

# Fitness Tips for Teens

If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program. Ask about the activities that are right for you. See *Safety Tips* on the next page for more information.

## Exercise –it is a way of life

- If you are not regularly active, start gradually. Walk a little more or lift light weights. Increase the amount of weights when you are ready.
- Choose activities that YOU like. Maybe you would like to dance at home. Walk briskly while you window-shop or while chatting with your best friend.
- Find out when you like to exercise. Are you a morning or an evening person? If you are busy, break up your exercise into 10-minute sessions throughout the day.
- Spare your coffee money and try exercising to stay awake! Exercise can give you the energy-boost that you need.
- Team up with friends so you can motivate each other. Or, join a group activity and make new friends while exercising!
- Map your walking or running route. Choose a safe route that is well-lit and does not have missing sidewalks. Use a city map or create a map online at [www.mapmyrun.com/search](http://www.mapmyrun.com/search).
- If you enjoy Wii Fitness®, use that to get moving. If you have a smart phone, use apps to help you exercise and stay on track with goals. If you are pregnant, make sure the activities you choose are safe for your pregnancy. Talk to your doctor and read the safety tips on the next page.



## Just MOVE –every day, anytime and anywhere!



- Walk to places that are close by. Park your car or get off the bus farther away from you are going.
- Do chores that get you moving — walk the dog, mow the lawn, vacuum, pull weeds, or wash the car.
- Use any chance to get up and move around. Every little bit makes a difference! Here are some ideas:
  - Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
  - Walk or ride a bike to school.
  - Be active in physical education (P.E.) class.
  - Stretch or run in place while watching TV.
- Remember that all physical activity is good for you — sports, planned exercise, household chores, even yard work.

## Make it a family affair—exercise with your family!

- If you take care of younger children, don't just watch them play tag or kick a ball. Join them! You can also push swings or climb on the jungle gym.
- Take young children on a walk in the stroller. Not only does this exercise your whole body, it can help put children to sleep!
- Help your family stay healthy. Exercise with parents, grandparents, and children to help prevent heart disease or type 2 diabetes. They will be happy when you are healthy. Try dancing to music or walking with your family.



## Get toned by building muscles

- When you work your muscles, they burn calories even when you are not working out! Working your muscles can also help you look more fit and toned. You can carry things more easily.
- You can do muscle-strengthening activities while listening to music or even in front of the TV! Try lifting weights or water bottles or do some crunches.

## No gym? No problem!

- You do not need a fitness center or have to do high-intensity workouts. Making small changes, like walking more, is just as effective. And all you need is a pair of shoes!
- You can make a cheap gym right at home. Ask your case manager for the handout, *How to Make a Home Gym*.

## Safety Tips

- Warm up and stretch before you exercise.
- Wear athletic shoes that are for walking or running.
- Wear bright clothing when it's dark.
- Use sunscreen. Drink enough water.
- To avoid overheating, do not exercise in hot, humid weather or when you have a fever.
- Wear a helmet and padding if skating or biking.

**Pregnant teens should not skate or bike.**

- Talk to your doctor if you feel light-headed, your chest hurts, or if you have nausea, severe muscle pain, or joint pain as these could be signs of something wrong.

- **If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.**

**After doing so, remember:**

- **Do not scuba dive, ski, or play contact sports such as soccer, basketball and hockey. These activities can be harmful for your pregnancy.**
- **Do not do jumping activities. Avoid quick motions that could strain your joints.**
- **Do not do activities with a high risk of falling, such as gymnastics or horseback-riding.**
- **After the first trimester, avoid exercises that require lying down on your back.**

