

What Counts as Moderate Exercise?

Aim for 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise on at least five days a week. A moderate effort means you can talk but not sing during the activity. Doing a few things to strengthen your muscles gives you even more health benefits. A few examples are:⁶

Aerobic	Muscle-building
Biking slowly	Doing push-ups or sit-ups
Water aerobics	Lifting weights
Ballroom dancing	Using resistance bands
Walking	Yoga or Pilates
Light gardening	Heavy gardening

Exercise is a Lot Easier Than You May Think!

You can break your activity into small chunks throughout the day. Only 10 minutes of moderate effort, three times a day, is fine to start. Follow these steps to get the most out of your workout program:

- Find an activity you love
- Work with your doctor to design an exercise routine that fits you
- Exercise with a friend to motivate you
- Set goals
- Take small steps
- Reward yourself for doing well

Being more active can also make your body less sensitive to the effects of salt on blood pressure.⁷ Make fitness fun and you will see results!

Sources:

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2. NHLBI. Calculate your Body Mass Index. Available at <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>. Accessed March 25, 2011.
3. Mayo Clinic. Exercise: A Drug-Free Approach to Lowering Blood Pressure. Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/H100024>. Accessed February 18, 2011.
4. American Council on Exercise. Sneaker Savvy. Available at: http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/fitfacts_display.aspx?itemid=13. Accessed February 18, 2011.
5. Mayo Clinic. "Fitness programs: 5 steps to getting started." Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/HQ00171/NSECTIONGROUP=2>. Accessed March 25, 2011.
6. CDC. How much physical activity do adults need? Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html#Musclestrengthening>. Accessed March 25, 2011.
7. American Heart Association. News release. Physical activity decreases salt's effect on blood pressure. Available at: <http://www.newsroom.heart.org/index.php?s=43&item=1289>. Accessed March 24, 2011.
8. Mayo Clinic. 10 ways to control high blood pressure without medication. Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/H100027>. Accessed April 27, 2011.

If you have high blood pressure, exercising can help bring it down to a healthier level. If your blood pressure is almost high, exercise could help you avoid getting high blood pressure. Ask your doctor to help you design an exercise program that's safe and that works well for you.⁸

