



Your SASH Team

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Celebrate Go4Life Month in September!

Go4Life® — based on research showing that exercise reduces the risk of many of the chronic conditions and disabilities associated with aging — is a national health campaign designed to help adults 50+ fit exercise and physical activity into their daily life. This September, the campaign is challenging older adults to “Move More with **Go4Life®!**” by asking them to step up their physical activity, work out a bit more frequently, and try all four types of recommended exercise: endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility.

How Exercise Can Help You

Exercise and physical activity are good for just about everyone, including older adults. No matter your health and physical abilities, you can gain a lot by staying active. In fact, in most cases you have more to lose by not being active.

Here are just a few of the benefits. Exercise and physical activity can help:

- Improve your ability to do the everyday things you want to do
- Manage and improve diseases like [diabetes](#), [heart disease](#), and [osteoporosis](#)
- Maintain and improve your [physical strength](#) and fitness
- Improve your [balance](#)
- Reduce feelings of [depression](#) and may [improve mood and overall well-being](#)

You don't need to buy special clothes or belong to a gym to become more active. Physical activity can and should be a part of your everyday life. Find things you like to do. Go for brisk walks. Dance. Work around the house. Garden. Climb stairs. Swim. Rake leaves. Try different activities that keep you moving. Check the SASH Flash/Calendar for weekly Yoga and Bone Builders classes.

FOUR WAYS TO BE ACTIVE

To get all the benefits of physical activity, try all four types of exercise- (1) endurance, (2) strength, (3) balance, and (4) flexibility.

- Try to build up to at least 30 minutes of activity that makes you breathe hard on most or all days of the week. Every day is best. That's called an **endurance** activity because it builds your energy or “staying power.”
- Keep using your muscles. **Strength** exercises build muscles. When you have strong muscles, you can get up from a chair by yourself, lift your grandchildren, and walk through a park.

Keeping your muscles in shape helps prevent falls that cause problems like broken hips. You are less likely to fall when your leg and hip muscles are strong.

- Do things that help your **balance**. Try standing on one foot, then the other. If you can, don't hold onto anything for support. Get up from without using hands or arms. Every now and then walk heel-to-toe. As you walk, put the heel of one foot just in front of the toes of your other foot. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch.
- Stretching can improve your **flexibility**. Moving more freely will make it easier for you to reach down to tie your shoes or look over your shoulder when you back your car out of the driveway. Stretch when your muscles are warmed up. Don't stretch so far that it hurts.

Almost anyone, at any age, can do some type of physical activity. You can still exercise even if you have a health condition like heart disease or diabetes. In fact, physical activity may help. For most older adults, brisk walking, swimming, weight lifting, and gardening are safe, especially if you build up slowly. But, check with your Doctor if you are over 50 and you aren't physically active.

Looking for more information on how to exercise safely? Check out **Go4Life at**

www.nia.nih.gov/Go4life

Ask your SASH Coordinator for a free *Everyday Guide Book on Exercise & Physical Activity and a Work Out To Go*

The **SASH Model** helps Vermont's seniors and individuals with special needs access the care and support they need to stay healthy while living comfortably and safely at home. SASH communities include a care coordinator and wellness nurse who work in partnership with a team of community providers to assist SASH participants.

