**Special Seat Cushions to Prevent Skin Breakdown** - Typically these cushions are made of air cells, gel or plastic pellets and decrease the likelihood of skin breakdown or pressure sores during exercise.

**Wrist and Hand Grips** - While exercising these gloves or grips improve your ability to hold on to pieces of equipment and reduce the likelihood of blisters and injuries. These are excellent adaptive devices for people with limited grip strength.

**Therapy Bands** - These bands are like large rubber bands like that provide resistance to your movements. The bands are inexpensive and can be used while in a seated position, on the floor, or for standing exercises. Be sure the bands are latex free if you or anyone helping assist you may have an allergy to latex.

**Stabilizing Straps** - These straps reduce unneeded movement while exercising and can prevent injuries or falls from happening.

**Wrist or Ankle Weights** - These are bands that you can wear on your ankles or wrists that add extra weight to your movements. With these weights, you get all the benefits of traditional light free weight lifting exercises, but do not have to grip the weight with your palm while doing so. These are helpful for people with grip or spasticity issues.

**Fitness Bands/ Pedometer** - There are numerous fitness bands that measure your heart rate

---

and your general exercise output. Some are more compatible for wheelchair users than others. If you are a manual wheelchair user, be sure to call the company to see if the fitness band you are interested in will count your arm/wheel rotations. You want a band that detects wrist and/or manual wheelchair movements. These movements can give you a measure similar to a non-disabled person's tracking of "steps."

### **And Now a Bit of Prevention**

Let's face it, going to the doctor can sometimes be stressful, especially if it is your first visit with them, or you're going to discuss a new and unfamiliar medical concern. You know your body better than anyone else. So, when something doesn't feel right, you're sick or experiencing unfamiliar/increased pain for extended periods of time, it's important to seek medical attention. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The best time to establish a relationship with a healthcare provider is when you are healthy and feeling good! That sounds backwards doesn't it? Well, not really. If you take the time to get an annual (once a year) physical, your provider can begin to keep a record of your overall health. What does your health look like right now? Health care providers often call your first physical with them your baseline. The information they collect about you during that visit will help them to create a plan with you to make you as healthy as you can be. Things like immune cell counts, and hormone, protein and cholesterol levels can vary widely from person to person. Establishing a baseline when you're well allows your provider to treat you more effectively when you're sick because they already know what your 'normal' is.

So, what is a physical? A physical is a whole body check-up from a healthcare provider (HCP). During this visit your HCP will check for any changes, both positive and negative in your overall health. These visits are sometimes also called "wellness visits" and most insurance programs will cover one visit per year. This is a good time for you to let your HCP know of any changes in your health, medications or any other significant life changes that have happened since you last visit.

### **Before Your Visit**

If you are seeing a provider for the first time, or it's been a long time since your last visit, it's important to take some time to prepare for your visit with the doctor before your appointment. Here are some things to remember:

- Does your provider accept your insurance?
- Are the office and exam rooms accessible to you?
- How long will the appointment take including wait time?
- Is there an appointment cancellation policy? If so, what is it?
- Do you have transportation to and from the visit?
- If needed, can the scheduling team provide you with a little extra time for your visit to accommodate your disability-related needs?
- Is there paper work you have to fill out before your visit? Often you can ask the office to send the required paper work to you before your appointment. Having to fill out a whole stack of paper while you're waiting to be seen can be stressful. It's a huge time saver to do it ahead of time if you can.

### **Common Question on Medical Intake Forms**

- Insurance carrier(s), policy number and contact information
- Family history of certain conditions

- Primary Care Provider Contact Information
- Emergency Contact/Guardian Information
- Medications including all over the counter medications, supplements, herbs and vitamins you may be taking.
- Recent Hospitalizations



### During Your Visit

Your HCP may check the following:

- Height, weight and eyesight
- Blood pressure, pulse, cholesterol and sugar levels
- Skin for any sores, redness, breakdowns or irregular growths
- Listen to your lungs, heart
- Look into your ears and mouth
- Tap on various parts of your abdomen/back

For the most part, though somewhat longer than other visits, physicals are not painful and, as we've mentioned before, are really your time to communicate with your HCP about your health. If you have any questions you would like answered during the appointment, don't be ashamed! Write them down ahead of time and bring them with you. Time is limited and preparation is key! HCPs can sometimes use complicated words when they talk. If you don't understand what they are saying to you, ask them to repeat themselves, or explain it again.

Doctors share a lot of complex information with you during very short visits. In order to stay healthy, it's important for you to be able to leave their office knowing the basics and any next steps that are being recommended as a result of your visit. *Ask Me-3: Good Questions for Patient Health*, an initiative of the Partnership for Clear Health Communication at the National Patient Safety Foundation, suggests when you have a visit with your HCP, there are three basic questions you can ask them to better understand your health.

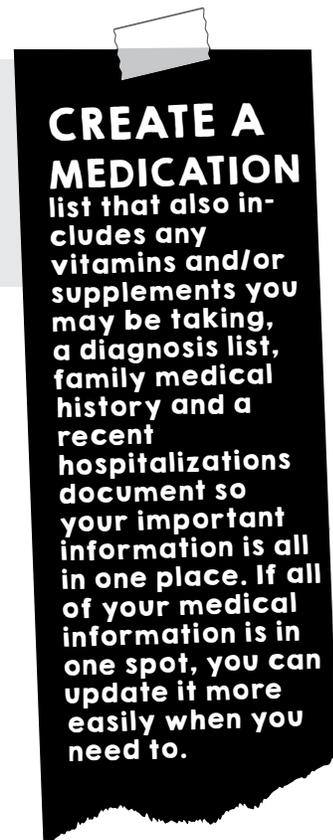
- What is my main problem? (there may not be one)
- What do I need to do?
- Why is it important for me to do this?

These three simple questions will help put you in the driver's seat when it comes to your health.

### After Your Visit

Because a physical typically doesn't include any invasive testing, you can go about your normal routine after your appointment. If your HCP performed any tests, they may be in touch after the exam to discuss the results with you. If everything is normal and you get a clean bill of health, the only thing left to do is schedule next year's physical. If there are any results that concern your HCP, they will highlight the important parts and suggest next steps. Generally, offices will provide you with a copy of your results. If not, and you want one, request a copy. Once again, if you have questions about the test results, don't be afraid to ask them.

Most of us can remember getting annual physicals as children, but as we age, remembering to go to the doctor for regular check-ups often times gets put on the back burner because: we're too busy, we feel fine, we're



not sick, we don't like going to the doctors, we can't afford the medical bills.... The list of excuses goes on and on, but if you take the time to get regular checkups, your HCPs can often catch things before they become bigger, harder to treat, more painful and expensive problems for you down the road. So, if it's been years since you've had a physical, why not try to schedule one soon? Don't be afraid to use some of the suggestions we've discussed in this section and remember there are no stupid questions. This is your life, your body and your health. You deserve to know what's going on inside of you.

### **Ok, I Understand the Physical - What About Health Screenings?**

Be proactive about your health by staying on top of necessary screenings in between your annual physicals. Screenings are short tests your healthcare provider does on a regular basis to check for specific, common and often treatable conditions. Some routine screenings are to test cholesterol, diabetes, and different types of cancers like colon, breast, and testicular. There is an extensive feature on screenings in the first book of this series, *Eat Well. Live Well. Be Well.* The same folks that gave you this book can give you the first book, as well. Just ask for one!

### **Saying Farewell...To the Old You**

Okay, so having read through this guide, your mind may be full of many ideas, thoughts, and new goals. Do not wait another second, go and write down the goals you wish to accomplish. Then write down how you are going to accomplish them. Now, write down the things that you need to crowd out of your life. What is the worst that will happen when these negatives are no longer a part of your life? What good things will take place once those things are out of your life? Not sure whether or not you should keep or crowd out certain things? Look at the pros and the cons. Choose the pros. Next, list 5 things you are going to change today to get you started, another five things you are going to add to that one month from today, and another five things to add for the month after that. Get a planner and plan your sleep, your workouts, and your "me" time, and then family time. Come up with two goals per month to achieve, and think of the ways you will achieve them each month - then do it. Journal everything for yourself. Say hello to the new you right now, and farewell to the old you, because guess what? You guessed right! You are no longer the old you. Your positive thoughts right now are all steps closer to the new, healthier you. You will be successful, and more than anything, you know you want it and believe in change too, or else you wouldn't be reading this guide right now.

## **Chapter 6 Summary**

- ➔ Learn how to use the equipment and tools you are going to use in all of your workout/exercise plans so that you may get familiar with it.
- ➔ Get to know different workouts for each muscle group and how to perform them properly.
- ➔ Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure and best time to establish a relationship with a healthcare provider is when you are healthy and feeling good! Establishing a baseline when you're well allows your provider to treat you more effectively when you're sick because they already know what your 'normal' is.
- ➔ Saying farewell to the old you is important so that you may open doors for the new you.
- ➔ Flush out the negativity in your life.
- ➔ Write down your dreams and goals! Start by taking one step a day towards your first goal. You'll get there!
- ➔ Don't look back, you've got this.

## Glossary

**Aerobic Exercise (Cardiovascular Training)** - Activities that increase your heart rate and may cause your body to sweat.

**Affirmations** - An affirmation is usually a sentence or phrase that you repeat regularly to make a formal declaration to yourself and the universe of your intention for it to be the truth.

**Anaerobic Exercise** - Typically strength building exercises

**Agility** - Ability to move your body easily

**Atrophy** - Wasting away of the body's muscles

**BPM** - Beats per Minute, or the number of times your heart beats in one minute  
Basal metabolic rate (BMR)- Minimal rate of energy expenditure.

**Calisthenics** - Exercises to achieve bodily fitness and grace of movement.

**Calories** - Calories are a unit of energy. The number of calories you take in each day by eating or drinking, determines if you lose, maintain (stay the same) or gain weight. Simply put, if you take in more calories than you burn, you will gain weight. If you burn more calories than you take in, you will lose weight.

**Cardiovascular diseases** - Any diseases that involve the heart or blood vessels, like heart attacks, strokes and high blood pressure

**Cognition** - The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses.

**Depression** - Feelings of severe despondency and dejection that are medically treatable

**Diaphragmatic Breathing** - Deep breathing technique using your abdominal muscles

**Disability** - A condition that damages or limits a person's physical or mental abilities.

**Endurance** - The ability or strength to continue doing something especially when tired

**Exercise** - Physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive and purposeful.

**Gross motor exercises** - Skills that involve movements using the large muscles of the body. They include things like running, jumping, catching and throwing balls, and other large muscle activities.

**Hydration** - indicates how much water something contains

**Hypersomnia** - excessive sleeping.

**Insomnia** - the inability to sleep

**Lean Muscle Mass** - How much your body weighs without fat.

**Longevity** - the length or duration of life

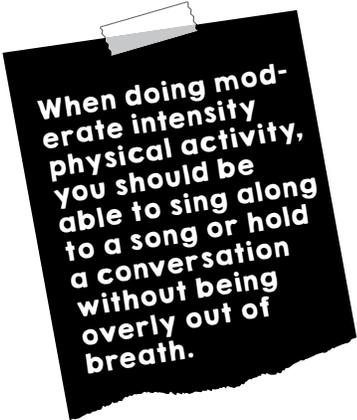
**Metabolism** - how quickly your body can burn fat

**Mindfulness** - maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of your thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment

**Moderate Intensity Physical Activity** - Body movement that requires a moderate amount of effort and noticeably accelerates your heart rate.

**Obesity** - a condition involving excessive body fat that increases the risk for numerous health problems

**Osteoporosis** - a condition that causes bones to become weak and brittle



When doing moderate intensity physical activity, you should be able to sing along to a song or hold a conversation without being overly out of breath.

**Physical Activity** - Any body movement that tightens your muscles to burn more calories/expend more energy than you would when your body is at rest.

**Rep** - (or repetition) refers to the number of times you do the particular movement.

**RICE** - A method for injury intervention; rest, ice, compression and elevation.

**Set** - is the number of times you do a series of reps.

**Stress** - your body's way of responding to any kind of demand; perceived demand or actual demand

**Target Heart Rate Zone** - Exercise that increases your heart rate to between 50% to 85% of your maximum heart rate

**Vigorous Intensity Physical Activity** - Body movement that requires a large amount of effort, causes rapid breathing and a substantial increase in your heart rate.



**When doing vigorous intensity physical activity, you can say a word or two, but your breathing is generally labored.**

**Notes:**

---

## **Appendix A:** **Questions that you should be asking when touring an exercise facility:**

When you go into a gym, wellness center, or studio; be sure to ask some of the following questions. Bring this questionnaire along with you.

Name of Facility Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does this facility have wide interior/ exterior doors?
2. Are there any steps at the entrance/exit to the building?
3. Are there wide hallways and wide bathroom stalls with accessible sinks for me to use?
4. Is the shower/locker room accessible?
5. If I need assistance getting on and off equipment during my workout, will someone be available to do so?
6. If I can't reach equipment because it is too high, or too low for me will someone be able to assist me in reaching the equipment?
7. Is there a personal trainer available who has worked with people with disabilities?
8. Are smaller studios and workout rooms, where classes like aerobics or yoga may be held wheelchair accessible?
9. Is adaptive equipment available for use?
10. Can group classes be adapted for people with disabilities? If so, which ones?
11. Are there any programs your facility has that are designed for those with disabilities?
12. Are the facility doors automatic?
13. Is everything in the gym on ground level? And if not, is there an elevator, lift or ramp to access the second level?
14. Does the facility accept companion cards? Would the facility allow care taker to come at no charge to help and make sure I am doing things safely?
15. Does the facility have a pool?
16. Is there someone who can assist me in the pool?
17. What is the temperature and size of the pool?
18. Is there hydrotherapy?
19. Is there a lift into the pool and if so what type?
20. Is there any pool equipment like water wheelchairs, noodles, mats, floating aids, kickboards, etc.?
21. Are there any machines that are wheelchair accessible?  
Can benches and seats be moved away if I prefer to stay in my wheelchair?
22. Do you have free weights, cable machines, thera-bands, cuff weights, upper limb cycle, arm machine, recumbent bikes?
23. Is there enough floor space in between equipment for me to wheel myself to the next piece?
24. Is there floor staff on the floor to help me when I need help moving benches and reaching things or holding me in place or spotting me if choose not to use a personal trainer?



---

## Appendix B: Information and Resources

**Adaptive Sports USA** - Seeks to engage, evolve, and empower individuals with disabilities to be involved in adaptive sport through education, coaching and advocacy and are a gateway to regional, national and international multi-sport competitions. [www.adaptivesportsusa.org](http://www.adaptivesportsusa.org)

**American Dance Wheels Foundation** - ADF works with individuals with ambulatory disabilities by providing the social, rehabilitative, and competitive activity of Wheelchair Ballroom and Latin Dance to partnerships comprised of one seated and one standing dancer. [www.americandancewheels.org](http://www.americandancewheels.org)

**Association of Blind Athletes of New Jersey** - is the premier sports association for blind athletes in the state. Whether you're a beginner or an elite athlete, ABANJ offers opportunities to participate in a variety of sports including: beep ball, goal ball, judo, track and field, swimming and skiing. [www.abanj.org](http://www.abanj.org)

**Disabled Sports USA** - DSUSA's mission is to provide national leadership and opportunities for individuals with disabilities to develop independence, confidence, and fitness through participation in community sports, recreation and educational programs. [www.disabledsportsusa.org](http://www.disabledsportsusa.org)

**Dwarf Athletic Association of America** - is committed to providing athletic competition, guidance, support, and information to people of short stature and to their families. Every level of ability and skill is welcomed and supported. [www.daaa.org](http://www.daaa.org)

**Life Rolls On** - hosts surf and skate events for wheelchair athletes of all levels, to 10 cities nationwide every year. [www.liferollson.org](http://www.liferollson.org)

**National Center on Health, Physical Activity, and Disability** - is the premier resource for information on physical activity, health promotion, and disability, serving persons with physical, sensory and cognitive disability across the lifespan. [www.nchpad.org](http://www.nchpad.org)

**Roll Call Wheelchair Dance** - With locations in NJ and NY, Roll Call seeks to teach people of all ages and abilities how to partner dance. [www.rollcallwheelchairdance.org](http://www.rollcallwheelchairdance.org)

**Special Olympics New Jersey** - provides sports training and athletic competition to children and adults with intellectual disabilities throughout NJ. [www.sonj.org](http://www.sonj.org)

**Tri-State Wheelchair & Ambulatory Athletics** - seeks to promote disabled sports in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut area. The organization supports athletes using wheelchairs and all ambulatory disabilities. [www.tswaa.com](http://www.tswaa.com)

**U.S. Paralympics** - a division of the nonprofit United States Olympic Committee, is dedicated to becoming the world leader in the Paralympic Movement and promoting excellence in the lives of people with Paralympic-eligible impairments, including physical disabilities and visual impairments. [www.usparalympics.org](http://www.usparalympics.org)

**United States Association of Blind Athletes** - A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USABA provides athletic opportunities in various sports including, but not limited to track and field, Nordic and alpine skiing, biathlon, judo, wrestling, swimming, tandem cycling, powerlifting and goalball (a team sport for the blind and visually impaired). [www.usaba.org](http://www.usaba.org)

**USA Deaf Sports Federation** - serves as the national governing body of deaf sport organizations in the United States. Its purpose is to regulate the rules of competition for affiliated organizations, facilitate the participation of US teams in international deaf competitions, and promote human rights and equity through sports. [usdeafsports.org](http://usdeafsports.org)

**Wheelchair Sports Federation** - a national non-profit that provides opportunities for the disabled and wheelchair-bound adults and youth to play sports recreationally and competitively. Their motto is, "If a sport exists, then it can be adapted!" [www.wheelchairsportsfederation.org/](http://www.wheelchairsportsfederation.org/)

## Wow! Check out these facts...

- ➡ In 2013, research found adults in the following states to be most likely to report exercising 3 or more days a week for at least 30 minutes: Vermont (65.3%), Hawaii (62.2%), Montana (60.1%), Alaska (60.1%). The least likely were Delaware (46.5%), West Virginia (47.1%) and Alabama (47.5%). The national average for regular exercise is 51.6%.
- ➡ Nationwide, 25.6% of persons with a disability reported being physically inactive during a usual week, compared to 12.8% of those without a disability.
- ➡ Only about one in five homes have parks within a half-mile, and about the same number have a fitness or recreation center within that distance.
- ➡ Nearly one-third of high school students play video or computer games for 3 or more hours on an average school day.
- ➡ Reducing the sodium Americans eat by 1,200mg per day on could save up to \$20 billion a year in medical costs.
- ➡ Food available for consumption increased in all major food categories from 1970 to 2008. Average daily calories per person in the marketplace increased approximately 600 calories.
- ➡ Since the 1970s, the number of fast food restaurants has more than doubled. More than 23 million Americans, including 6.5 million children, live in food deserts – areas that are more than a mile away from a supermarket.
- ➡ Empty calories from added sugars and solid fats contribute to 40% of total daily calories for 2–18 year olds and half of these empty calories come from six sources: soda, fruit drinks, dairy desserts, grain desserts, pizza, and whole milk.
- ➡ US adults consume an average of 3,400 mg/day [of sodium], well above the current federal guideline of less than 2,300 mg daily.

---

**Notes:**





---

The Disability, Health & Wellness Program encourages individuals with disabilities to be proactive in their healthcare. In taking on a healthier lifestyle, you can elevate your overall health and wellness and possibly prevent secondary conditions.

In support of those goals, the *"Your Body Is Where You Live"* guide provides multiple wellness resources for individuals with disabilities. Recipes, tips, adaptive resources and so much more - helps you to take control of your health.

