

## In This Issue...

- *Why is Cholesterol Important?*
- *Be Active Your Way: A Fact Sheet for Adults*

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## Keep your company informed with important health information!

This e-newsletter is designed to benefit you and your employees, so please feel free to forward it to family, friends and co-workers!

As always, we hope you enjoy this edition and would like to hear from you with any questions, concerns, or suggestions for future articles. Send us an email at [info@alliantservices.com](mailto:info@alliantservices.com).

## Why Is Cholesterol Important?

Your blood cholesterol level has a lot to do with your chances of getting heart disease. High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease. A risk factor is a condition that increases your chance of getting a disease. In fact, the higher your blood cholesterol level, the greater your risk for developing heart disease or having a heart attack. Heart disease is the number one killer of women and men in the United States. Each year, more than a million Americans have heart attacks, and about a half million people die from heart disease.

## How Does Cholesterol Cause Heart Disease?

When there is too much cholesterol (a fat-like substance) in your blood, it builds up in the walls of your arteries. Over time, this buildup causes "hardening of the arteries" so that arteries become narrowed and blood flow to the heart is slowed down or blocked. The blood carries oxygen to the heart, and if enough blood and oxygen cannot reach your heart, you may suffer chest pain. If the blood supply to a portion of the heart is completely cut off by a blockage, the result is a heart attack. High blood cholesterol itself does not cause symptoms, so many people are unaware that their cholesterol level is too high. It is important to find out what your cholesterol numbers are because lowering cholesterol levels that are too high lessens the risk for developing heart disease and reduces the chance of a heart attack or dying of heart disease, even if you already have it. Cholesterol lowering is important for everyone— younger, middle age, and older adults; women and men; and people with or without heart disease.

## Be Active Your Way: A Fact Sheet for Adults

Finding out what kind and how much physical activity you need

### How do I do it?

It's your choice. Pick an activity that's easy to fit into your life. Do at least 10 minutes of physical activity at a time. Choose **aerobic** activities that work for you. These make your heart beat faster and can make your heart, lungs, and blood vessels stronger and more fit. Also do **strengthening** activities which make your muscles do more work than usual.



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**Why should I be physically active?**

Physical activity can make you feel stronger and more alive. It is a fun way to be with your family or friends. It also helps you improve your health.

**How many times a week should I be physically active?**

It is up to you, but it is better to spread your activity throughout the week and to be active at least 3 days a week.

**How do I build up more physical activity?**

Do a little more each time. Once you feel comfortable, do it more often. Then, you can trade activities at a moderate level for vigorous ones that take more effort. You can do moderate and vigorous activities in the same week.

**How much physical activity do I need to do?**

This chart tells you about the activities that are important for you to do. Do both aerobic activities and strengthening activities. Each offers important health benefits. And remember, some physical activity is better than none!

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Aerobic Activities</b>              | <p>If you choose activities at a <b>moderate</b> level, do at least <b>2 hours and 30 minutes</b> a week. If you choose <b>vigorous</b> activities, do at least <b>1 hour and 15 minutes</b> a week.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slowly build up the amount of time you do physical activities. The more time you spend, the more health benefits you gain. Aim for twice the amount of activity in the box at left.</li> <li>• Do at least 10 minutes at a time.</li> <li>• You can combine moderate and vigorous activities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Muscle Strengthening Activities</b> | <p>Do these at least <b>2 days</b> a week.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include all the major muscle groups such as legs, hips, back, chest, stomach, shoulders, and arms.</li> <li>• Exercises for each muscle group should be repeated 8 to 12 times per session.</li> </ul>   |

To learn more about the different types and amounts of physical activity that offer substantial health benefits to Americans please visit the United States Department of Health & Human Services website at [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov). At their website you can print out your own physical activity tracking forms to help you keep track of your goals and chart your progress.

*Message from Alliant—When you refer a friend or family member to us it's the most satisfying rewards in our business and you can rest assured that we'll offer the same level of service and personal touch you have come to expect from Alliant.*