PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES

MAKING THE ACTIVE CHOICE
THE EASY CHOICE

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDING PRINCIPLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making the Active Choice the Easy Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Health: Kaiser Permanente is Making Lives Better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Active at Your Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Your Family and Friends to be Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Our Communities to be Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: Aim for 30 minutes a day of any moderate to vigorous activity; at least 150 minutes of activity a week for you and your family (60 minutes everyday for kids)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promoting Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get Your Heart Pumping Every Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Your Muscles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretch Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: Find your joy! Do activities you love to do and are passionate about. It doesn’t have to be only one; you can do it all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Your Thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: Have a conversation with your physician about your physical activity goals and concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise as a Vital Sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPMoves.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness Coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaiser Permanente Programs and Classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont’d.

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: Identify and build your support system — reach out to co-workers, family members, or friends to support you and join your team as “workout buddies.”  |
| Getting the Support You Need for Success  |

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5: Take advantage of what’s available to you at your worksite — your surroundings, wellness initiatives, and resources.  |
| Active Breaks  |
| Instant Recess® for Kaiser Permanente Employees  |
| Active Meetings  |
| Standing vs. Sitting at Your Work Station  |
| Worksite Programs, Resources, and Events  |
| Movement for an Active Workplace  |

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6: Discuss with your manager opportunities to build physical activity into your work day and how to support your goals to improve your health.  |
| Getting started  |

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7: Be a leader — we all play a vital role in creating an active culture.  |
| Physical Activity Manager/Team Leader Resources  |

| GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8: No matter your abilities, aspirations, and interests, there are many ways to get and stay active.  |
| Physical Activity and Persons of all Abilities  |
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9: Make physical activity accessible to everyone across all communities regardless of race, income, or status, or employment level. What could be done in your work and community environments to increase access to safe places to be active?

Vision Zero — A Model to Follow 38

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 10: Be a change agent. Living an active life inspires those around you and the watching world — make a difference.

Thriving Schools – Creating Active Lifestyles, Starting at Schools 40

Every Body Walk! 41

SUMMARY 21

APPENDIX A: ACTION PLANNING 44

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE EXERCISES & ACTIVITY BREAKS 45
# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES

| 1 | Aim for 30 minutes a day of any moderate to vigorous activity; at least 150 minutes of activity a week for you and your family (60 minutes everyday for kids). |
| 2 | Find your joy! Do activities you love to do and are passionate about. It doesn’t have to be only one; you can do it all. |
| 3 | Have a conversation with your physician about your physical activity goals and concerns. |
| 4 | Identify and build your support system — reach out to co-workers, family members, or friends to support you and join your team as “workout buddies.” |
| 5 | Take advantage of what’s available to you at your worksite — your surroundings, wellness initiatives, and resources. |
| 6 | Discuss with your manager opportunities to build physical activity into your work day and how to support your goals to improve your health. |
| 7 | Be a leader — we all play a vital role in creating an active culture. |
| 8 | No matter your abilities, aspirations, and interests, there are many ways to get and stay active. |
| 9 | Make physical activity accessible to everyone across all communities regardless of race, income, or status, or employment level. What could be done in your work and community environments to increase access to safe places to be active? |
| 10 | Be a change agent. Living an active life inspires those around you and the watching world — make a difference. |
INTRODUCTION

The Physical Activity Guiding Principles & Practices, a resource we designed for Kaiser Permanente employees, physicians, dentists, and their families, but also for you – our community partners.

OUR VISION: a physically active culture of health that promotes the well-being of body, mind and spirit, prevents disease, and creates a healthier workplace and healthier communities.

OUR CHALLENGE: to move beyond ‘awareness’ of the health benefits of physical activity and creation of programs and projects towards delivering measurable increases in rates of people getting at least 30 minutes a day (60 minutes everyday for kids) of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

The Physical Activity Guiding Principles & Practices are a result of a collaborative partnership between Healthy Workforce, Community Benefit, and Total Health at Kaiser Permanente. The Physical Activity Guiding Principles & Practices demonstrates innovative approaches to wellness and is a useful resource for organizations seeking to implement similar practices. As our community partner, this guide can be customized to compliment the work you are already doing in your own organization/community or it may spark some fresh, new ideas about helping you and others make the active choice the easy choice.

Making the Active Choice the Easy Choice

At Kaiser Permanente, we are trusted partners in total health, collaborating with people to help them thrive and creating communities that are among the healthiest in the nation. That is why Kaiser Permanente encourages you to get active — it is one step that can increase your overall sense of well-being and significantly improve your health. Being active is being healthy — it helps you feel better and stronger at any age. We encourage you to start by “finding your passion” for physical activities that bring you joy.

Opportunities to get active surround us every day and Kaiser Permanente’s Physical Activity Guiding Principles & Practices provides information about how to be more active wherever you are with the resources available to you. Through this guide, our goal is to help make the active choice the easy choice — to, from, and at work, as well as in the communities where we live, work, and play.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The content provided in this guide is only informational and should not replace recommendations from your health care professional. If you are changing a routine, or have health concerns, speak with your health care professional before starting.
Total Health: Kaiser Permanente Is Making Lives Better

To be a leader in Total Health, we are applying all our resources to care for our members, employees, and communities. We aim to support you wherever you are during the day — by providing physical activity education, resources, and opportunities whether you are at work, in a Kaiser Permanente medical office, at a school, or in your community.

Being Active at Your Workplace

- We seek to ensure all Kaiser Permanente employees have access to a healthy environment and resources to help them be active during the work day — including wellness programs, special events, active community options, and ideas to keep them moving whether they work in an office setting, a medical facility, or in their communities.

- We believe that health is a team sport, and that being physically active doesn’t have to be done alone. We are building a culture of health in which we not only support one another, but also are active together.

Supporting Your Family and Friends To Be Active

- We want you to thrive where you live, work, and play. You can have a powerful impact on your family and friends, inspiring others to be active, and serving as a great role model.

- Kaiser Permanente doctors have committed to measuring activity levels with “exercise as a vital sign.” As a member of Kaiser Permanente, your health care team will ask you and family members how many minutes of physical activity you do each day. This can be followed with a conversation about your interests in being more active, what you like to do to get moving, and possibly developing a “prescription” for physical activity.

- As Kaiser Permanente members, you and your family members have access to a variety of health education and physical activity programs such as personal Health Coaches, online lifestyle programs, and onsite classes.
Supporting Our Communities To Be Active

- **KAISER PERMANENTE THRIVING SCHOOLS** is an effort dedicated to improving the health of students, staff, and teachers in K-12 schools. Our work in schools is focused on four key areas: healthy eating, active living, school employee wellness, and positive school climate.

- **EVERY BODY WALK!** is a national and collaborative movement to get America walking and increase access to safe places to be active. This initiative also addresses the economic, ecological, and equity benefits of “placemaking” and the creation of more walkable communities. The website offers an application you can download to your smart phone or tablet to help track your walks and provides information on great places you can walk. Check it out at everybodywalk.org.

- **COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES** promote healthy eating and active living (often referred to as HEAL) in neighborhoods, schools and workplaces. HEAL work also addresses the economic vitality of families and communities, neighborhood safety, and social and emotional wellness — key factors in promoting healthy communities. We work with community-based organizations, public agencies, businesses, and residents to translate their vision for healthy communities into visible, concrete changes—and ultimately healthier neighborhoods.

- **KAISER PERMANENTE** actively partners with scores of organizations and initiatives to support healthy, active lifestyles in our communities — e.g. American College of Sports Medicine, Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Rails to Trails Conservancy, Complete Streets/Smart Growth America, HEAL Cities, Girl Trek, and Cities for Workforce Health. Other partners include: Alliance for Biking and Walking, Bipartisan Policy Center, Vision Zero Network, Transportation for America, Institute of Medicine, Playworks, Trust for Public Lands, 8-80, Partnership for Public Spaces, NIKE, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

Aim for 30 minutes a day of any moderate to vigorous activity; at least 150 minutes of activity a week for you and your family (60 minutes everyday for kids).

WHAT MOVES YOU? Is it dancing, sports, swimming, or biking? Physical activity does not have to look a certain way — it’s about moving your body in ways that feel good and are appropriate for you.

Walking is a simple way to get started, but remember, it could be any type of activity — so find your passion, find your thing, and move to better health! Pick activities that you like — ones that make your heart beat faster, your muscles stronger, and your muscles and joints more flexible. If you find more than one thing you like doing, do them all. You don’t have to do the same thing every day. Outdoor physical activity can strengthen your connection to nature, so don’t limit yourself to only being active at a gym; there is a world to discover outside your door.

The US Surgeon General encourages all Americans to aim for 30 minutes a day (60 minutes everyday for kids) of any moderate to vigorous activity; and to achieve at least 150 minutes (420 for kids) of activity a week. These activity levels have significant health promoting benefits.

Sing-Talk Test

The easiest way to gauge moderate intensity exercise is by using the Sing-Talk Test. Exercise done at a moderate intensity level should make you winded enough that you cannot sing, but not so winded you cannot talk.
Health Promoting Benefits

Physical activity is any kind of activity that gets your body moving. Being active means allowing your body to “practice” breathing, stretching, and lifting. The more practice your body gets, the better it works.

There are significant disease prevention and health-promoting benefits from consistent physical activity. Being active is one of the best things you can do to get fit and stay healthy. Consistent physical activity helps you to:

- Feel stronger and have more energy to enjoy all activities
- Focus better at work or school and to perform better
- Improve your sleep and gastrointestinal health
- Reach and stay at a healthy weight
- Lose fat and build lean muscle
- Lower risk for serious health problems
- Keep bones, muscles, and joints strong
- Acts as a natural mood elevator; helps to relieve mild anxiety and depression, improve energy, and increase a general sense of well-being

DID YOU KNOW BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE CAN HELP YOU BE MORE PRODUCTIVE?

Workers who are physically active on and off the job are more productive and this can help contribute to overall workplace morale. Furthermore, you will be at lower risk of getting injured or ill, and may feel more job satisfaction.
Get Your Heart Pumping Every Day

Get 30 minutes a day of any type of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity.

**MODEST-INTENSITY AEROBIC ACTIVITY**
You’re working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. One way to tell is that you’ll be able to talk, but not sing the words to your favorite song.

Examples of activities that require moderate effort:
- Walking briskly
- Water aerobics
- Bicycling on level ground or with a few hills
- Playing doubles tennis
- Gardening – i.e. raking leaves

**VIGOROUS-INTENSITY AEROBIC ACTIVITY**
You’re breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate has gone up quite a bit. If you’re working at this level, you won’t be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath. Examples of activities that require vigorous effort:
- Jogging or running
- Swimming laps
- Riding a bike fast or on hills
- Playing singles tennis
- Playing basketball

**PACE YOURSELF AND BUILD UP OVER TIME**
If you want to do more vigorous-level activities, slowly replace those that take moderate effort like brisk walking, with more vigorous activities like jogging.

When you do vigorous intensity exercise you gain the same benefits in half the time. For example, 15 minutes of jogging gives an equivalent benefit to 30 minutes of walking. So if time is short, you can increase the intensity level of your activity and get the same health benefits in less time.

If you are concerned about how more activity might affect your health, have a physical before starting any new physical activity. Be sure to follow any special advice from your doctor.
**Strengthen Your Muscles**

Getting stronger does not always mean lifting heavy weights or growing big, bulky muscles. Doing a few simple activities that make your muscles work against, or “resist,” something can help you get stronger.

For example, you can:

- Do push-ups or sit-ups; both use your own body weight as resistance.
- Use resistance bands at home, in a gym, or at work.
- Speak with a fitness professional to show proper form and use fitness equipment correctly to add intensity to your workout.

**Stretch Often**

Stretching will help you maintain or improve your body’s range of motion and help prevent injury as you become more active by increasing flexibility and loosening tight muscles. Stretching can also help improve your balance and posture; it can also be a great way to relax.

Be sure to stretch the muscles you’ll be using when you work out. It is best to warm your muscles slightly before you stretch them. Walk or do some other light aerobic activity for a few minutes, and then start stretching.

**WHEN YOU STRETCH YOUR MUSCLES:**

- Do it slowly. Stretching is not about going fast or making sudden movements.
- Don’t push or bounce during a stretch.
- Hold each stretch for at least 15 to 30 seconds, if possible. You should feel a stretch in the muscle, but not pain.
- Practice deep breathing while stretching. Breathe in while holding the stretch. Then, as you release the stretch and relax, exhale out. Or, for an even deeper stretch, as you breathe out, try to extend and hold the stretch for a second time. There is a tendency to hold one’s breathe while stretching, but don’t forget to keep breathing!
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2  

Find your joy! Do activities you love to do and are passionate about. It doesn’t have to be only one; you can do it all.

DO WHATEVER MAKES YOU FEEL ALIVE. Use your five senses to choose a type of physical activity, and pay attention to how each makes you feel while you move. Ask yourself, “What do I see or smell or taste or hear when I’m active?” Instead of watching the clock or counting the distance you are running, pay attention to what sensations you are experiencing and what your body is telling you. You may discover new opportunities or desires to try out new types of activities to enjoy and add to your routine.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

Do Your Thing

• Identify the activities that make you happy—maybe swimming, or going for a walk or hike in the outdoors. Spend some time with a creative outlet like singing, photography, or dancing.

• Explore what exercise means to you. Is it about health, being social, wanting to learn something new, or trying something challenging? Exercise does not necessarily equate to weight-loss. You can work to create new associations, like enjoying the beat of the music you are dancing to or being outside in the sun walking around the lake with friends.

• Go back in time and think about what physical activities you enjoyed as a child that were solely for fun. Maybe it was jumping rope, or biking, or playing with your dog. We are meant to be physical creatures and not be sedentary for eight hours a day, but physical activity does not have to be a structured thing where you go to the gym to work out on a treadmill.

• Schedule time to do those things with the people you love. Connecting with others is a powerful source of well-being.

• Be present in your activity. The most direct way to awaken joy comes from a grateful heart, which means being present and expressing gratitude for all the blessings in your life. Reflecting on your blessings regularly and appreciating them in the moment is powerful.

Movement can be built into your current routine. It is okay if running or going to the gym is not at the top of your list. By paying attention to what your body naturally wants, finding your passion and doing the activities that you enjoy will help you create and live a physically active lifestyle in no time!
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3 Have a conversation with your physician.
Exercise is a vital sign and a critical component of your overall health.

AT KAISER PERMANENTE we have one simple mission — keeping you and your family healthy. That’s exactly what we’ve been doing for more than 70 years. We’re continually advancing medicine so that we can provide you with better care to live a longer and healthier life. As Kaiser Permanente members, you and your family members will have access to a variety of health education and physical activity programs such as personal health coaches, online lifestyle programs, onsite classes, podcasts, and even a Kaiser Permanente YouTube channel. You can have a powerful and positive impact on your family and friends, inspiring them to be active by serving as a great role model.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

Exercise as a Vital Sign

Has a member of your health care team asked you or your family members how many minutes of physical activity you’re engaging in each day? This is done because the number of minutes you spend being active each week has been proven to have a direct effect on your health. Kaiser Permanente was the first major health care provider to begin using an Exercise Vital Sign to inform patients about the dangers of being sedentary. The Exercise Vital Sign supports Kaiser Permanente members in being physically active, regardless of their age or level of physical fitness. It recognizes the critical importance of regular aerobic activity to the health of all members — and aims to help members take action. This practice encourages Kaiser Permanente members to have a conversation with their physicians about starting or maintaining a physical activity routine and what resources are available to them.

Kaiser Permanente Supports “Exercise is Medicine”

Bob Sallis, MD

The association between a physically active lifestyle and good health cannot be denied. Those who maintain an active and fit way of life live longer and healthier lives, while those who are sedentary and unfit tend to suffer prematurely from chronic disease and die at a younger age. In fact, studies suggest a positive relationship between physical activity and health status, and that an association between disease and inactivity exists in every age group — from children to adults to senior citizens.

Imagine if there was a pill that conferred even a fraction of the proven health benefits of exercise. It is certain that physicians would widely prescribe this exercise pill to patients. Health care systems would see to it that every patient had access to such a wonder drug. For these reasons, Kaiser Permanente has been a pioneer in assessing our patient’s physical activity habits using an Exercise Vital Sign and encouraging them to be active. For most patients, the default exercise prescription is walking at a moderate pace for 30 minutes on 5 or more days each week. Getting patients to follow this simple prescription has the potential to prevent and treat more disease than any therapy that exists today.
**KPMoves.ORG**

KPMoves.org is a website designed to make physical activity fun and easy. Use the website to find physical activity ideas, places, and events in your local community.

**Wellness Coaching**

Kaiser Permanente employees and family members who are members of the Kaiser Permanente Health Plan have access to a personal wellness coach. Wellness coaching can help you get started with a physical activity routine — as well as help to reduce stress, quit tobacco use, manage weight, and eat healthy.

**Kaiser Permanente Programs and Classes**

Kaiser Permanente members and their families have access to online programs, special rates, and classes to help them live healthier and become more active. There are fitness tips and many resources available to you at kp.org/fitness. More information on programs and classes is available if you are a Kaiser Permanente member.

Programs and classes vary by region. For a list of classes available to you in your region, visit: healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/health/care/consumer/health-wellness/programsclasses/
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

Identify and build your support system – reach out to co-workers, family members, or friends to support you and join your team as your “cheering squad” or “workout buddies.”

POSITIVE SOCIAL SUPPORT plays an important role in one’s ability to make healthier choices, whether it be from co-workers, friends, or family.

A workout buddy can help you be accountable, keep you motivated, and encourage you to be more active. Having a companion join you in taking that Zumba class or going for a hike can add another level of fun to your activity.

When you determine what it is that you want to do, whether it is to climb Kilimanjaro, be able to do a pull-up, or spend quality time with a loved one while being active, tell those people you’ve chosen to be in your cheering squad and ask for their support. For example, they could provide you with friendly reminders to get regular exercise, do strength training, eat healthy, and keep regular checkups with your physician.

If you have a chronic condition that requires daily management, your support system can also help you with following your doctor’s recommendations to monitor blood sugars, blood pressure, or other vital signs; stick with a regular diet and obtain routine physical activity; and help with other daily needs.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

Getting the support you need for success

- Identify the people (family, friends, coworkers) that can help you in getting and staying active. Ask those who matter most to you to make a point of asking you about your physical activity. Who are the people that will not only ask you about it, but also cheer you on when you need it most?

- What kind of support do you want? Do you want someone to workout or walk with you? It could even be asking your family to help with cleaning up after dinner so that you can take a walk. Whatever it may be, don’t be afraid to ask.

- Challenge your family, friends, and coworkers to join you! With physical activity, the more the merrier. There’s nothing like starting a family dance party, catching up with friends on a walk, or making a regular meeting a walking meeting. Encourage others to join you in the fun! You will find it just may give you the support you are looking for.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5

A LOT OF TIME IS SPENT at the workplace and regardless of how busy work can get, it is important to take the time to be active during the work day. Under this guiding principle, you will find ideas and tools for how to make opportunities for stretching, moving and feeling great during the work day. You can even set a game plan for yourself by completing the “Time to Take Five” action plan.

You will also learn more about resources and programs available to make the active choice the easy choice. Sometimes the easiest choice is right in your immediate surroundings. Evaluate your work environment and take advantage of active spaces at the worksite or neighboring areas. Are there established walking or bike paths? Are there parks, trails, or other active public spaces nearby? Can you find ways to take the stairs more often?

These resources and programs apply to all Kaiser Permanente employees at all levels of work, from employees who work mainly at a computer workstation and attend long meetings, to those of us who are already active during the workday, due to jobs that are labor-intensive and physically demanding.
These types of positions may require you to be on your feet or moving a lot during the day. Examples include standing or walking much of the day; cleaning or maintaining facilities, rooms and equipment; or moving equipment, laundry, other materials, or people. If this sounds like a job you do, being more active may be the last thing on your mind. However, there are benefits to being physically active other than what you do while working. Physical activity can help you feel better, reduce stress, and increase your strength or endurance for all kinds of physical activity, including while at work. We have developed a special section of this principle just for you called “Movement in an Active Workplace” (see page 29).

**NOTE:** All activities done at the workplace should be completely voluntary, done at a pace that is comfortable for you, and should not cause pain or discomfort.

### Active Breaks

Tighten your glutes. Flatten your tummy. Tone your arms. This isn’t an infomercial — it could be your next meeting. Research shows that short 5- or 10-minute workouts throughout the day can help you to reach your physical activity goals.

*Try one of these Active Break ideas:*

**STRETCH BREAKS**

Reach for the sky. Bend to the side. Breathe. These refreshing activities can be a part of each and every meeting by adding short stretch breaks. Bring [Stretch Break 101 (PDF)](#) with you to each meeting. If you’re holding a web conference meeting, use the [Stretch Break PowerPoint Slides](#) during your meeting. Read the instructions on the slide to lead meeting members through the stretches. Do you work in a job that requires you to be active? Try stretching before your shift to get you physically prepared for the day ahead.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5

WALKING BREAK

• Take a quick 5- or 10-minute walk around the building. Getting outside for some fresh air might even leave you refreshed and energized for the rest of your meeting.

• Include a short walk in your next meeting as a quick activity break.

• If you don’t have time to leave the building, take a quick walk through the halls of the building. Consider walking down the hall to talk to a colleague, rather than using the phone or sending an email.

• Start a walking club with work colleagues.

• Use mobile apps, such as the Every Body Walk! App, to support your walking breaks.

• Keep a walking journal or use a physical activity tracker like Fitbit® or Jawbone™. Every little bit adds up!

STAIR CLIMBER

• If your building has open stairwells, you have a quick workout waiting for you. See how many flights up and down you can squeeze in during your meeting break.

• Make your break functional. Try using a bathroom on a different floor so that you can add a few flights of stairs.

PUMP IT UP

Building muscle doesn’t require a lot of time or equipment. Incorporating a short strength training circuit workout will increase your heart rate and exercise each of your major muscle groups using your body weight as resistance. Simply move from one exercise to the next with minimal breaks in between. See the Appendix for sample workouts.
Instant Recess® for Kaiser Permanente Employees

Recess is back! Kaiser Permanente partnered with Toni Yancey, MD, to provide our employees a fun way to incorporate activity within our work days. Instant Recess® can be done by anyone, in any location, in any attire. Join the movement happening at Kaiser Permanente where call centers, labs, pharmacies, patient care units, and administrative offices are participating. It’s never been easier to get more active. Individuals can participate at their own level and in their own way. Simply play music, get creative, and get moving for 5-10 minutes to re-energize!

Encourage your team members to add play to their day and see how it helps strengthen teams, raise morale, and helps you thrive. There is no wrong way to move with Instant Recess, just move!

Active Meetings

Take physically active meetings to the next level and make your meeting a workout. With a little planning, and a good pair of walking shoes, you can schedule walking meetings that will leave you feeling productive and refreshed.

WALKING MEETINGS

Designate a walking route and start walking and talking. One-on-one meetings are easy to convert into walking meetings. Need to be on a long conference call? Consider taking it on a mobile phone and walking outdoors.

Team walking meetings can be a fun and productive alternative to regular staff meetings. Here are a few suggestions on how to coordinate a large team walking meeting:

- Separate the larger team into groups of two to three people to walk together, and set “planned stops” along the route for the team to reconvene or switch partners.
- Reserve a conference space in a nearby building and plan for discussions to occur to and from the meeting.
- Use the walking meeting option as a break-out session for small groups to discuss a suggested meeting topic.
Before a walking meeting begins:

- Determine the route the team will take (e.g. around the perimeter of the building, to a nearby landmark, from one end of the facility to the other.)
- Set “planned stops” with a larger group or pairs to stop to discuss a topic.
- Plan and share the walking route with meeting participants prior to the meeting.
- Designate a walking leader to lead the route.
- Make sure every participant is paired with at least one other person.
- Bring a watch and determine a start and end time.
- Be mindful of the surroundings if/when discussing confidential information.

You should also check to see if your facility offers treadmill conference rooms, or rooms with fitness equipment such as resistance bands and exercise balls. In some facilities, you can schedule these rooms for smaller groups.

**STANDING MEETINGS**

If you can’t hold a moving meeting, try holding shorter meetings (or part of longer meetings) as standing meetings. Standing burns an average of about 20 percent more calories than sitting for the same amount of time. This calorie burn is due to the muscles in your legs and back working against gravity to keep you in a standing position.

You can also get a hands-free phone headset to use during phone meetings so that you can stand and even walk in place in your office while still being engaged in the meeting.

**Here are a few ideas to make hosting a standing meeting convenient:**

- Make sure the conference space you use has enough room to accommodate meeting participants standing.
- Consider bringing clip boards to the meeting so participants can easily write while standing.
- Let meeting participants know ahead of time that the meeting will be conducted standing. Some participants may want to change shoes for comfort.
- Keep it short — people may be uncomfortable standing more than 20-30 minutes. You may even find that your meetings get more efficient when you stand, so you’ll need less time to get through your agenda.
- Be sensitive to staff concerns about their physical capacity to engage in these activities. Respond to any concerns promptly and confidentially.
Standing vs. Sitting at Your Work Station

Studies show that sitting and standing for long periods of time can cause health problems. There are pros and cons for both. But, sitting for more than 1 hour has been shown to cause fat to accumulate in tissue rather than be metabolized by muscle. Extensive sitting also increases heart disease risk, so people are advocating standing at your workstation because this uses more muscle activity, burning an average of about twenty percent more calories. Standing all day can also be unhealthy because it is an increased, additional stress on the circulatory system, legs, and feet. Standing for long periods of time can also aggravate pain and swelling from varicose veins.

Whether you choose to sit or stand during the workday, moving is important to your overall health. Moving prevents injuries, allows for greater extension of joints, promotes faster recovery, relaxes the body, and feels good! Bottom line, sit and stand during the day by taking frequent “micro breaks,” preferably 1-2 minutes every 20-30 minutes.

Workplace ergonomics are an important factor in workplace safety and your overall health. Work with your manager to make appropriate changes to your work area or get an ergonomic assessment, if necessary.

One resource offered by Kaiser Permanente National Workplace Safety is “Stretch Break Pro,” a multi-user group license software program that reminds computer operators to take frequent mini breaks.

DID YOU KNOW THAT “SITTING” MAY BE A NEW EPIDEMIC?

A growing body of evidence suggests that all the time we spend sitting — at work, home, or behind a steering wheel — is linked to increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer and even depression. Even those who regularly exercise may be at risk. The problem? Extended periods of sitting are not good for you. Your body was made to move, so break up those extended periods of sitting by getting up and moving (even a little) throughout the day where possible.
Worksite Programs, Resources, and Events

There are a number of programs, resources, and local events available to you as a Kaiser Permanente employee.

**WORKFORCE WELLNESS AT KAISER PERMANENTE**

Healthy Workforce offers programs for all employees and is designed to make physical activity fun, engaging, and sustainable. Whether you need something simple or a competitive team challenge, there is something for you.

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**

Active forms of transportation promote pedestrian mobility, bicycle usage, and connectivity to mass transit. But it not only promotes active living, it’s good for our environment too — reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. Kaiser Permanente offers incentives and amenities to encourage active commuting and use of public transit.

Resources may include:

- Bike racks or bike lockers
- Shower facility
- Carpool parking
- Emergency Ride Home
- Bike to Work Event
- RideShare Event
- Shuttle from public transportation to the medical center
COMMIUTER SPENDING ACCOUNTS

Kaiser Permanente offers employees the ability to set aside pre-tax money to use toward parking and transportation used for getting to and from work. An advantage of enrolling in the program is a convenient way to order your transit passes online and receive them without leaving your home. In some regions, there is a new $20 per month subsidy for bike commuters. To learn more, log on to My HR and go to the “KP & Me” benefits section.

BIKE SHARE PROGRAMS

Bike share programs have been shown to increase overall employee wellness and morale, contribute to environmental stewardship, and relieve parking pressure and traffic congestion. At a Northern California IT campus, employees use KP-branded bikes for lunch, errands, team building, meetings and healthy breaks.

DID YOU KNOW THERE ARE ACTIVE SPACES IN KAISER PERMANENTE FACILITIES?

Throughout Kaiser Permanente we are constantly building and creating spaces to encourage physical activity. These spaces vary by region and are available to the public. Here are a few to look out for:

- Labyrinths (located in calm, landscaped courtyards, paved labyrinths are a place where you can walk, whether for fun, relaxation, or meditation)
- Beautified stairwells
- Walking paths
- Bike share programs
- Onsite or nearby fitness programs/facilities
Movement for an Active Workplace

In a health care organization, many employees are on their feet all day. They are caring for patients, transporting patients, cleaning, delivering meals and contributing to the operations of medical centers.

If you are in this type of position, you may feel you are already active enough, and may not need further physical activity or exercise. However, the amount and types of physical activity required for your typical work may not be enough to condition and challenge your body to reap the health benefits of physical activity.

Our bodies are highly adaptable. This is especially true when it comes to physical activity. Keeping our bodies physically fit can make us safer doing physical activities both on and off the job. Physical activity, both aerobic exercise and strength training, can help lower the risk of work-related injuries. By conditioning your body through exercise and physical fitness, you prepare yourself for movement throughout the day, especially when your job is physically demanding.

SOMETIMES ALL WE NEED IS 10 MINUTES TO FEEL HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER.

When we break a sweat, even for just 10 minutes at a time a few times a day, we get more than we often put into it. You can decrease your chance of getting preventable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and even some cancers. It can also increase your energy, boost your mood, and decrease your stress. Here are some ways you can incorporate, even just 10 minutes of physical activity to get you feeling good:

• Incorporate an Instant Recess® in your workday and relieve stress with your coworkers.

• Go for a quick brisk walk to a park or down the street after the workday; have family or a friend join you.

• Turn on some music or watch an exercise video and have some fun.
It’s also just as important to keep our muscles strong through strength training. Strength training doesn’t necessarily mean “getting bulky,” but it can burn a lot of calories and help you lose weight. There are many different ways to start strength training. These include:

- Bodyweight exercises in a circuit
- Resistance band workouts
- Weight machines or dumbbells at a gym

The options are endless and customizable to your busy life.

DID YOU KNOW THAT DIFFERENT TYPES OF STRETCHING CAN HELP DECREASE BACK PAIN AND MUSCLE TIGHTNESS?

Not only can increasing physical activity help us stay safe on and off the job, but keeping our muscles loose and maintaining adequate blood flow can help minimize the risk for workplace injuries.

If you are on your feet all day, try some dynamic movements to increase blood flow throughout your legs and low back, and relax those muscles! Here are some great movements to incorporate into your day:

- Alternating knee flexion. Try bringing your heel to your buttocks by bending at the knee while standing. Stay in your normal range of motion. This movement can loosen your thigh muscles after a long day.

- Hip rotations. Rotate your hips in circles or in Figure 8’s. This will increase blood flow to your legs and can loosen up your hip muscles.

- Alternating knee raises. Raise your knee to hip level (or your normal range of motion) while keeping your knee bent.

- You can also try some static stretches just for your legs such as hamstring stretch, quadriceps stretch, or calf stretch.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6

Discuss with your manager opportunities to build physical activity into your work day and how to support your goals to improve your health.

MANAGERS CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE in helping build physical activity into the work day. By partnering with them, you can help build an environment that not only encourages you to achieve your active goals, but your team’s goals as well. Health is a team sport, and a healthier, more active team means everyone wins. Active teams have better attendance, are more productive, and suffer fewer injuries. Just a few minutes of physical activity a day can lead to improved health for you, your team, your department, and organization. You can help your manager understand its important role in creating an environment where you can be healthy, stay healthy, and thrive.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6

Getting started

• Change can start with a simple conversation. It often helps managers to understand that they can be an active role model. They don’t need to be an athlete or a health nut to support their team – in fact, sharing their sincere efforts and challenges around active living could be all the inspiration the team needs.

• Ask your manager to set their own active goal. What moves them? What are they passionate about? Encourage them to start where they are and share with their team that they are setting their own goal.

• Spread the wealth! Once your manager is encouraged to set their own goal, they can encourage you and your team to prioritize physical activity. You could even brainstorm as a team ways that you can incorporate physical activity into your day. For example, you could all take a quick walk during your daily huddle or incorporate an active break in the afternoon. Try one idea out for a week or month and see how it goes.

• Get creative with your environment. Regardless of the physical environment you work in, there are ways you can work with your manager to make your environment foster physical activity. It could be as simple as posting a sign near the elevator encouraging people to take the stairs; encouraging coworkers to walk to another department to ask questions instead of relying on email; or post an activity tracker where team members can check a box or post a sticker every time they do 10 minutes of physical activity. Just like when we were in grade school, a poster full of gold stars that is visible to all can be a great motivator. Just be sure to keep it anonymous so that it remains voluntary.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7

Be a leader – we all play a vital role in creating an active culture.

KP LEADERS, managers, physicians, and employees all play a vital role in creating an active workplace. Transforming the Kaiser Permanente culture to an active culture includes engaging all levels throughout the organization to be champions for physical activity.

Physical Activity Manager/Team Lead Resources

If you are a manager or team lead, we understand that you need help too — to keep yourself healthy, as well as guidance on inspiring your team to be more active. That is why Healthy Workforce created resources just for you — our managers and leaders — to support healthy activity in the workplace. Schedule walking meetings, participate in Instant Recess breaks with your team, and take stretch breaks at your desk. We provide three simple steps: educate, inform, and inspire.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7

It’s also important as managers and team leads to encourage physical activity in the places that your team works. There may not be labyrinths, walking paths, or even beautified stairwells in your building, but that shouldn’t stop you from getting creative in making the active choice the easy choice for your team. Here are some ideas to get you thinking outside the box:

• Incorporate a quick activity break during a team meeting (even if it’s on the phone or in person).

• Get some pedometers and challenge your team to a step challenge for one week to see who can get the most steps. Get another team involved and have a challenge across different departments.

• Make it visible. Post active break ideas or motivating messages in your break room.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8

Physical activity is always for everyone, regardless of physical abilities or fitness levels. There are many ways to get and stay active.

KAISER PERMANENTE EMBRACES and supports the core principles of Integrated Disability Management. This means that all employees, regardless of any illness or disabling condition, can work in an environment that embraces their total health, ensures their safety, and maintains its commitment to optimize their functional ability to serve our members and patients. Kaiser Permanente is committed to creating environments that encourage physical activity for all abilities.
Physical Activity and Persons of all Abilities

Adults of all shapes, sizes, and abilities can benefit from being physically active, including those with disabilities. Evidence shows that regular physical activity provides important health benefits including improved mental health and better ability to do tasks of daily life. Adults with disabilities, who are able to, should still aim for 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous intensity. In cases where the disability is temporary, physical activity (approved by your physician or other health care professional) and eating a healthy diet can assist in and hasten your recovery. No matter what your limitations are, you can still find ways to be as active as possible. You are encouraged to talk with your health care professional about the types of physical activity that are appropriate for your abilities. Examples of activities may include:

- Water aerobics, swimming, or aquatic therapy
- Hand-crank bicycling
- Rowing
- Seated volleyball
- Wheelchair sports or activities
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9

Make physical activity accessible to everyone across all communities regardless of race, income, or status, or employment level. What could be done in your work and community environments to increase access to safe places to be active?

IN ORDER TO MAKE physical activity accessible to all, we need to improve our communities and develop walkable, safe places that encourage activity. There are many reasons and corresponding solutions to addressing this.

Healthy and safe communities are possible with environments that allow access to healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables; affordable housing; roadways designed to allow efficient and safe travel by foot, bike, and car; and access to parks and open spaces for all to be physically active. How can we, as individuals, businesses, health care systems and clinicians, community organizations, schools, and local and state governments, do more to address and support these ideals?

Compared to those who do not have access to safe, walkable places, people engage in higher levels of physical activity when they work, go to school, or live near parks or open spaces. Government leaders and funders can help protect these public spaces by investing in communities for new construction of parks within communities, protecting current funding, and prioritizing resources when new funds become available. Collaboration across diverse sectors (e.g., transportation, planning, housing, education, environmental regulation, businesses, labor organizations, public health) when making decisions will likely have a significant effect on making our communities safe for all.
Communities that are walkable have the following characteristics: sidewalks, safe intersections, accessible destinations, and green spaces. Children who walk or bike to school are more physically active overall than those who commute by car with their parents. To ensure safety of school routes and increase sidewalks in communities, parents, teachers, and school administrators can continue to support funding for Safe Routes to Schools programs and policies and make investments in physical activity infrastructure in schools. Implementing complete streets helps ensure that streets are accessible for all of us at any age, from five years old to 80 years old, as a pedestrian, cyclist, public transit user, or automobile user. Through partnerships with community advocacy organizations and local government planners, we can focus on incorporating and building sustainable community strategies with a health and equity lens into community infrastructure projects and grant making. Working across sectors and with community leaders can help ensure that the health, equity, and safety of communities are a top priority.

**Vision Zero – A Model to Follow**

Vision Zero, an initiative first developed in Sweden and has since been adapted in several cities throughout the United States, aims for achieving zero lives lost due to pedestrian and/or auto collisions while boosting safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Vision Zero targets communities that are have higher levels of low income populations, minorities, youths, seniors, and people with disabilities. Vision Zero recognizes that there are many factors involved, including infrastructure, enforcement, educations, and policies – and all must prioritize safety to achieve the goal for safe and healthy mobility.
WE ARE COMMITTED TO transforming how the world thinks about and delivers on health. We are dedicated to making health care accessible to all. We help make healthy choices easier choices for millions of Americans.

Through our community benefit initiatives and partnerships we invest in creating healthier environments, healthier people, and shaping knowledge that expands access into our communities.

Here are some of the ways Kaiser Permanente is encouraging our communities to move more:

- Center for Total Health
- Garfield Center for Innovation
- Weight of the Nation Video series
- Kaiser Permanente Educational Theater
- Community Benefit Grants to promote heart health.
- Kaiser Permanente Community Health Initiatives (HEAL: Healthy Eating Active Living).
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 10

DID YOU KNOW WALKING IS A GREAT WAY TO CONNECT?

Walking has become a great way to connect KP physicians and our communities. In some regions, KP members have partnered with a physician to get outside and walk together and these efforts have grown into walking programs and clubs. At the Center for Total Health, physicians host a 10-minute teaching session and then get outside for a walk with members of the community. In the Sacramento service area, physicians have hosted “Walk to Thrive” walks for the community and thousands have joined them. For information on this initiative, go to kpwalktothrive.org

Thriving Schools – Creating Active Lifestyles, Starting at Schools

Schools play a critical role in promoting physical activity and teaching youth how to be physically active for a lifetime. Schools are an ideal setting for teaching youth how to adopt and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle through quality physical education, active and engaging recess, physical activity breaks, walk-and bike-to-school programs and out-of-school sports and activity programs. Teachers and school staff also benefit from integrating physical activity into the school day. By modeling these behaviors, they further encourage their students to be active.

Thriving Schools is an effort dedicated to improving the health of students, staff, and teachers in K-12 schools. Our work in schools is focused on four key areas: healthy eating, active living, school employee wellness, and positive school climate.

FIRE UP YOUR FEET

Fire Up Your Feet, a program of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, encourages families, students, teachers, and school staff to work together and create active lifestyles. Centered around the school day, age-appropriate resources and educational materials are available to encourage physical activity to, from, and at school. Any parent or school in the country can use these resources. Participate in one of the challenges in the fall and spring and compete to win awards that can be used to further promote health. Visit fireupyourfeet.org to learn more.
LET’S MOVE ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Kaiser Permanente is supporting the First Lady’s Let’s Move Active Schools initiative. Schools can sign up and get access to tools and resources to promote physical activity. Visit letsmoveschools.org.

Learn how to promote physical activity in your school and see how others have championed physical activity, healthy eating, school employee wellness, and a healthy school environment at thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/

Every Body Walk!

The Every Body Walk! Collaborative was launched in January 2013 as a partnership of diverse organizations focused on collective efforts to promote walking and push for safer, accessible, walkable places. The goals and core strategies of the Collaborative are guided by the premise that all Americans should be able to walk enough to get a health benefit and all communities should have places where walking is safe, easy, and routine.

The Collaborative’s goals are to:

1. Increase knowledge, awareness and capacity to motivate action;
2. Increase the demand for accessible, safe and easy places to walk; and
3. Improve and facilitate coordination of all efforts that are creating walkable spaces.

Core strategies are:

1. Serving as a network for resource sharing and collaboration;
2. Framing messages to be used across the movement; and
3. Developing and serving as a national voice to guide resources and showcase successful efforts.

As a Collaborative, we promote both walking and walkability; we empower and celebrate champions and push for safe, accessible and inclusive places to walk. The Collaborative is powered by Kaiser Permanente.
GUIDING PRINCIPLE 10

At the center of this campaign is an online walking hub you can use at everybodywalk.org. It has grown into a national movement that focuses on walking, but embraces all forms of physical activity. Through a multi-faceted collaboration with our national partners, Every Body Walk! is spreading the message that by walking 30 minutes a day, five days a week (60 minutes a day for kids), you can improve your overall health and prevent disease. We understand that a key to getting people to be more physically active is ensuring access to safe and fun places near their homes, schools, workplaces, and in their communities. We provide the latest news and resources on physical activity, health information, a personal pledge form to start walking, as well as a place to share stories about individual experiences with walking. Use the Every Body Walk! App on your iPhone or Android device to help you, your family, and your community get more active.

Other partnerships include:

- Partnership for a Healthier America
- Let’s Move — First Lady Michelle Obama’s program
- Convergence Partnership
- Instant Recess
SUMMARY

KAISER PERMANENTE is a world leader in the promotion of physical activity to improve health. It began with the Thrive campaign and our understanding that patients need to be an active participant in their own health. We can practice the best medicine in the world, but if our patients engage in unhealthy habits like smoking, eating poorly, or being sedentary, our best efforts to keep them healthy can be sabotaged. This is why we work to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage our patients to do their part so they can live long and thrive.

Helping and encouraging our physicians and employees to do their best to walk the talk and live the brand takes on double importance. First of all, the health of Kaiser Permanente depends on the health of those who work here. We know that employees who are physically active miss less work, are more productive, and live longer. In addition, studies have shown that health care providers who are active themselves are more likely to encourage their patients to be active and to prescribe preventive care. In effect, they are better health care providers and the result is healthier patients. Those studies also show that you do not have to be an accomplished athlete to inspire your patients or members. In fact, patients related even better to providers who were struggling like them to be fit. So do your best to live long and thrive, and inspire those around you and the patients you serve to do the same!
APPENDIX A: ACTION PLANNING

I will set new norms and habits to make the active choice the easy choice. I will be an active leader and inspire others to be active in the places that I live, work, and play.

1. FIND YOUR PASSION.
List physical activities that you love to do (e.g., hiking, swimming, yoga):

2. BEING ACTIVE AT WORK
What are 1-2 ways you can get active at work?
1.
2.

3. BEING ACTIVE AT HOME
What are 1-2 ways you can get active at home?
1.
2.

4. BEING ACTIVE IN MY COMMUNITY
How can you inspire others to be active in your community or schools?

5. ACHIEVING 30 MINUTES A DAY OF MODERATE TO VIGOROUS ACTIVITY; AT LEAST 150 MINUTES OF ACTIVITY A WEEK
Things that could make it difficult to achieve 150 minutes of physical activity a week:

Plan for overcoming these challenges:

Support and resources you need to achieve 150 minutes of physical activity a week:
APPENDIX B: SAMPLE EXERCISES & ACTIVITY BREAKS

SAMPLE ACTIVE BREAKS

THE 5 BEST EXERCISES YOU CAN DO AT HOME

By Andy Gallardo, CPT-NASM
Director of Fitness, Kaiser Permanente

1. SQUAT: One of the best all-around exercises you can do. Targets your quadriceps and activates your core and just about every muscle in your lower body.
   A. Brace your core
   B. Low back should have a natural arch
   C. Stand tall
   D. Lower your body by pushing hips back and bending knees
   E. Legs should be parallel to floor
   F. Weight is on heels
   G. Pause then slowly push back up

2. PUSHUPS: Great for upper body muscles as well as core and hips.
   A. Get down on all fours in a plank position and place your hands slightly wider than your shoulders
   B. Lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor
   C. Your body should form a straight line
   D. Pause at the bottom and then push yourself back up
   E. Keep head in same position looking down
   F. When your hips start to sag … you are done

3. BIRD DOG: Great stability exercise as it teaches you to brace your core which will help prevent injuries and lower your risk of back injuries.
   A. Get down on your hands and knees with palms flat on the floor and shoulder width apart
   B. Brace your abs and raise your right hand and left leg until they form a straight line with your body
   C. Hold for 5 seconds and switch
   D. Keep your lower back and hips still as you switch
4. **PLANK**: This exercise improves your ability to stabilize the spine which is essential for lower back health. Also, it is highly effective in working the abs.

   A. Get into a pushup position and bend your elbows and rest on your forearms instead of your hands
   
   B. Your body should form a straight line from ankles to shoulders
   
   C. Brace your core like you are about to be punched in the stomach
   
   D. Hold for 30 seconds

5. **ALTERNATING LUNGES**: This exercise targets your quadriceps but works almost all lower body muscles and higher reps give you cardio as well.

   A. Stand tall with shoulders back and chest out
   
   B. Feet are hip width apart
   
   C. Step forward with left leg and slowly lower your body until your front knee is 90 degrees
   
   D. Pause then push yourself back up quickly
   
   E. Alternate and start with right leg
   
   F. Your back knee should almost touch the floor and front leg should not bend past the toe

**SAMPLE ACTIVE BREAKS**

**QUICK AEROBICS WORKOUT**

Try a 5- or 10-minute circuit of fun aerobics moves. Do the following for 1-2 minutes each:

- March in place
- Alternate knee lifts (touch your knee to your opposite elbow)
- Kickboxing kicks to the front and sides (if you have room)
- Wide, side-to-side steps (step left, feet together, step right, feet together)
- Jumping jacks
- Run in place
- Add new moves as you go so your routine stays fresh!
PUMP IT UP

Incorporate a short strength training circuit workout. Try doing two circuits of the following exercises. Do each exercise for about 30 seconds.

- Shoulder presses with dumbbells or exercise bands
- Side leg lifts
- Lunges
- Bicep curls with dumbbells or exercise bands
- Triceps extensions with dumbbells or exercise bands
- Squats
- Add new moves as you go so your routine stays fresh!