



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Get Active for Good Health

Prevalence of Self-Reported Participation in Aerobic and Muscle-Strengthening Physical Activity Among Adults – United States, 2011
Recorded: April 30, 2013; posted: May 2, 2013

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Only one in five Americans is getting enough exercise.

Dr. Kathleen Watson is a researcher with CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of being active and supporting the design of walkable communities. Welcome to the show, Kathy.

[Dr. Watson] Thank you, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Kathy, how much physical activity is recommended for adults?

[Dr. Watson] Adults need at least two and a half hours of moderate aerobic activity or one hour and fifteen minutes of vigorous activity each week. And you need to do this type of activity for at least 10 minutes at a time. Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week. Strengthening activities include things like push-ups, sit-ups, and lifting weights. And you don't have to go to the gym to get your physical activity in. You may get it through walking or running, gardening, dancing, playing basketball, and resistance exercises.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the health benefits of regular physical activity?

[Dr. Watson] Not only does physical activity help control weight, but it can also reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. Physical activity also helps strengthen bones and muscles and it improves your mental health.

[Dr. Gaynes] Kathy, why are so few people getting enough exercise?

[Dr. Watson] There are a number of reasons why people don't get enough exercise. Some of the personal reasons that people cite are they think they don't have enough time to be physically active or they find it inconvenient to be physically active. And sometimes it's the environment that's the problem. As I mentioned before, walking is a terrific form of physical activity, but sometimes the community does not accommodate it.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can people do to help make their community more walkable?

[Dr. Watson] You can work with community leaders to support safe and clean sidewalks, bike paths, and walking trails. Neighborhoods can form walking clubs. Walking clubs can be formed at the workplace, as well. Parents can work with the PTA so parents and children can walk to school instead of driving or taking the bus. And finally, you can encourage community leaders to implement physical activity programs for all ages.

[Dr. Gaynes] Kathy, where can listeners get more information about how to support walkable communities?

[Dr. Watson] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/physicalactivity, all one word.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Kathy. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Kathleen Watson about the importance of being active and supporting the design of walkable communities.

Remember, you can influence how walkable your community is so you and your family and neighbors can be more active and feel better.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.