



# The Physical Activity Guidelines Midcourse Report: Implementation Strategies for Older Adults

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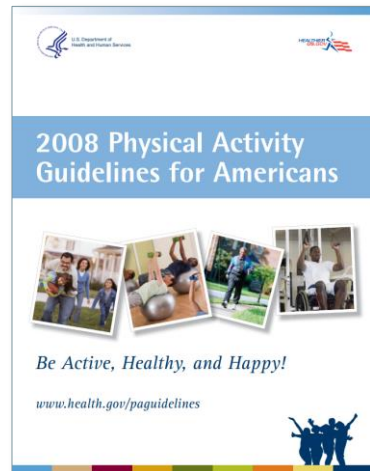
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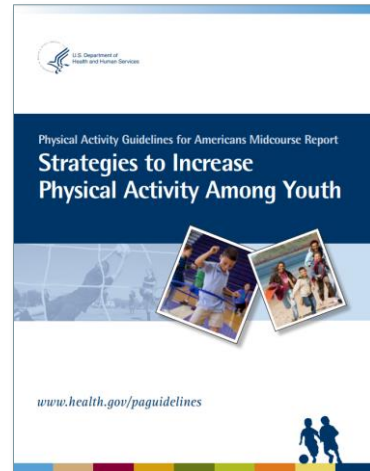




# History of The Physical Activity Guidelines



2008



2013



2018



2023



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## MOVE YOUR WAY®

### What types of physical activity do older adults need to stay healthy?



#### Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least  
**150**  
minutes  
a week



#### Muscle-strengthening activity

Activities that make your muscles work harder than usual count.

at least  
**2**  
days  
a week



#### Mix in activities to improve your balance!

Aim for a mix of aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and balance activities.



Try activities that count as more than 1 activity type, like dancing, sports, or tai chi.

If that's more than you can do right now, **start slow and do what you can** — even 5 minutes of physical activity has real health benefits.

Walk. Run. Dance. Play. **What's your move?**



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## Benefits of Physical Activity for Older Adults

↓ Reduced risk of chronic diseases

↓ Reduced risk of falls

↓ Reduced risk of injury from falls

↓ Reduced risk of dementia (including Alzheimer's disease)

↑ Improved physical function

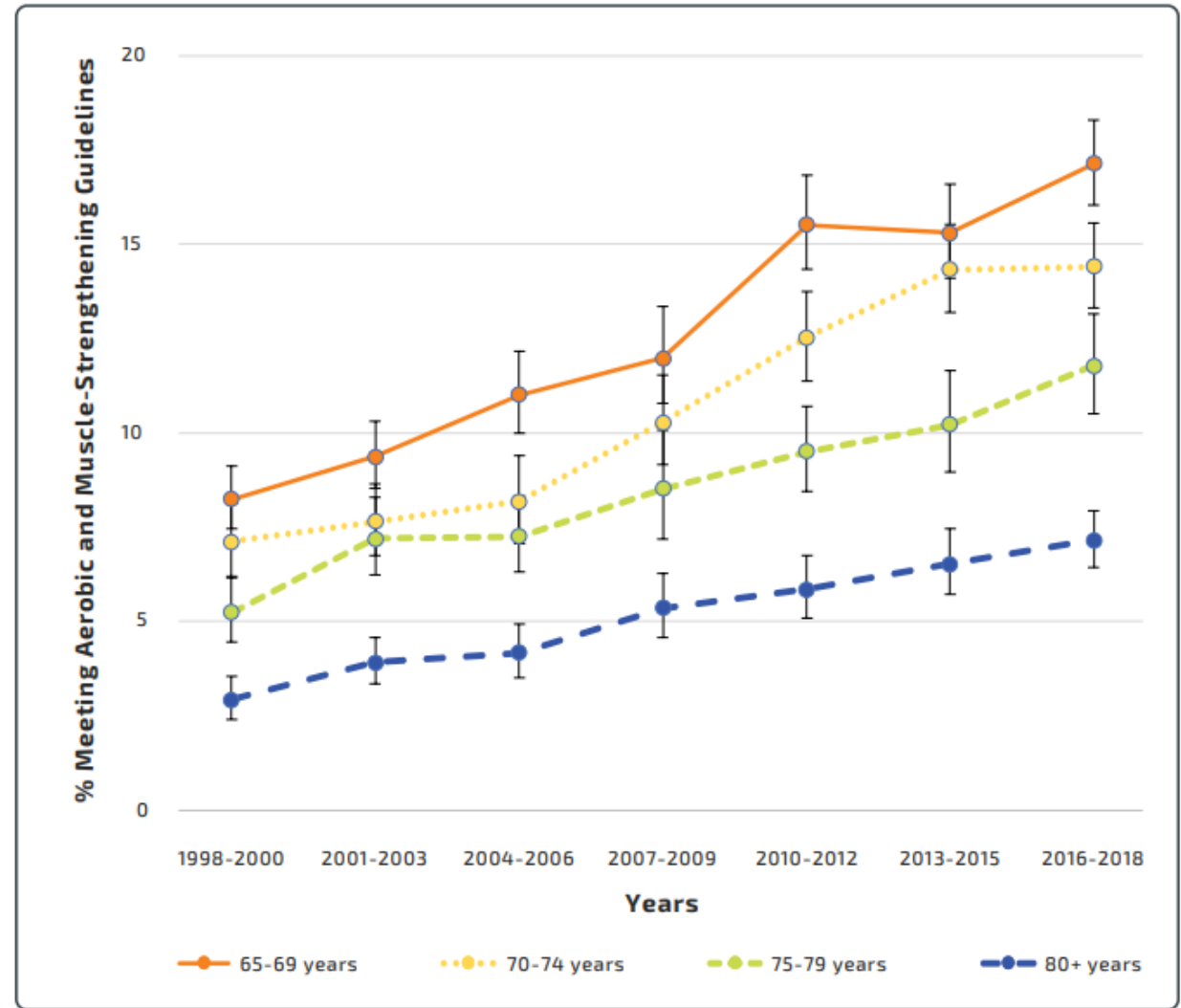


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## Prevalence of Meeting the Aerobic and Muscle-Strengthening Guidelines Among Older Adults by Age Group—National Health Interview Survey, 1998-2018



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Source: Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Health Interview Survey—1998-2018.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/1997-2018.htm>.



## Key Messages

- The Midcourse Report **highlights evidence-based strategies and interventions to support physical activity among older adults** in a variety of settings so that they may achieve the benefits of physical activity outlined in the Guidelines.
- Regular physical activity can support older adults to **live independently longer, be healthier, improve their quality of life, and reduce their need for medical care.**
- It's **never too late** to start being physically active and gain substantial health benefits.



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## Barriers to Physical Activity

- **Capability-related barriers** — individual attributes such as chronic health conditions, physical or cognitive limitations, and pain.
- **Opportunity-related barriers** — external factors such as social isolation; inequitable access to spaces, equipment, or guidance; neighborhood environment characteristics; and environmental limitations.
- **Motivation-related barriers** — personal attitudes and beliefs; fear of falling, pain, or injury; low self-efficacy, knowledge, and awareness; or lack of enjoyment.





# Midcourse Report Audience

Policy makers; exercise and health professionals; clinicians; gerontologists; built environment professionals; local, state, territorial, and Tribal leaders; and others working with older adults



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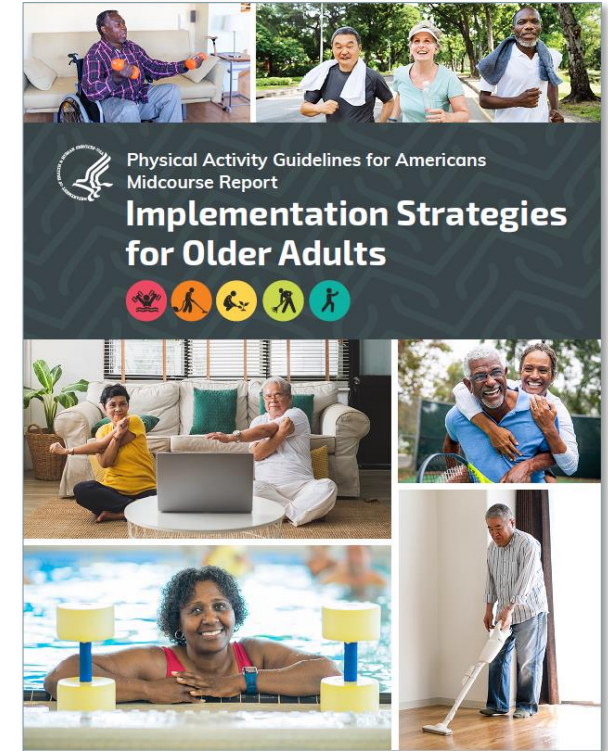
# Key Findings

- **Key Settings**

- Community
- Health care
- Home

- **Key Strategies**

- Policy, Systems, and Environmental Approaches
- Behavior Change
- Physical Activity Programs





# Policy, Systems, and Environmental Approaches

- Community design elements that improve walkability include:
  - Availability of and access to everyday destinations
  - Sidewalk connectivity, quality, and networks
  - Social, aesthetic, and functional components





# Behavior Change

- Cognitive behavioral strategies
  - Physical activity knowledge and awareness
  - Goal setting
  - Self-monitoring
  - Barrier identification and problem-solving
  - Social support
- Physical activity counseling







# Physical Activity Programs

- Exercise programs
  - Help older adults engage in specific exercises for a set amount of time
- Lifestyle-based physical activity programs
  - Empower older adults to increase their physical activity in ways that fit into their lifestyle








# Real World Examples

## Portland, Oregon

### Creating an Accessible Built Environment That Helps Residents Stay Active as They Age



**Who?** Portland, Oregon

**What?** City of Portland initiatives to make infrastructure and systems more age friendly and accessible so that residents can safely get active as they age.

**Where can I learn more?**

- [portland.gov/planning/age-friendly-city](http://portland.gov/planning/age-friendly-city)
- [portland.gov/transportation/programs](http://portland.gov/transportation/programs)
- [portland.gov/transportation/planning/adultsandseniors](http://portland.gov/transportation/planning/adultsandseniors)

Through efforts like its Age-Friendly City program, Portland works to great places to grow up and grow old," says Alan DeLaune, Ph.D., Assistant Director of Planning and Sustainability (BP5).

Portland started its age-friendly initiative in 2006 as part of the Work for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Since then, the city has adopted partners — an Action Plan for an Age-Friendly Portland. The plan includes:

- Provide guidance to help developers create age-friendly housing, zero-step entrances, wide hallways, and accessible bathrooms
- Partner with organizations that serve older adults and people with disabilities
- Implement policies that facilitate safe physical activity — like accessible to people of all ages and abilities
- Create parks and green spaces in historically underserved areas

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## Detroit Parks & Recreation

### Focusing on Fun to Keep Older Adults Active and Connected



**Who?** Detroit Parks & Recreation

**What?** A local government agency offering resources and services to help community members get active, build connections, and learn new skills.

**Where can I learn more?** [detroitparksandrec.com](http://detroitparksandrec.com)

One of the oldest parks and recreation systems in the nation, Detroit Parks & Recreation has been promoting quality of life, health, and community for all Detroiters since 1920. The department offers parks, greenways, and recreation centers — as well as a wide range of programs, events, and initiatives.

Among its many programs, the department offers a variety of fitness and wellness classes specifically intended to help older adults maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. The classes are designed to meet the needs of participants of all fitness and experience levels. And there's a focus on building connections and camaraderie as much as on fitness.

"Providing accessible physical activity opportunities is one of our top priorities, but promoting connectivity is just as important," says John Armstrong, the department's Assistant Director of Recreation. "We work hard to bring community members together and give them a reason to get out and be happy."


**Strategy: Focus on Fun — for Everyone**

Lisa Curran, Senior Coordinator for Detroit Parks & Recreation, describes fun as the key to successful programming. She says making programs fun can look like offering prizes as incentives for older adults to participate in group walks or playing upbeat music during aerobics activities.

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## Newington Senior and Disabled Center

### Staying Flexible and Keeping It Creative to Meet Older Adults' Needs



**Who?** Newington, Connecticut, Senior and Disabled Center

**What?** A safe and welcoming place for older adults and people with disabilities to get active, socialize, and learn new skills.

**Where can I learn more?** [newingtonct.gov/24322/Senior-Disabled-Center](http://newingtonct.gov/24322/Senior-Disabled-Center)

In the past, senior centers often focused mostly on activities like the Newington Senior and Disabled Center. "It's do your quilting club, and have lunch. But they've evolved to meet older adults' needs, combining multiple resources."

This includes offering people the chance to gain new skills, for example, has a computer lab, a volunteer-run organic garden manage everyday challenges like filling out tax paperwork.

And, of course, it means focusing on physical activity as a fully equipped fitness room and offers a variety of program. The program to tai chi, Qigong, and line dancing. In addition, individual abilities and fitness levels.

**Who?** EnhanceFitness

**What?** An evidence-based group exercise and falls prevention program that helps older adults get more active so they can lead independent lives.

**Where can I learn more?** [projectenhancefitness.org/enhancefitness](http://projectenhancefitness.org/enhancefitness)

EnhanceFitness is a low-cost, evidence-based program that's specifically designed to help older adults at different fitness levels get more active. Seattle-based nonprofit Sound Generations manages EnhanceFitness in partnership with the University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center.

Certified instructors lead EnhanceFitness classes both virtually and at YMCAs and other organizations nationwide. A typical 1-hour class includes aerobic activity, strength training, stretching, and balance exercises — and instructors aim to set a pace that's right for the participants. About 60 percent of participants are age 70 years or older, and more than 20 percent are 80 years or older.


"We've found that over the course of the 16-week program, participants grow more confident in their ability to do things independently," says Summer Craft, Director of Community Health Programs at YMCA of the Suncoast in Florida. "That's because we're following the EnhanceFitness evidence-based standards, which are proven to help older adults improve their health. We also encourage the participants by emphasizing that we're following the Physical Activity Guidelines — that's a great motivator."

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes EnhanceFitness as an **Arthritis-Appropriate, Evidence-Based Intervention**. That means the program is proven to reduce arthritis symptoms and teach participants how to safely increase their physical activity to manage arthritis and other chronic conditions.

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## EnhanceFitness

### Helping Older Adults Get Active and Stay Independent




Falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults, but physical activity can help prevent fall-related injuries — and allow older adults to stay active and independent. That's why hundreds of organizations across the country offer EnhanceFitness programs to older adults in their communities.

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## University of California San Francisco

### Cardiac Rehab

#### Providing Comprehensive Support to Help People with Heart Disease Improve Their Health



**Who?** University of California San Francisco

**What?** A medically supervised program for people with heart disease that combines physical activity, health behavior counseling, and psychological support.

**Where can I learn more?** [cardiacrehab.ucsf.edu/about-program](http://cardiacrehab.ucsf.edu/about-program)

Cardiac rehab is designed to help heart disease patients learn how to protect their heart health moving forward. For many people, the focus is on physical activity, healthy eating, lowering stress, and managing other risk factors. But it also includes motivational counseling and psychological support to help people regain their confidence as they get back to everyday activities.

**Who?** Walk with a Doc

**What?** A doctor-led walking group that combines movement and conversation to help people of all ages take steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

**Where can I learn more?** [walkwithadoc.org](http://walkwithadoc.org)

Back in 2008, cardiologist David Sabag invited his patients to go for a walk with him at a local park in Columbus, Ohio. To his surprise, more than 100 people showed up — and Walk with a Doc was born.

Today, Walk with a Doc helps people across the nation take steps toward a healthier lifestyle — both literally and figuratively. True to its name, the program offers free doctor-led walking groups to give people of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities a safe, accessible, and fun way to get active. And doctors kick off each event by discussing a health topic, empowering participants to make informed decisions about their health.

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## Walk with a Doc

### Bringing Communities Together Through Movement and Conversation



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## Everyone Has a Role to Play

- **Professionals working with older adults** (e.g., exercise and health professionals, clinicians, and gerontologists)
- **Organizations** (e.g., fitness centers, cardiac rehab facilities, parks and recreation departments, and senior living residences)
- **Community** (e.g., civic associations, housing authorities, and those involved in public works, urban planning, and transportation)
- **Policymakers and decision makers** (e.g., local and state government officials; Tribal leaders; public facility management, and health insurance companies)





# Get Involved!



Download and read the  
Midcourse Report and related  
resources!



Sign up for ODPHP's  
physical activity email  
updates!



**Thank You!**  
**Bianca.Macias@hhs.gov**



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