

Physical Activity

and Heart Disease and Stroke

A lack of physical activity is a risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Being active can improve your health and help reduce your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

Many Missourians do not get enough physical activity. Some physical activity is better than none.

The importance of being active

Being physically active can help prevent obesity, which increases a person's risk for heart attack and stroke.

Physical activity can also help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Maintaining your blood pressure and cholesterol at healthy levels can decrease your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

Adults should get at least 30 minutes or more of physical activity most days of the week – 60 minutes if you are trying to achieve a significant weight loss. If it is difficult to find time for physical activity, you don't have to do it all at once. Being active for 10 minutes at a time, several times a day, can improve your health.

Tips for increasing physical activity

Increasing your physical activity doesn't have to be complicated or costly. You don't need to go to a gym or purchase special equipment. There are a number of simple things you can do to be more active:

- Sit less and move more.
- Limit the amount of time you spend in front of the television or computer.



- Go for a walk during your lunch time or walk in the morning before you leave for work or in the evening after dinner.
- Add more steps to your day. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park farther away from your office or the store.
- Participate in recreational activities such as bicycling, swimming, hiking or dancing.
- Play outside with your kids or grandkids.

More information can be found at:
health.mo.gov/wellness
health.mo.gov/heartdisease
health.mo.gov/stroke

