

# Working Well: How are you staying active during COVID-19?

## Authors:

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COVID-19 has affected most of our daily routines, and created new barriers to our usual ways of getting exercise. Whether your local fitness studio is closed, your group runs are cancelled, or your sports practices are on pause, you're likely having to find creative ways to get moving. At the best of times, there are many barriers to getting exercise; now COVID-19 requires being adaptable and thinking outside the box to get our steps in. These obstacles also present an opportunity to discover new and fun ways to be active!

Now that we are stabilizing into a new normal with COVID-19, it's important to include exercise in our routine to maintain our resilience. Following Canada's [healthy movement guidelines](#) not only helps to manage stress, prevent depression, sleep better, and regulate appetite, it boosts our immune system too.

## Looking to become more active? Start by asking yourself the following:

1. What equipment at home can you use for exercise? A bench, chair, stairs, or a yoga mat can all be used for various body weight exercises.
2. Where is the best place to exercise in your home or nearby outdoor environment? An outdoor patio or yard? Where are the closest cycling paths, trails, or parks? Playgrounds can provide many options for great workouts using only your body weight.
3. What time of day is best for you to exercise? Can you add it to your calendar? Scheduling exercise into your daily routine makes it more likely to happen. Work with rather than against your body rhythms.
4. What are your fitness goals? Are they SMART goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound? Goals can be process goals (e.g. walking for 30 minutes every day) or results oriented goals (e.g. running 10 km in under one hour).
5. Do you have an accountability mechanism in place? Do you have a friend or co-worker to walk or run with? How can your partner/roommate/neighbour support you? Can you make this a family activity? The simple act of telling your fitness goals to others can help with keeping you accountable.

6. What barriers are preventing you from exercise? If time is a factor, try incorporating movement into your workday, such as taking a call while walking around the neighbourhood. If you have pre-existing medical conditions or physical limitations, such as an injury, that prevent you from exercising, please consult an appropriate medical practitioner for recommendations on how to safely incorporate new activities.
7. Finally, don't be too hard on yourself if you didn't get out for your exercise as planned. Tomorrow is a new day to try again. The benefits of exercise come both in the short term, immediately after exercise, but also in the long term (by increased lifespan, reduced chronic diseases, etc.). Over time, the effort required to incorporate exercise on a regular basis will likely become easier as it becomes an established habit.

### Get active with PHSA's Fitness Challenge from June 8 to 12, 2020!

In recognition of National Health & Fitness Day on June 6, PHSA is holding a five day fitness challenge from Monday June 8 to Friday June 12. This is an opportunity to reintegrate gentle exercise into your life at no cost, connect with other staff over social media, and boost your physical energy.

We challenge YOU to participate in one or both of the following activities:

- Attend one or all five virtual Pilates or yoga classes from June 8-12 from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Prizes will be randomly drawn for two staff who participate in all five classes!
- Track your walks or runs during June 8-12. Download the Strava app on your mobile and start recording your walks or runs. Prizes will be available for the furthest distance walked, the furthest distance ran, and for two other lucky participants!
- Post photos of how you're getting active on Instagram and tag PHSA's Instagram page with the handle @phsa.bc using the hashtag #GetActiveCanada.

Sign up on the [LearningHub](#) by June 5th at 11:59 p.m. to participate!

### Looking for some at-home fitness ideas during COVID-19?

You can find at-home workouts, online workouts, running tips, and class recordings on the [Curtis Health Thrive site](#). Password: Health

- Looking for ways to get active with kids in the outdoors? See this [Citizen's Tool Kit](#) for ideas.
- Lessen the negative effects of sitting with this [five minute desk workout](#) you can do at your desk.
- No weights at home? Here are some [at-home exercises](#) that use your body weight only.
- Looking for a gym/rec centre discount? See [PHSA's staff discounts on POD](#).

*PHSA's Psychological Health and Safety team supports the mental health of all employees in any PHSA program, service, or division. To learn more about the programs and services available to staff, [visit us on POD](#) or at [PHSA.ca](#). Questions? Email [healthpromotion@phsa.ca](mailto:healthpromotion@phsa.ca).*