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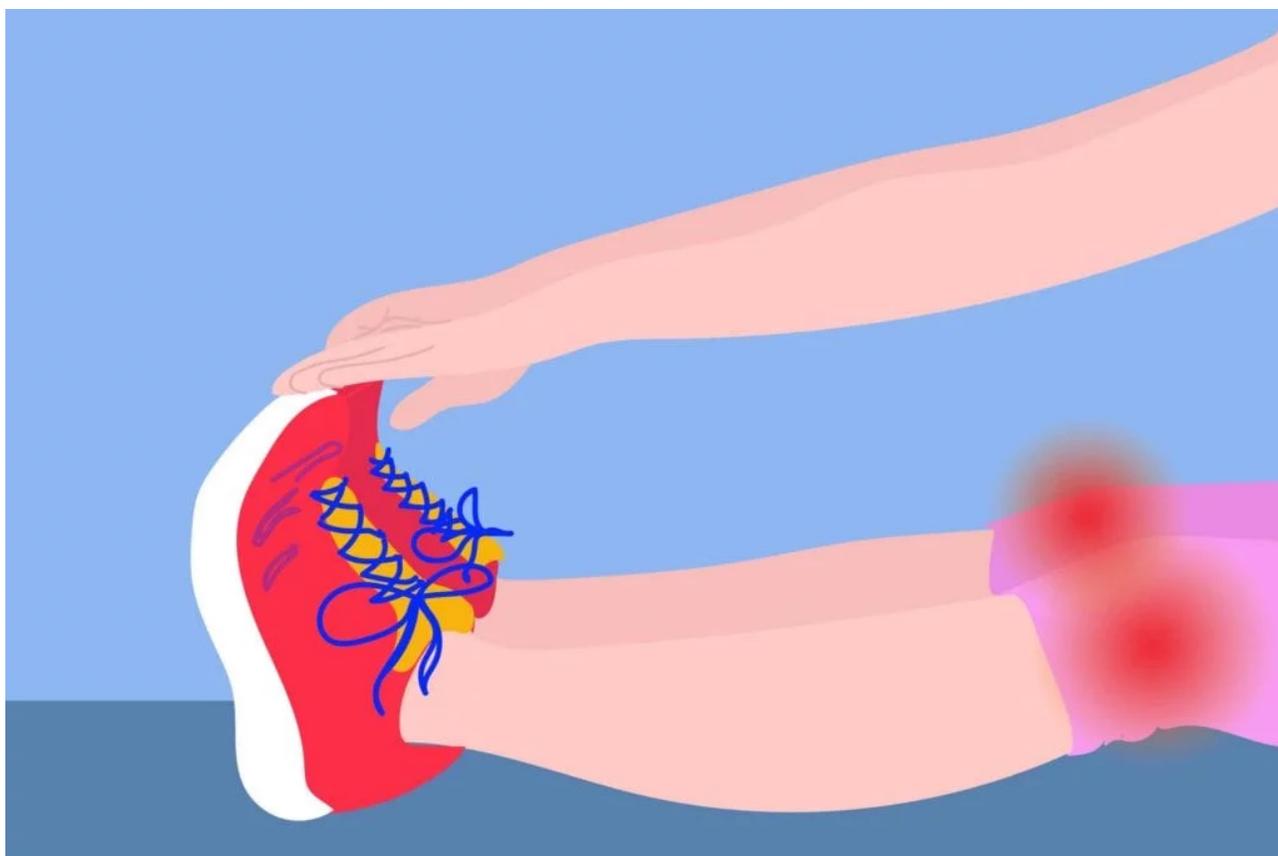
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The New 2018 Exercise Guidelines in 4 Words: "Move More, Sit Less"



One hundred and fifty minutes of moderate physical activity spread over the entire week might not sound like much to exercise enthusiasts. (It breaks down to 22 minutes per day.) Yet the overwhelming majority of Americans — about 80 percent

of adults and teens — have been failing to meet that goal, which was set forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) a decade ago. ^

Now, in an effort to get more people moving, the 2018 update to the guidelines have been simplified: “Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day. Some physical activity is better than none.”

That’s a key change between the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans and the 2018 version (<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2712935>), which was presented earlier this month at the American Heart Association’s Scientific Sessions.

While it might seem like the new guidelines set the bar quite a bit lower, the old rules haven’t been entirely abandoned. While the basic principle boils down to “move more,” the current guidelines also say that for substantial health benefits, **it’s best to get 150 to 300 minutes of moderate activity (or 75 minutes to 150 minutes of vigorous activity) per week.**

Meanwhile, the new guidelines eliminate the old stipulation that said exercise has to be done in bouts of at least 10 minutes to count toward a goal of 150 minutes or more per week.

The authors state that “current evidence shows that the total volume of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is related to many health benefits; bouts of a prescribed duration are not essential.” That means a walking a bit further in a parking lot, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, and doing jumping jacks for one minute all count.

The new physical activity guidelines also emphasize the importance of making exercise a priority from an early age. This is the first time that the HSS Physical Activity Guidelines have included recommendations for the preschool set, though no specific goal other than keeping kids ages 3 to 5 “physically active throughout the day” has been established. Older kids and teens are directed to get 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity every day.

The guidelines don’t let older adults and those with chronic conditions off the hook, either. Seniors are encouraged to shoot for at least 150 minutes of activity each week (the same ideal target for younger adults), or to do as much as they physically can. People with disabilities and chronic conditions are advised to do the

same if possible, though they guidelines state that they ought to consult with a health care practitioner or fitness specialist about the amount of type and amount of activity that's appropriate. ^

Why the push for more exercise for everyone? "Physical activity aids in reducing the risk of myriad diseases, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, dementia, and eight forms of cancer (bladder, breast, colon, endometrium, esophagus, kidney, lung, and stomach)," two HSS representatives wrote in an accompanying viewpoint to the new guidelines in *JAMA* (<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2712936>). "Physical activity improves sleep and physical function, prevents injury from falls, and is beneficial as an adjunct to pain management, particularly for persons with osteoarthritis or other rheumatic conditions. Overall, individuals who meet the [Physical Activity Guidelines] recommendations could lower their risk of premature death by 33 percent, compared with those who are not physically active."

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