

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.