

SMART About Physical Activity

S - Safely exercise by following the precautions below

- Always take medications as prescribed
- Drink water before, during and after exercise to stay hydrated especially during the summer
- STOP exercise if you feel chest pain, lightheadedness, dizziness, palpitations or extreme fatigue
- Don't exercise if you have a fever, are feeling ill or in extreme weather conditions
 - Exercising in the heat and in the cold puts extra stress on your heart
- Take precautions related to your other medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma etc.
- **NO SNOW SHOVELING!!!!!!**

M - Muscles need exercise to maintain strength and flexibility

- Warm up for 10 minutes at an easy workload before cardio exercise and strength training
- Aerobic exercise improves the efficiency of the heart so it doesn't have to work as hard
- Strength exercises keep muscles strong and improve balance. Stretching exercises keep you flexible and decrease muscle tightness

A - Advance your fitness safely and effectively

- Exercise on most days of the week for 30-35 minutes or more. Work towards a goal of a minimum of 150 minutes/week of moderate intensity exercise.
- Warm up for 10 minutes at an easy workload and then increase your workload to a moderate intensity for 20 minutes or more. Exercise intensity can be determined by how hard you feel you are working (exertion scale), "talk test" and or being in your target heart rate range
- Cool down at an easy workload for 5 minutes at the end of your cardio exercise
- Perform strength exercises 2-3 times weekly on non-consecutive days. Do 8-16 reps and increase weight once you can do 16 reps with ease.
- Stretch after exercise to the point of feeling a mild to moderate pulling sensation

R - Regular exercise is essential for a healthy body and mind

- Exercise provides many health benefits. Make a list of personal benefits from exercise that will keep you motivated. If you get off track, remember to look at the list to get back on track.
- Use cross training to prevent boredom, challenge different muscles and avoid overuse injuries

T - Things to consider...

- Schedule your exercise time in advance, being as specific as possible to ensure it happens.
- Eat healthy foods, drink water and get enough sleep to enhance your exercise efforts and promote recovery between workouts.
- Stay physically active by doing household chores, yard work and other recreational activities appropriate to your current fitness levels. Having an indoor exercise option is a must in New England!

SMART START:

1. Identify strategies you use already and what you can add to enhance your exercise.
2. Identify benefits and barriers to exercise on the next page

Which of the following are important benefits of exercise for you?

- Improves or maintains my healthy blood pressure
- Helps me achieve/maintain a healthy body weight
- Improves my blood sugar
- Improves my cholesterol
- Decreases my stress or improves my mood
- Helps me feel more energetic
- Helps me sleep better
- Decreases stiffness and body pain
- Improves my other medical conditions such as: _____
- Other: _____

Identifying what makes it difficult to exercise is an important step in establishing an exercise program. Which of the following might be true for you?

- Not enough time
- The weather
- Feeling too tired
- Body pain
- I do not enjoy exercise because: _____
- I do not feel confident to exercise on my own yet
- Sometimes I just don't feel like doing it
- I feel like I do not know what to do
- Other: _____

For safety and sometimes comfort it is important to have an indoor option for exercise. What are your options?

- Home treadmill, bike or other equipment
- Health club/gym
- Mall walking
- Exercise DVD's
- Other: _____

As you improve your fitness you may be able to return to doing other physical activities. For example, house/yard work, leisure time recreation sports etc. What activities would you like to start or return to doing?