

Exercise guidelines: how much is enough?

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(HealthDay)—When it comes to exercise, even a modest investment can pay off big time in terms of your health.

The latest U.S. government guidelines say that most adults need at least two-and-a-half hours of moderate-intensity exercise each week to control weight and prevent some illnesses, including [heart disease](#), diabetes and some types of cancer. That's just a half-hour of exercise on most days of the week. And, hitting the gym isn't your only option. Choose activities you like. Go for a brisk walk, rake the yard or play with the kids.

You can even divide up a block of exercise throughout the day. Getting active for 10 minutes at a time, three times a day, will do the trick.

If you're able to exercise vigorously, you can cut the minimum workout time in half. Running, swimming laps or jumping rope will really get your heart pumping. Keep in mind, though, that the more [exercise](#) you do, the better you'll feel.

Don't forget about [strength training](#). Work out with weights or resistance bands at least twice a week. No equipment? Try push-ups, squats and sit-ups to keep your muscles strong. Just be sure to space strength-training sessions at least 48 hours apart. This gives muscles time to recover and grow.

Don't give up if you can't always stick to these goals. Remember that some activity is better than none at all.

More information: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services details the benefits of [exercise](#) and how to get started.

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