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## Healthy Living

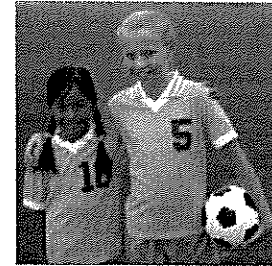
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### The FITT Plan for Physical Activity

Physical activity is important for everyone in the family. The following is information from the American Academy of Pediatrics summarizing the FITT method and includes general fitness tips and an activity log.

#### FITT method

FITT (frequency, intensity, time, and type) is one way to remember the general guidelines for what should be included in a fitness plan. Remember, it's important to keep in mind that each family member's fitness goals will be different based on age, sex, current fitness level, and available resources. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions.



**Frequency**—Do some type of physical activity every day.

**Intensity**—Choose an activity that is at least moderate in intensity, and also try to add a few more vigorous activities over the week. Vigorous activity is activity that makes you breathe hard and sweat. (Reaching a certain heart rate is not necessary.)

#### Examples of Moderate Activity

Slow walking (3.5 mph)  
 Slow bike riding (<10 mph)  
 Dancing  
 Weight lifting—light workout  
 Stretching

#### Examples of Vigorous Activity

Fast walking (4.5 mph)  
 Fast bike riding (>10 mph)  
 Jogging or running  
 Aerobics  
 Competitive sports: basketball, football, soccer

**Time (duration)**—Plan on a total time of at least 60 minutes of activity each day. This can be done all at once or added together over several shorter 10- to 15-minute blocks of activity. Breaking it up into smaller blocks of time is a great way to start a new program or fit activity into a busy schedule.

**Type**—The type of activity can include a variety of team sports, individual sports, recreational activities, family activities, active hobbies, and walking or bicycling for fun and transportation. Several times every week do weight-bearing activities that promote muscle strength, flexibility, and bone health. The most important thing is to choose something fun!

#### Tips for parents

- Make time to be active. School-aged youth should participate every day in 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity that is right for their age, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities.
- Limit sedentary activities. These are activities where you're sitting down a lot, like watching TV, using the computer, or playing video games. Spend no more than 2 hours per day in front of a screen.
- Keep an activity log. The use of activity logs can help children and teens keep track of their exercise programs and physical activity.
- Focus on the positive. Praising participation over winning and encouraging positive behaviors are important, especially if a child is less active and interested in sports.
- Be a role model. Parents are powerful role models and can help shape a child's perception of exercise.

#### Activity Log

Children and teens can be motivated to exercise more when they keep an activity log. Logs can also be used by parents and health care professionals to make recommendations for changes or to offer incentives to encourage their children to be physically active.

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**Source** Care of the Young Athlete Patient Education Handouts (Copyright © 2011 American Academy of Pediatrics)

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