

# Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR CHILDREN - 5 – 11 YEARS

## Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy children (5-11 years), irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status of the family. Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of physical activities that support their natural development and are enjoyable and safe.

Children should be physically active daily as part of play, games, sports, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school and community (e.g. volunteer, employment) activities. This should be achieved above and beyond the incidental physical activities accumulated in the course of daily living.

Following these physical activity guidelines can improve cholesterol levels, blood pressure, body composition, bone density, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, and aspects of mental health. The potential benefits far exceed the potential risks associated with physical activity.

These guidelines may be appropriate for children with a disability or medical condition; however, their parents or caregiver should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of physical activity appropriate for them.

For those who are physically inactive, doing amounts below the recommended levels can provide some health benefits. For these children, it is appropriate to start with smaller amounts of physical activity and gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity as a stepping stone to meeting the guidelines.

For guidance on decreasing sedentary behaviour please refer to Canada's Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Children and Youth.

## Guidelines

- For health benefits, children aged 5-11 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include:
  - Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week.
  - Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.
- More daily physical activity provides greater health benefits.

# Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR YOUTH - 12 – 17 YEARS

## Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy youth (12-17 years), irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status of the family. Youth are encouraged to participate in a variety of physical activities that support their natural development and are enjoyable and safe.

Youth should be physically active daily as part of play, games, sports, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school and community (e.g. volunteer, employment) activities. This should be achieved above and beyond the incidental physical activities accumulated in the course of daily living.

Following these physical activity guidelines can improve cholesterol levels, blood pressure, body composition, bone density, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, and aspects of mental health. The potential benefits far exceed the potential risks associated with physical activity.

These guidelines may be appropriate for youth with a disability or medical condition; however, their parents or caregiver should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of physical activity appropriate for them.

For those who are physically inactive, doing amounts below the recommended levels can provide some health benefits. For these youth, it is appropriate to start with smaller amounts of physical activity and gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity as a stepping stone to meeting the guidelines.

For guidance on decreasing sedentary behaviour please refer to Canada's Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Children and Youth.

## Guidelines

- For health benefits, youth aged 12-17 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include:
  - Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week.
  - Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.
- More daily physical activity provides greater health benefits.

# Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR ADULTS - 18 – 64 YEARS

## Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy adults aged 18-64 years, irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status. Adults are encouraged to participate in a variety of physical activities that are enjoyable and safe.

Adults can meet these guidelines through planned exercise sessions, transportation, recreation, sports or occupational demands, in the context of family, work, volunteer and community activities. This should be achieved above and beyond the incidental physical activities accumulated in the course of daily living.

Following these guidelines can reduce the risk of premature death, coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, colon cancer, breast cancer, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis and improve fitness, body composition and indicators of mental health. The potential benefits far exceed the potential risks associated with physical activity.

These guidelines may be appropriate for those who are pregnant, have a disability or have a medical condition; however, they should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of physical activity appropriate for them.

For those who are physically inactive, doing amounts below the recommended levels can provide some health benefits. For these adults, it is appropriate to start with smaller amounts of physical activity and gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity as a stepping stone to meeting the guidelines.

## Guidelines

- To achieve health benefits, adults aged 18-64 years should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits.

# Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR OLDER ADULTS - 65 YEARS & OLDER

## Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy adults aged 65 years and older, irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status. Older adults are encouraged to participate in a variety of physical activities that are enjoyable and safe.

Older adults can meet these guidelines through planned exercise sessions, transportation, recreation, sports or occupational demands in the context of family, work, volunteer and community activities. This should be achieved above and beyond the incidental physical activities accumulated in the course of daily living.

Following these guidelines can reduce the risk of chronic disease and premature death, maintain functional independence and mobility, as well as improve fitness, body composition, bone health, cognitive function and indicators of mental health. The potential benefits far exceed the potential risks associated with physical activity.

These guidelines may be appropriate for older adults with frailty, a disability or medical condition; however, they should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of physical activity appropriate for them based on their exercise capacity and specific health risks or limitations.

For those who are physically inactive, doing amounts below the recommended levels can provide some health benefits. For these adults, it is appropriate to start with smaller amounts of physical activity and gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity as a stepping stone to meeting the guidelines.

## Guidelines

- To achieve health benefits and improve functional abilities, adults aged 65 years and older should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.
- Those with poor mobility should perform physical activities to enhance balance and prevent falls.
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits.