

WELLNESS CONNECTION

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OCTOBER 2020

INSPIRE TO MOVE - Building a Well-Rounded Movement Routine



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With so much fitness and wellness information available at our fingertips, it can be overwhelming to decide which pieces should be included in your movement or exercise routine. What elements are most important? How often should I exercise? Do household chores count as exercise?

The top factor in shaping your movement routine is what you want out of your routine. You may have short- and long-term goals and they may shift over time. Consider using the [SMART Goals Worksheet](#) if you need help defining your goals. Revisit your goals regularly and use them to inform your routine.

Once you have specific goal(s) in mind, there are [5 essential elements](#) that should be present in any plan:

Aerobic/Cardio Activity – This includes activities using large muscle groups/full body movements which increase breathing and heart rate. Regular [aerobic activity](#) can strengthen your heart and lungs, allowing them to more efficiently transport oxygen throughout your body. Current guidelines recommend 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity spaced throughout the week. Your participation in the [UI Stride Walktober](#) challenge is a great way to get your aerobic activity in this fall!

Strength Training – Any exercise which places a load (dumbbells/weights or your bodyweight) on your muscles and bones counts as [strength training](#) and can help you maintain or increase the lean muscle tissue and bone tissue in your body. Since both muscle tissue and bone tissue

naturally decline with age, including strength training in your weekly fitness routine can help slow that decline and aid in healthy aging. Being strong also makes completing all of your daily responsibilities easier! Try to include strength training in your routine at least twice per week.

Core/Stability Training – Your whole trunk, from your shoulders down to your hips, is your core. A strong core supports healthy posture, holds your internal organs in place, allows you to move your arms and legs effectively, and helps you keep your balance. A great core routine will include both [mobility and stability exercises](#), and work the sides and back in addition to the front.

Balance Training – Having good balance is a benefit at any age, but is especially important for older adults. Being able to maintain balance on slippery ice, when climbing stairs, or simply while moving throughout your day will reduce the likelihood of falls and injuries. A great bonus for [balance training](#) – it strengthens your core too!

Flexibility/Stretching – Stretching can help you maintain or improve the range of motion in all of your joints, allowing you to move with ease. Devoting some time to stretching can also help improve your performance in other fitness areas. Adding just a [few flexibility exercises](#) to your routine can reap benefits.

When building your movement routine, consider your lifestyle and the demands of your work and household responsibilities. Remember that your daily life activities count toward meeting the recommended targets for activity and that many exercises crossover into more than one category. Work within the limits of your schedule and find the balance that leads you toward your goals and leaves you feeling strong and accomplished. Also recognize that your routine may vary throughout the year due to weather, family or work commitments, or other personal factors. The changing of the seasons can be a helpful cue to remind you to check in on your progress and readjust if necessary.

