

## Physical Activity Stages of Change

### Lifespan Healthy Living Video Series

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For each of the following questions, please circle Yes or No. Please be sure to follow the instructions carefully. Physical activity or exercise includes activities such as walking briskly, jogging, bicycling, swimming, or any other activity in which the exertion is at least as intense as these activities.

	No	Yes
1. I am currently physically active.	0	1
2. I intend to become more physically active in the next 6 months.	0	1

For activity to be *regular*, it must add up to a *total* of 30 minutes or more per day and be done at least 5 days per week. For example, you could take one 30-minute walk or take three 10-minute walks.

	No	Yes
3. I currently engage in regular physical activity.	0	1
4. I have been regularly physically active for the past 6 months.	0	1

### Scoring Algorithm

If (question 1 = 0 and question 2 = 0) then you are at stage 1.

If (question 1 = 0 and question 2 = 1) then you are at stage 2.

If (question 1 = 1 and question 3 = 0) then you are at stage 3.

If (question 1 = 1, question 3 = 1, and question 4 = 0) then you are at stage 4.

If (question 1 = 1, question 3 = 1, and question 4 = 1) then you are at stage 5

Marcus, Rossi, et al., 1992.

## **What Stage are you in?**

Stage 1: Not thinking about change (Precontemplation)

Stage 2: Thinking about change (Contemplation)

Stage 3: Doing some physical activity (Preparation)

Stage 4: Doing enough physical activity (Action)

Stage 5: Making physical activity a habit (Maintenance)

Based on your stage of change, the following strategies may be especially helpful to you:

### **Stage 1: Not thinking about change**

1. Talk with your doctor about how you might personally benefit from exercise.
2. Think about other benefits you may get from becoming more active (i.e., better weight control, increased energy, decreased depression and/or anxiety)
3. Think about what barriers are getting in the way of your becoming more active (i.e., no time, no one to be active with, no place to be active)
4. Try to spot a person similar to yourself in age, body shape, and health status, who is being physically active.
5. Write down some ways that your being inactive is affecting people important to you. Discuss this with these individuals.
6. Think about what physical activities you would be most likely to do and where you might do them.
7. Think of a small gift you can buy for yourself as a reward for following these strategies.
8. Be aware of the importance of using these strategies as beginning steps for becoming physically active.
9. After using these strategies for a couple of weeks, think again about your stage of change.

### **Stage 2: Thinking about change**

1. Make some phone calls to learn where you might be able to participate in physical activity.
2. Write down some of the barriers that prevent you from being physically active(i.e., no time, no one to be active with, no place to be active). Work out some solutions for a few of these barriers.

3. Ask some people you know to help you with solutions for overcoming barriers to physical activity.
4. Commit yourself to a brief period of physical activity, such as a ten-minute walk, at least once over the next week.
5. For one week keep track of how much time you spend participating in physical activity and how much time you spend sitting or being inactive in other ways (i.e., watching TV, driving, sleeping).
6. Think of a small gift you can buy for yourself as a reward for following these strategies.
7. After using these strategies for a few weeks, think again about your stage of change.

### **Stage 3: Doing some physical activity**

1. For one week keep track of how much time you spend participating in physical activity and how much time you spend sitting or being inactive in other ways (i.e., watching TV, driving, sleeping).
2. Look at your record of activity and plan to replace 15 minutes of inactive time during the week with a physical activity.
3. Call up a friend to schedule a 20-minute walk during the upcoming week.
4. Think of ways to remind yourself to be more active during the week (i.e., put activity reminders in your calendar or palm pilot, put post-it notes with reminders to exercise around your home, office, and/or car).
5. Commit yourself to increasing your daily activity at least 5 minutes each day for the next week.
6. Allow yourself to do something inactive (watch TV, read) as a reward for being physically active.
7. Discuss with someone important in your life how he/she can reward you for following these strategies.
8. After using these strategies for a few weeks, think again about your stage of change.

#### **Stage 4: Doing enough physical activity**

1. Write down ways to be physically active each day.
2. Commit yourself to doing at least 30 minutes of activity each day.
3. Try a new activity that you think might be enjoyable.
4. Plan to participate in a walking or running event that will take place in your community.
5. Set up a plan for rewarding yourself for physical activity on a regular basis.
6. Think of ways to remind yourself to be more active during the week (i.e., put reminders in your calendar, put post-it notes with reminders to exercise around your home, office, and/or car).
7. Decide on a number of total miles to walk, run, and/or swim over the next 3 months.
8. Think about some of the benefits you have already received from being physically active. Think about other benefits you might like to receive from from being physically active (i.e., better weight control, better sleep, increased energy)
9. After using these strategies for a few weeks, think again about your stage of change.

#### **Stage 5: Making physical activity a habit**

1. Meet with your physician to discuss long-term health goals for physical activity, such as decreased blood-pressure and/or cholesterol.
2. Think about other benefits that you have received or hope to receive from leading a physically active lifestyle ((i.e., better weight control, increased energy, improved stress management)

3. Write down the strategies that have helped you so far and think about ways to make these strategies part of your daily routine.
4. Continue to set both short and long-term goals for physical activity.
5. Plan for how to stay physically active on vacations or holidays
6. Think about how to restart your physical activity if you've missed a few days.
7. Talk with people important to you about how they can help you if you are in an activity slump.
8. If you are having trouble staying motivated, go back to some of the earlier strategies, such as thinking about the benefits of physical activity.
9. Find ways to make physical activity fun!