

## Look what you can do for your heart at [www.sistertosister.org](http://www.sistertosister.org)

- Learn the facts about heart disease
- Locate a nearby screening center
- Assess your personal level of risk
- Build a customized action plan
- Track your heart health progress
- Ask experts for advice
- Give and get community support
- Discover daily heart health tips...and more!



Sister to Sister: The Women's Heart Health Foundation, a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is dedicated to preventing heart disease in women by:

- Offering women free cardiac screenings to promote early detection and treatment of heart disease and its risk factors.
- Increasing awareness that heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States.
- Helping women make healthy lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of heart disease.

### SISTER TO SISTER

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## Exercising For Your Heart



# YOU HAVE THE POWER TO HAVE A HEALTHY HEART



**SISTER TO SISTER**  
The Women's Heart Health Foundation

## The Exercise/Heart Health Connection

Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your chances of developing heart disease or having a heart attack. That's because physical activity addresses many major risk factors: it helps you lose weight and it helps lower your blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol.

*Think about your current level of physical activity and build from there.*

Any amount of physical activity – no matter how little – is better than none. The key is to increase your time and intensity slowly. Ultimately, women need to do both aerobic and muscle strengthening exercise. Here are some guidelines to follow.

### AEROBIC EXERCISE

Aim for at least 2½ hours each week of moderate aerobic activity or 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous activity. If you're just starting out, try to do moderate aerobic activities for 10 minutes at a time. If you've been exercising for awhile, try building up to 5 hours or more of moderate activity, or 2½ hours of vigorous activity a week.

**Moderate aerobic activities defined:** You can talk but not sing while you do them. Examples are walking briskly, water aerobics, line dancing, or biking on level ground.

**Vigorous aerobic activities defined:** You can only say a few words without stopping to catch your breath. Examples are swimming laps, biking fast, jogging or running, or aerobic dance.

### MUSCLE STRENGTHENING EXERCISE

Women need to do strengthening exercises at least two days a week.

**Strengthening activities defined:** Heavy gardening (digging, shoveling), lifting weights, push-ups on the floor or against the wall, sit-ups, or working with resistance bands.

## Just Between Us...



## Before You Exercise

- Warm up your muscles (with a brisk walk, etc.) for 10 to 15 minutes before starting your full workout.
- Turn on fast-paced music. It can help you work harder and faster, burning more calories and fat.
- Drink water and also keep some with you for during and after exercise. The amount you should drink will vary, but eight ounces is a good rule of thumb. (Some people need to limit their fluid intake, so check with your doctor).

# YES YOU CAN GET PHYSICALLY ACTIVE



## 10 Heart Healthy Changes

1. Set measurable goals that you know you can keep, instead of shooting for the stars.
2. Keep an activity journal to track what activities you are doing, and for how long.
3. Plan your exercise schedule ahead of time so you start each day knowing what kind of activity you will do and for how long.
4. Choose activities you enjoy. If you don't like an activity, you won't want to do it regularly.
5. Team up with a family member or friend. It will keep you motivated and be more fun.
6. Increase the intensity of your activities as you get stronger and exercising becomes a natural part of your routine.
7. Vary the types of exercise you do so you don't get bored.
8. Look for ways to add activity to everyday life. Take the stairs rather than the escalator or elevator, park far from the door at the mall, play tag with your kids.
9. If you don't have a solid chunk of time in your day to devote to exercise, break up exercise into more than one shorter sessions – you will still get benefits.
10. Forget the “no pain, no gain” mantra. Pay attention to your body. If you feel pain, shortness of breath, dizziness or nausea, take a break. You may be pushing yourself too hard.

GET MORE TIPS AT [SISTERTOSISTER.ORG](http://SISTERTOSISTER.ORG)