

# Physical Activity Assessment (PAA)

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## How active are you?

All of us could probably be more physically active than we are now. Take some time to think about the physical activities you do in an average (or usual) day or week, not just exercise. The next few pages ask you about your day-to-day physical activity habits.

## What are the questions about?

The questions are about **all** the different kinds of activities you do in a usual week, including working, household chores, taking care of children, doing hobbies such as gardening, or walking or bicycling to get to places. Some questions ask about **“moderate”** activities, which make you breathe a little harder but still let you talk while you do them. Other questions ask about **“vigorous”** activities, which make you breathe harder and make it hard to talk.

## How do I answer the questions?

For each question, choose the box beside the number or word that best answers the question **for you**. The more accurately you can remember all your activities, the better we can work together to come up with a physical activity plan that can help improve your health.

- ❖ Choose “some” if this best describes the amount of time you spend doing these activities.
- ❖ Choose “not much” if you do less than “some.”
- ❖ Choose “a lot” if you do more than “some.”





# 1. Working



**Do you work for pay or as a volunteer?**

☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #2)

What Type of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

In a usual week, how many days do you work?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual work day, how much time do you spend doing:

❖ Activities while <b>sitting or standing</b> : like typing, filing, preparing food, or working a cash register	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>not much</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>some</b> (3–5 hr/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>a lot</b>	goals ↓
❖ <b>Moderate</b> activities while walking: like waiting tables or walking to deliver things	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>a lot</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>some</b> (1–3 hr/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>not much</b>	
❖ Hard ( <b>vigorous</b> ) physical work: like heavy cleaning, scrubbing or mopping floors, lifting or carrying heavy objects, walking up hills or stairs	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>a lot</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>some</b> (20–30 min/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>not much</b>	

See Work Tips, page C-9.

# 2. TV and Seated Hobbies



**Do you watch TV or videos, read, use a computer, or do seated hobbies such as knitting or arts and crafts?**

☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #3)

In a usual week, how many days do you watch TV or do seated hobbies?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day, how much time do you spend watching TV or doing seated hobbies?	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>not much</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>some</b> (1–2 hr/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>a lot</b>	goals
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See TV and Seated Hobby Tips, page C-9.

### 3. Household Chores



**Do you do chores such as laundry, sweeping, vacuuming, or mopping?**

☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #4)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **moderate** housework, like picking up toys or tidying rooms, doing laundry, sweeping, or vacuuming?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **moderate** chores, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ a lot

☐ some

☐ not much

goals

(10-29 min/day)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **vigorous** housework, like mopping, heavy scrubbing, or carrying?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **vigorous** chores, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ a lot

☐ some

☐ not much

goals

(10-19 min/day)

See Household Chore Tips, page C-10.

### 4. Child and Elder Care



**Are you a caregiver for children or older adults?** ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #5)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **moderately** active things, like active play, clean-up, or pushing a stroller or wheelchair?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **moderate** child or elder care, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ a lot

☐ some

☐ not much

goals

(10-29 min/day)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **vigorous** work or play, like heavy lifting, or active sports with children?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **vigorous** child or elder care, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ a lot

☐ some

☐ not much

goals

(10-19 min/day)

See Child and Elder Care Tips, page C-10.

## 5. Yardwork/Gardening/Outside House Care



**Do you do activities like gardening, raking, pushing a lawn mower, pushing a wheelbarrow, or chopping firewood?** ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #6)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **moderate** yardwork or outside house care, like sweeping, raking, or push mowing?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **moderate** yardwork or outside house care, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-29 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

In a usual week, how many days do you do **vigorous** yardwork or outside house care, like heavy lifting, chopping firewood, or spade work?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a day that you do **vigorous** yardwork or outside house care, how much time do you usually spend?

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-19 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

See Yardwork and Gardening Tips, page C-10.

## 6. Church and Social Group Activities



**Do you do activities with a church and/or social group?** ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #7)

In a usual week, how many days do you do church or social group activities?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day, when you do church or social group activities, how much time do you spend doing:

❖ Sitting or standing activities: like listening, talking, eating, or playing games

☐ **not much**

☐ **some**  
(1-2 hr/day)

☐ **a lot**

**goals**  
↓

❖ **Moderate** activities: like active singing in the choir, dancing, setting up or cleaning up

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-29 min/day)

☐ **not much**

❖ Hard (**vigorous**) physical work: like heavy set-up or clean-up work, moving tables and chairs, mopping, or loading

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-19 min/day)

☐ **not much**

See Church and Social Group Tips, page C-11.

## 7. Walking or Bicycling for Transportation



**Do you walk or bicycle to get to places like work, school, shopping, or to get to the bus stop?** ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #8)

In a usual week, how many days do you walk, bicycle, or use a wheelchair to get to places?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day when you walk or bicycle to get to places (***moderate activity***), how much time do you spend?

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-29 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

See Walking or Bicycling for Transportation Tips, page C-11.

## 8. Exercise and Sports



**Do you exercise or play sports?** ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #9)

In a usual week, how many days do you do ***light*** exercise, like walking at a leisurely pace that doesn't make you sweat or breathe hard?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day when you do ***light*** exercise, how much time do you spend?

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-29 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

In a usual week, how many days do you do ***moderate*** exercise or sports (fast enough to make you breathe harder), like brisk walking, bicycling, dancing, shallow water aerobics, or outdoor games?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day when you do ***moderate*** exercise, how much time do you spend?

☐ **a lot**

☐ **some**  
(10-29 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

In a usual week, how many days do you do ***vigorous*** exercise or sports (fast enough to make it hard to talk), like fast walking, jogging, bicycling, swimming laps, hiking uphill, tennis, or deep water aerobics?

**Number of Days Per Week**

On a usual day when you do ***vigorous*** exercise, how much time do you spend?

☐ **a lot**

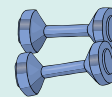
☐ **some**  
(10-19 min/day)

☐ **not much**

**goals**

See Exercise and Sports Tips, page C-12.

## 9. Strength Training



Do you do strength training exercises such as lifting weights, stretch band exercises, sit-ups, push-ups, leg-lifts, or squats? ☐ Yes ☐ No (Go to #10)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **strength training** exercises?

Number of Days Per Week

And on a usual day when you do <b>strength training</b> exercises, how much time do you spend?	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> some (10-29 min/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> not much	goals
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See Strength Training Tips, page C-12.

## 10. Stretching



Do you do stretching exercises, such as yoga, Pilates, chair stretching, or standing stretches? ☐ Yes ☐ No (End of Physical Activity Assessment)

In a usual week, how many days do you do **stretching** exercises?

Number of Days Per Week

On a usual day when you do <b>stretching</b> exercises, how much time do you spend?	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> some (10-29 min/day)	<input type="checkbox"/> not much	goals
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See Stretching Tips, page C-12.

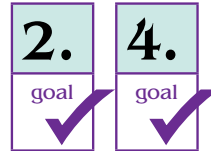
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# Physical Activity Tip Sheets

**Check the goals you want to work on for the next contact.**



**No matter what you do, you can find ways to be active longer and put more effort into what you do—in other words, more minutes and more umph!**

For exercise ideas, look at our online *Exercise Module*, which can be found with other *New Leaf* intervention materials at **[www.wiseinterventions.org](http://www.wiseinterventions.org)**. If you do not have access to a computer or the Internet, you can ask your health counselor for a copy of the *Exercise Module*. *Note: If you have a health condition, an old injury, or you have not been active in a while, talk with your doctor first about what level and kinds of activities are safe for you.*

## Work Tips



**1.**

goal

**When you work (for pay or as a volunteer), look for ways to keep active and put some extra moves into your daily routine.**

- ❖ If you sit a lot at work, try to get up and move every hour or two. You can:
  - stretch at your desk or march in place
  - walk up and down stairs, deliver a message, or pick up supplies... get moving!
- ❖ Use breaks or part of lunch to walk for 10 minutes—it's energizing and every step adds up!
- ❖ If you work on a line where you stand a lot, try walking in place or moving your arms. Moving on the line also reduces stress.
- ❖ If you're stressed, take 5-10 deep breaths and sit up as tall as you can.

## TV and Seated Hobby Tips



**2.**

goal

**When you are doing seated activities, be a chair exerciser and stretch your body while you stretch your mind.**

- ❖ Watch less TV—only watch shows you really have to see. You'll have lots more free time!
- ❖ When you watch TV, get moving, too:
  - Use an exercise DVD or video for a few minutes before you watch any other TV.
  - You can get in 10 minutes of movement during commercials for a 1-hour show.
  - Do chair exercises or a few quick stretches.
- ❖ Take exercise breaks while you use a computer, do hobbies, or play games; or walk around while you talk on the phone.
- ❖ Do leg and foot exercises while you're reading or knitting. Or take a quick walk after you finish a chapter or a section of knitting.

## Household Chore Tips



### 3. When you do household chores, think about ways to move and make your chores do double duty!

goal

- ❖ Scrub a little harder and longer—you'll sneak in more activity and your house will be cleaner, too.
- ❖ Help friends or family by doing a chore like taking out the garbage.
- ❖ Put music on and turn cleaning into dance time!
- ❖ Make several trips up the stairs.

## Child and Elder Care Tips



### 4. When you do child care or elder care, choose to be more active and, if you have to stay put, add some umph!

goal

- ❖ Play active games with children—nobody knows better how to burn energy!
- ❖ Go for long walks or strolls with children, or take elders in a wheelchair. Push and walk briskly for at least 10 minutes—and try for a total of 30 minutes each day.
- ❖ If you do a lot of sitting and watching, do some stretch band exercises.
- ❖ Try chair exercises or do some stretching.

## Yardwork and Gardening Tips



### 5. Remember that yardwork, gardening, and home repair lead to good health—especially if you do them the old-fashioned way!

goal

- ❖ Spend some extra time gardening.
- ❖ The old saying that “wood warms you twice” means chopping or cutting wood is a good way to get more activity.
- ❖ Raking leaves or hoeing for 10 minutes without stopping is a good workout.
- ❖ Save your money and your health—use a push mower instead of a riding mower.
- ❖ Don't use a sprinkler—walk around with the hose or watering can instead. You'll see more of your neighbors, too.

## Church and Social Group Tips



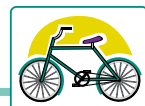
**6.**

goal

**During church or social activities, feel good about yourself in more ways than one, and get into it!**

- ❖ Organize a walking group with your church or social club. It's more fun with a group and better for everyone.
- ❖ Help set up and clean up for group events.
- ❖ If you sing in the choir, move to the music!
- ❖ Join an outdoor or gardening club to become more active and meet new people.
- ❖ Try a social dancing club—have fun and get a good workout!

## Walking or Bicycling for Transportation Tips



**7.**

goal

**Walk or bike to get to where you need to go more often, and walk or pedal briskly.**

- ❖ Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ❖ Do errands or visit people on foot.
- ❖ When someone offers you a ride, say “No thank you, I’d rather walk” whenever it’s possible and safe to do so.
- ❖ If you drive, park in the farthest safe parking spot instead of the closest; if you take the bus, get off one stop early (as long as it’s in a safe place).
- ❖ Give your dog a nice long walk, or your child or grandchild a brisk stroller ride—aim for at least 20-30 minutes.
- ❖ If your children are in school, walk or bicycle to or from school with them. You’ll set a good example by showing your kids healthy habits.
- ❖ Go bicycling with your family—it’s a great way to be active together!
- ❖ Check your walking pace:
  - If you can sing a song as you stroll along—walk a little faster.
  - If you can’t talk when you walk—slow down a little and catch your breath.
- ❖ Swing your arms while you walk to put more umph into it!
- ❖ Don’t avoid the hills. Start with small hills and work up to steeper ones over time.
- ❖ Set up a reminder for yourself, like putting your walking shoes by the front door.

## Exercise and Sports Tips

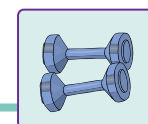


### 8. When you exercise or do sports, spend more time doing whatever you like to do—or step up the pace!

goal

- ❖ Try activities or sports such as brisk walking, jogging, swimming laps, bicycling, dancing, tennis, or softball.
- ❖ Do chair exercises or water aerobics—choose the level that’s right for you and keep it up for 10 minutes or more.
- ❖ Be active a little **longer**: Add 3 minutes to each workout for one week, then add 3 more minutes the next week.
- ❖ Work a little **harder**. As part of your usual workout, try this:
  - Increase your pace for 1 minute (fast), then slow to your usual pace for 2 minutes, then increase the pace for another minute (fast).
  - Repeat the fast-slow-fast pattern 4 times the first week.
  - Repeat the fast-slow-fast pattern 5 times the next week, and so on, until you are doing 16-20 “fast” minutes.
- ❖ Drink lots of water.

## Strength Training Tips



### 9. When you do strength training exercises, start slow and work up to more.

goal

- ❖ Do exercises at home using stretch bands, weights, or on your own.
- ❖ You may want to start with 6–8 repetitions and add 2 more each week.
- ❖ If you belong to a gym, ask a trainer to help you set up a strength training program and show you how to do the exercises correctly.

## Stretching Tips



### 10. When you do stretching exercises, take your time and enjoy the stretch—stretching should NEVER hurt.

goal

- ❖ You can do stretching exercises while standing, sitting, or even lying down.
- ❖ Try this gentle leg stretch:
  - Lie flat on your back with your knees bent.
  - Loop a towel or belt around one foot, hold onto each end of the towel, then slowly straighten your knee until you feel a gentle, comfortable stretch.
  - Hold the stretch for 5-10 deep breaths (about 15-30 seconds).
- ❖ Do shoulder shrugs:
  - Sit in a chair and let your arms drop by your sides.
  - Lift your shoulders up towards your ears, pause, then gently let your shoulders drop.
  - Repeat 10 times.

# What Makes It Hard to Keep Active? (Assessment)



Being physically active includes **everyday activities**—like cleaning house, raking the yard, grocery shopping, gardening, or walking to the bus stop. Being active can also include **exercise activities**—like walking, swimming, lifting weights, or aerobics. But sometimes it can be hard to be active.

**For each of the following statements, please pick the answer that best describes you.**

**1. After a full day's work, it's hard to find the energy to do any kind of extra activity.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

**2. Being overweight makes it hard for me to be more active.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

**3. When my heart beats faster or I get out of breath, I get anxious and worry about overdoing it.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

**4. With all the things I have to do and take care of, finding time for more physical activity is low on my list of things to do.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

**5. Because I have a health condition, I am concerned that physical activity may do me more harm than good.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

**6. I would be more physically active if the activities I wanted to do didn't cost so much.**

☐

not at all like me

☐

a little like me

☐

a lot like me

<b>7. Every time I try to become more active, I get sore and uncomfortable and feel like quitting.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me
<b>8. Most physical activities are just plain boring, so it's hard to make myself do anything.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me
<b>9. Most of my friends and family members are not physically active, and it's hard for me to be active on my own.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me
<b>10. I do pretty well with starting a physical activity program, but the hardest part is sticking with it for a long time.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me
<b>11. When the weather is bad, I get less physical activity.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me
<b>12. Sometimes I avoid physical activity because I don't want to sweat or mess up my hair.</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> not at all like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a little like me	<input type="checkbox"/> a lot like me

See Being More Active, page C-15.

# Being More Active (Tip Sheets)



**Check the goals you want to work on for the next contact.**

2.	4.
goal	goal
✓	✓

For exercise ideas, look at our online *Exercise Module*, which can be found with other *New Leaf* intervention materials at **[www.wiseinterventions.org](http://www.wiseinterventions.org)**. If you do not have access to a computer or the Internet, you can ask your health counselor for a copy of the *Exercise Module*.

**1.**

goal

## **Plan activities that you can enjoy even with a busy schedule.**

- ❖ When you are tired out by life's stresses and strains, take a few minutes for a walk or some active stretching to clear your head and refresh yourself.
- ❖ If you spend the day doing tiring work, a fun activity like walking with a friend, dancing, or your favorite active sport or hobby can give you energy.
- ❖ Take a break by using the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ❖ Put more umph into what you already do each day.



**2.**

goal

## **Don't let your weight stop you from moving.**

- ❖ If you are self-conscious exercising:
  - You don't have to wear tights or a stretchy bodysuit to get a good workout!
  - Find a walking partner.
  - Exercise while you watch TV or listen to music at home.
- ❖ Start with just a few changes and add more activity to your life over time.
- ❖ Pick walking or another activity and build up slowly. Every step counts!
- ❖ Remember—it's easier to lose pounds if you're active.

**3.**

goal

## **Start slowly and work up to more activity.**

- ❖ Being active doesn't mean running marathons! Work your way up to a level that is comfortable for **you**. If you feel uncomfortable, slow down.
- ❖ Set goals that you can reach.
- ❖ Regular activity strengthens your heart so it doesn't have to work so hard.
- ❖ As you get in better shape you'll feel less out of breath.
- ❖ Avoid injuries by warming up slowly—pace yourself.
- ❖ Smoking and extra weight can make you feel winded or cause your heart to beat faster.

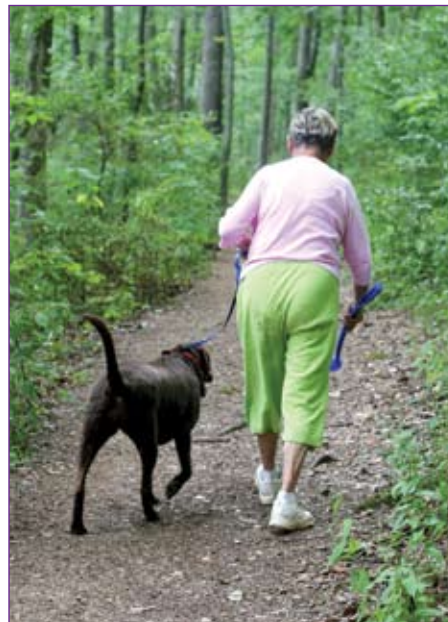


**4.**

goal

**Put physical activity high on your “to-do” list.**

- ❖ During your daily work or chores, put a little more umph into what you do—you won’t need to set aside extra time to exercise at the end of the day.
- ❖ Three 10-minute blocks of moderate activity during the day almost every day can do you as much good as 30 minutes of activity all at once.
- ❖ People who spend at least 30 minutes a day being active enough to breathe a little harder are less likely to have:
  - heart attacks
  - weight problems
  - cancer
  - high blood pressure
  - diabetes
  - brittle bones (osteoporosis)
- ❖ Tell your family and friends that being active is important to you—ask them to help you make time.
- ❖ People who depend on you need you to be healthy!

**5.**

goal

**Being active is the answer.**

- ❖ For people with most health conditions, being physically active usually does the body more good than harm.
- ❖ Being more active is safe for most people.
- ❖ Wear comfortable shoes and drink plenty of water when you are physically active.
- ❖ If you are worried about safety, see *General Safety Tips*, page D-13 for more suggestions.

**6.**

goal

**You don’t have to spend lots of money to be active.**

- ❖ Walk in a shopping mall, around your neighborhood, or at the local high school track. You don’t need a health club membership.
- ❖ Walk when you can, instead of driving, and save the money you would spend on gas.
- ❖ If you spend any money on physical activity, spend it on a comfortable pair of walking shoes that fit you well.
- ❖ Talk to a foot doctor about finding the right shoes if you have problems with your feet.
- ❖ If you decide you need it, look for used exercise equipment in good shape at thrift shops and yard sales.

**7.**

goal

**Don’t get “sore” about a few aches and pains.**

- ❖ The first few times you move in a new way you may feel a little sore, but after that you will feel better and better.
- ❖ You’re less likely to get sore if you start slowly and warm up.
- ❖ Try swimming or water exercises.
- ❖ If you are overweight, losing a few pounds can help with aches and pains.



**8.**

goal

**Don't do the same old thing—try something new!**

- ❖ Being active is a way of living. Look for activities you enjoy, like walking with friends, gardening, or dancing. Music makes anything more fun.
- ❖ Call your local Parks and Recreation office for new ideas.
- ❖ You don't have to do the same old boring thing. Choose activities that help you:
  - learn new things
  - meet new people
  - explore new places

**9.**

goal

**Get your friends and family to join you.**

- ❖ Some activities are more fun if you have company:
  - ask a friend to be your walking partner
  - start a new activity with family or friends
- ❖ Other things are just as easy to do on your own:
  - put just a little more umph into everything you do
  - take a break and stretch when you're working around the house

**10.**

goal

**Come up with tricks to help you stick with it.**

- ❖ Pick activities you really enjoy!
- ❖ Set simple goals and work up slowly. Reward yourself when you stick to your goals.
- ❖ Put up notes or bright stickers at home or work to remind you to keep active.
- ❖ Find a walking buddy—you will not want to let your buddy down if you know she is counting on you.
- ❖ Instead of trying to add extra activities to a busy schedule, make work time (at home or on the job) work for you:
  - look for chances to move a little more or a little faster
  - at break or lunchtime, go for a quick walk
- ❖ The goal is to “get moving”—it doesn't matter how you do it!

**11.**

goal

**Don't let bad weather slow you down.**

- ❖ There are many ways to be active at home:
  - If you have steps—take a few extra trips
  - If you don't have much room, you can run or march in place or do simple exercises
- ❖ Grab an umbrella and a friend and go for a walk in the rain, or walk at the mall.
- ❖ After a brisk walk in cold weather, treat yourself to a nice hot cup of coffee or tea.
- ❖ If the weather is cold, dress warmly—wear layers and a hat and gloves.
- ❖ If it's hot, swim, take a brisk walk in an air-conditioned building, or walk first thing in the morning or in the evening in a well-lit area.
- ❖ If you are active outside in the heat, drink plenty of water.

**12.**

goal

**You can be physically active and attractive.**

- ❖ Keep a small bag of toiletries (deodorant, hair spray, wipes, and other essentials) in your car, desk, or break room.
- ❖ If you walk or exercise at work, go to the ladies' room for a little "touch-up" afterwards.
- ❖ If it's hot and you are worried about sweating, go for a walk in a mall or another spot that is air-conditioned.
- ❖ Most water aerobics classes don't expect you to get your hair wet—to make sure your hair doesn't get wet, you can even wear a shower cap or swim cap.



# What Limits Your Activity? (Assessment)



**Would you say that the following physical concerns are no problem, somewhat of a problem, or a severe problem?**

**1. Ability to walk (permanent walking disability)**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem  
(wheelchair bound)

**2. Ability to use your arms (permanent upper body disability)**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem

**3. Arthritis**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem

**4. Painful tingling, numbness, or loss of feeling in your hands or feet**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem

**5. Breathing problems (such as asthma or emphysema)**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem

**6. Balance problems or frequent falls**

☐ No problem

☐ Somewhat of a problem

☐ A severe problem

**By yourself (without help from another person or special equipment), how much difficulty do you have:**

**7. Raising your arms over your head**

☐ Little or no difficulty

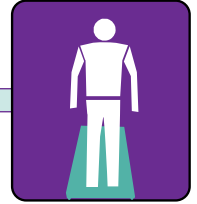
☐ Some difficulty

☐ A lot of difficulty or  
unable to do

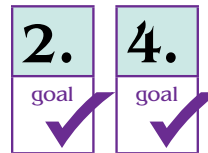
<b>8. Turning your head to look behind you</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>9. Lifting or carrying something as heavy as 10 lbs (like a bag of groceries)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>10. Using your fingers to grasp or handle things</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>11. Stooping, crouching, or kneeling</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>12. Climbing a short flight of stairs</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>13. Walking across a small room</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do
<b>14. Walking for a quarter of a mile (about 2-3 blocks)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Some difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> A lot of difficulty or unable to do

See Being Active with Physical Limitations, page C-21.

# Being Active with Physical Limitations (Tip Sheets)



**Check the goals you want to work on for the next contact.**



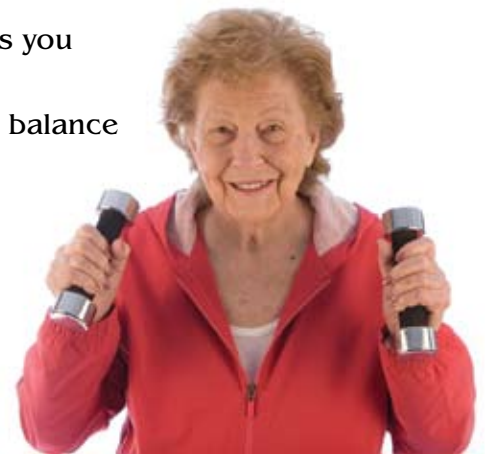
For exercise ideas, look at our online *Exercise Module*, which can be found with other *New Leaf* intervention materials at **[www.wiseinterventions.org](http://www.wiseinterventions.org)**. If you do not have access to a computer or the Internet, you can ask your health counselor for a copy of the *Exercise Module*.

**1.**

goal

## **Exercise even if you have trouble with your legs.**

- ❖ Upper body chair exercises can strengthen the muscles you need for using a cane, crutches or a wheelchair.
- ❖ Lower body chair exercises can help you improve your balance and make it easier to get out of wheelchairs.
- ❖ Do the activities you may have learned in physical therapy.



**2.**

goal

## **Exercise even if you have trouble with your arms.**

- ❖ Upper body chair exercises can strengthen your arm muscles.
- ❖ Do the activities you may have learned in physical therapy.

**3.**

goal

## **Don't let arthritis get you down!**

- ❖ To help joint movement and make your joints feel less stiff, do stretching exercises on most days of the week.
- ❖ Stretches and exercises are best when your muscles and joints are warm. Try stretching after doing the dishes, taking a warm bath or after a walk.

**4.**

goal

## **Take care of numb or tingly feet or hands.**

- ❖ Never walk barefoot.
- ❖ Keep your feet and hands warm.
- ❖ Use potholders when handling warm foods.
- ❖ Use tools with thicker grips to help you hold them easily.
- ❖ See *Foot Care*, page G-11.

**5.**

goal

**Manage your breathing problems.**

- ❖ Break your activity into 5- and 10-minute blocks of time. Rest in between if you need to, then try to do a few minutes more.
- ❖ Wait an hour after eating before you exercise.
- ❖ Try being active soon after taking your breathing medicine.

**6.**

goal

**Prevent falls.**

- ❖ Be sure that stairwells and halls are well lit.
- ❖ Take your time on steps and curbs. Look at the steps.
- ❖ On icy days, walk with a friend or do indoor activities.
- ❖ Put nonskid backing on rugs.
- ❖ If reaching makes you dizzy, put things on low shelves.
- ❖ Strength training and stretching exercises will help your balance. Walking and strength training will strengthen your bones.
- ❖ See *Prevent Falls*, page H-5.

**7.**

goal

**Work on upper body stretches.**

- ❖ Upper body stretches can make it easier to do everyday activities like reaching for things, getting dressed and doing household chores.
- ❖ Do upper body exercises.

**8.**

goal

**Work on neck flexibility.**

- ❖ Neck flexibility makes it easier to do everyday activities like turning your head.
- ❖ Do gentle neck exercises.

**9.**

goal

**Do exercises that slowly increase your upper body strength.**

- ❖ Use a stretch band looped around a heavy object like a table leg.
- ❖ Do upper body chair exercises.
- ❖ You can find good quality second-hand weights at some sporting goods stores.



**10.**

goal

**Get a grip!**

- ❖ Squeeze a soft ball to improve the strength of your grip.
- ❖ Use special equipment to help open jars or grasp things.
- ❖ Use foam rubber and tape to build up handles on your tools.

**11.**

goal

**Protect your back and leg muscles.**

- ❖ Good leg and lower back flexibility can help you prevent back injuries and reduce muscle soreness.
- ❖ Use raised garden beds or long-handled tools.
- ❖ Bend your knees and not your back when lifting.
- ❖ Try back stretches or lower body chair exercises.

**12.**

goal

**Do exercises that slowly increase your lower body strength.**

- ❖ Strong muscles can help prevent pain and injury.
- ❖ Climb stairs, a few at a time, to increase leg strength.
- ❖ Do stretch band exercises or lower body chair exercises.

**13.**

goal

**Do a little more every day.**

- ❖ Move more—movement gets oxygen to your muscles.
- ❖ Do activities that use large muscles—try walking or vacuuming.

**14.**

goal

**Work up slowly to walking more.**

- ❖ Build up! Start with 5-10 minutes of walking at one time, and increase by 2-3 minutes every few days, until you can comfortably do 30 minutes.
- ❖ Movement helps your muscles get oxygen.

