

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Physical Activity



Canadian
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Module Tools – Educate

physical
activity

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Here you will find Physical Activity 'Educate' Resources with useful information and tips to share with employees. The following documents are included;

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Ideas and Suggestions for Promoting Physical Activity at Work

physical activity

- **Post information about the importance of physical activity on bulletin boards.**
Download information and handouts from the Physical Activity Module on the Healthy Workplaces website.
- **Include information on the importance of physical activity in short articles** for internal newsletters, staff emails or pay cheque inserts. Articles and stories are available through [Healthy Families BC's](#) blogs, twitter and newswire feeds; Healthy Workplaces articles available from [Small Business BC](#).
- **Have a dedicated area** for displaying information, pamphlets or videos about physical activity.
- **Provide opportunities for employees to meet with qualified exercise professionals** to learn about setting personal physical activity goals and getting started. BCRPA-registered fitness leaders can lead various programs to help with your physical activity initiatives. Contact bcrpa@bcrpa.bc.ca for a list of qualified leaders in your area.
- **Promote the [Physical Activity Line](#)**, a free telephone service that provides advice and information from Certified Exercise Physiologists to get you moving. The toll-free number is 1-877-725-1149. Information is also available at as well as on twitter and Facebook.
- **Promote active living in the workplace.** Active living means making physical activity part of everyday by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking to the other building at your facility or meetings offsite instead of driving.
- **Organize "Lunch and Learn" sessions on the importance of regular physical activity.** Provide a list of suggested topics to spark discussion: the need for proper footwear/equipment, for example.



Physical Activity – What and How Much?

physical activity

Guidelines

- To achieve health benefits, the [Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology](#) recommends adults aged 18-64 should accumulate at least **150 minutes** (2.5 hours) of **moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic activity** per week, broken into sessions of 10 minutes or more.
- It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.

Intensity

- **Moderate** intensity activities (such as brisk walking and cycling) will cause you to sweat a little and to breathe harder. You should be able to talk but not sing your favourite song.
- **Vigorous** intensity activities (such as jogging and cross-country skiing) will cause you to sweat and be 'out of breath.' You won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath.

What kind of activity?

Being active can mean doing all kinds of physical activities. Choose activities to build endurance, flexibility and strength. Choose something you enjoy so that you stick with it.

- **Aerobic activities.** These activities help your heart, lungs and circulatory system stay healthy. They also give you more energy. They include walking, jogging, biking, swimming and dancing as well as exercising in organized programs and playing recreational sports. Aim to include aerobic activities for at least 150 minutes per week.
- **Strength activities.** These activities help your muscles and bones stay strong. To ensure good overall strength, try to do a combination of activities that work different muscles in your body. Lifting weights and doing sit-ups, push-ups or carrying heavy loads are all examples of strength activities. Aim to include muscle or bone strength activities at least two days a week.
- **Flexibility activities.** These activities help you to move easily. They keep your muscles relaxed and your joints mobile. Reaching, bending, stretching, yoga, gardening and Tai Chi are all flexibility activities.

Sources: [Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology](#); [ParticipACTION](#)



Risks of A Sedentary Lifestyle

It's shocking how many hours a day Canadians sit

Yikes! It's true – each day, Canadian adults spend almost **10 hours** of their waking time being sedentary.

What is sedentary behaviour?

Being sedentary refers to activities that need very little physical movement and don't use much energy, such as sitting or lying down for long periods of time. Sedentary behaviour is different than not getting enough exercise.

What are common sedentary activities?

We're spending more and more time on screens – TVs, smartphones, tablets and computers. And when we're texting, watching videos, playing online games, hanging out on the Internet or sharing on social media, we're usually sitting.

We also spend more and more time in our cars and on public transit. And with the rise in technology, many of us spend our days sitting at work as well.

Why is sedentary behaviour bad?

Researchers recognize sedentary behaviour as a health risk since it can lead to weight gain. Obesity is a risk factor for at least 11 types of cancer.

How sedentary behaviour increases your risk of cancer

If you're like the average Canadian, you sit for most of the day. A growing body of evidence supports a link between sedentary behaviour and an increased risk of colorectal cancer. The longer a person sits, the higher the risk.

"But I exercise regularly. I must have a lower risk of cancer even though I sit all day in my job."

Being active decreases your risk of cancer, but sedentary behaviour is an independent risk factor. Even if you exercise 30 minutes or more every day, if you're sedentary for most of your days, you are still at an increased risk for cancer. Sit less. Plan your day to take frequent, short breaks from sitting.

Tips to Sit Less

- ✓ Walk around while you are talking on the phone
- ✓ Take standing and stretching breaks during meetings
- ✓ Stand rather than sit on the sidelines while watching recreational games
- ✓ Visit your co-worker to discuss issues rather than phoning or emailing
- ✓ Use a standing desk if one is available
- ✓ Replace screen time with social time

Sources: [Canadian Cancer Society \(move more, sit less\)](#)

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