



Lesson 8: Keeping Fit for Life

This lesson is appropriate for anyone, with or without diabetes.

Note to the speaker: Use caution with individuals whose weight is within normal limits and/or underweight. Emphasize the need to remain physically active rather than losing weight.

Getting Ready

1. Review Lesson Plan before each session.
2. Copy handouts.
3. Gather supplies needed for lesson and activities.

Supplies Needed

1. Copy of handout for participants titled “A Goal for My Health.”
2. Copy of handout for participant titled “It’s Time to Get Moving.”
3. Copy of the strength and balance exercises (“Lesson on Exercise”) downloaded separate on NOAHnet. You can find the “Lesson on Exercise” listed under the Nutrition and Bone Health section.

Objectives

Participants will:

1. Learn the health benefits of losing and/or managing weight.
2. Learn safe ways for staying active and keeping fit.
3. Learn meal-planning tips to cut empty calories and extra fat out their diets.
4. State or write one fitness goal following the lesson.

Script

Do you worry about your weight? Do you have some extra pounds you would like to shed? If you are overweight, losing that extra weight can be one of the best things you can do for your health. Even a weight loss of five to ten pounds can make a difference. Here are a few of the benefits of trimming down and shaping up:

1. Can help lower blood pressure or blood cholesterol, which may help you reduce your medication dose (only with doctor okay).
2. Can help with blood sugar control if you have diabetes.
3. Can help reduce stress on your joints if you have arthritis.



4. Can give you more energy and help make you feel better.

Motivated to lose some weight yet? As I said before, you can see improvements in your health even after a weight loss of five to ten pounds. Once you decide you want to feel and look better, the next step is to make your own weight loss plan. Most people who are successful at losing weight and keeping it off have some kind of an exercise or activity routine. Maybe you think you can't actually exercise because of pain or some physical problem. However, there are all kinds of exercise that almost anyone can do.

Here are a few ideas to get you moving more:

1. Do housework to music. This can be more fun, keep you energized and help you move at a swifter pace.
2. Work in your garden or flowerbed. Do your work early in the morning or late in the evening so you won't get too hot.
3. Make several trips to and from the car while unloading groceries or other purchases. Carry one or two grocery bags (or shopping bags) on each trip.
4. Pace the floor while you talk on the phone.
5. Break up sitting time with movement- tap your feet, swing your legs up and down, circle your ankles, or raise and lower your arms, for examples.
6. Take walks in your neighborhood, even if only to the end of the block.
7. Take exercise breaks during TV commercials- stand up and march in place, stretch, walk around the room, walk to kitchen for glass of water (then walk to the bathroom during the next commercial break!).
8. Join the exercise and stretching class at your senior center.
9. Find a walking buddy and sign up for local "walk-a-thons" or charity walks. Ask your senior center director to make announcements about these events and check in your local newspaper.
10. Park you car in one spot and walk to do many errands.



11. Take your dog for a walk, but be careful not to trip over the leash.
12. Try an active hobby, like bicycling, walking trails, dancing, taking a yoga class, or swimming/water aerobics.

Remember to drink plenty of water before, during, and after an activity, if possible. You may sweat more than you realize when you start, but the sweat is worth it. Being physically active can improve your balance, strength and flexibility, which can keep you from having a serious fall.

Ask your audience: What are some activities you already do to keep fit? If you decide to start an exercise routine or class, tell your doctor first. Most likely, your doctor will encourage you to get active because the more active you are, the healthier you will be. Write down how much activity you do each day so you can keep track and also be proud of yourself for what you have done. Be good to yourself by making one or two exercise goals at a time, and start slowly at first.

1. Start doing your activity (walking) five or ten minutes daily (or four or more days/week) the first week. Add a minute or two each day during your second week and so on each week after, until you work up to 30 minutes daily.
2. Spread the 30 minutes out over the day if all at once is too much. For example, walk ten minutes before or after each meal.
3. Remember to warm up first with a couple minutes of slower walking. Cool down after walking with a few stretches that you are comfortable doing.

Once you've started powering up with your favorite activities, there are ways you can improve your meal plan as well.

- A. Take a shopping list with you when you go to the grocery store so you won't buy extra food, especially junk food, that you do not need.



B. Plan your meals around high fiber foods such as fruit (especially fruits with their skins like peaches, apples and grapes), beans, peas, whole wheat bread, and most vegetables. These foods can help you to feel full when you eat. Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

C. Choose healthy snacks, if you snack. Remember to keep portions reasonably small.

For example

- i. two cups low-fat popcorn
- ii. one piece fruit or one cup raw veggies
- iii. two to three tablespoons of nuts
- iv. glass of milk

D. Eat right at mealtime

- i. Ask for a “to-go” box and place a portion of your meal in the box before you begin eating (saves calories and money). Restaurants often serve portions that are too large.
- ii. Buy single portions of rich foods that you crave (instead of large amounts that will be left over to tempt you later).
- iii. Choose leaner meats that are baked or broiled instead of fried.

E. Limit empty calories from sweetened beverages (such as carbonated soft drinks, sweet tea, and lemonade) that add inches to your waistline without satisfying your appetite.

- i. Have not more than one to two servings of sweet tea daily, if at all.
- ii. Limit regular soft drinks to no more than two to three a week, if at all.

F. Do not to eat when you are bored or upset. Eat planned meals at regular times. This can help your blood sugar and your weight.

G. There are no special pills, potions, or products that will cause you to lose weight and keep it off long term.

H. Treat yourself in ways that don't involve food. Buy yourself a new plant, a new scarf, a book, or rent a movie. Call a friend.



Can you name any of your own tips that help you when you cook or dine out? Gather and discuss responses. Don't expect to make changes just for a little while. If you really want to improve your health, your new habits should last a lifetime. There are things you can do along the way to keep inspired and aware of your success. Measure your waist and hips every couple of months to see the inches you've lost. Often times your clothes will fit looser even if the scale says that your weight has not changed. Last but certainly not least, you will have a better cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar report during your doctor visits.

Activity

Pass around the piece of paper: "A Goal for my Health." Tell participants to write down one kind of exercise or activity they can do on a regular basis that will help them lose weight or stay fit. They may choose any of the ideas you presented today. Tell them to take this paper home and place it on their fridge or in another area where it will be visible.

After completing this paper, have your participants stand up and do the strength and balance exercises- (can be downloaded separately from NOAHnet).

The Diabetes Alphabet

Today we talked about keeping fit and staying physically activity, and how it is important to do so each day. Let's say the alphabet now.

A for **A1c Test**- Check twice a year

B for **Blood Pressure**- Check at each doctor's visit

C for **Cholesterol**- Check once a year

D for **Daily Exercise**- Be physically active every day

E for **Eating Well**- Take down portion sizes, stay on your meal schedule

F for **Foot Care**- Check your feet for sores, blisters, or injuries every day

S for **Sugar Testing**- Check your blood sugar daily or as recommended by your doctor

**For People with Diabetes**

If you have diabetes and want to begin an exercise plan, there are some important things to remember:

1. Carry a light snack (such as a granola bar or a pack of crackers) in your pocket in case of a low blood sugar reaction when you are exercising away from home. It is a good idea to get a diabetes I.D. bracelet to wear if you do not already own one.
2. Check your blood sugar before and after you exercise.
3. Do not exercise if your blood sugar is under 100 mg/dl or above 300 mg/dl,
4. Make sure your shoes fit well to avoid getting any blisters on your feet.
5. Check your feet everyday and after exercising.
6. Avoid any strenuous or high-impact exercises such as aerobics if you have high blood pressure or poor vision.
7. Drink plenty of water.

Also

Don't skip meals, but rather eat planned meals at regular times. Skipping meals can cause blood sugar to go too low. It can also make you very hungry and want to eat more later in the day. This "overeating" can lead to high blood sugar and weight gain. Eating three small meals and one or two snacks can help keep your blood sugar even throughout the day.



References

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The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local food stamp office, food bank, or senior center.

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A Goal for My Health

What kind of exercise or activity can I do several times each week to keep my body in good shape?





It's Time to Get Moving!

1. Do housework to music.
2. Work in your garden or flowerbed.
3. Make several trips to and from the car while unloading groceries or other purchases. Carry one or two grocery bags (or shopping bags) on each trip.
4. Pace the floor while you talk on the phone.
5. Break up sitting time with movement- tap your feet, swing your legs up and down, circle your ankles, or raise and lower your arms, for examples.
6. Take walks in your neighborhood, even if only to the end of the block.
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8. Join the exercise and stretching class at your senior center.
9. Find a walking buddy and sign up for local “walk-a-thons” or charity walks.
10. Park your car in one spot and walk to do many errands.
11. Take your dog for a walk.
12. Try an active hobby such as bicycling, walking trails, dancing, taking a yoga class, swimming, or water aerobics.