

Walk
NEBRASKA**Variety is the Spice of Life!**

*Do you remember the old song that asked “Is that all there is, my friends?” If you’re getting bored with your physical activity program, you might be asking yourself the same question, but the answer is, “No, that’s not all there is!” In fact, the newly released **Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans** suggest you should include at least two different components in your fitness regimen:*

- ✓ **Aerobic or Cardiovascular Activities** strengthen your heart. Did you know that a night of square dancing provides the same amount of exercise as a four-mile run? Biking, swimming, rowing, cross-country skiing or just climbing the stairs all provide cardiovascular benefits. You should strive for 2½ hours a week of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity activity. And, the good news is that each ‘work out’ can be as short as 10 minutes.
- ✓ **Strength Training** increases muscle tone and strength, improves balance and stability, increases bone density and boosts your metabolism. You probably think of “weight lifting” as the primary form of strength training but there are other ways to strengthen and tone your muscles. Any time you challenge your muscles with resistance or a load, you make them stronger. Elastic stretch bands, for instance, help you create resistance. Or, when you learned “calisthenics” in PE class, you were learning to use your body weight to create resistance for different muscles groups. That’s what all those sit-ups, push-ups, leg lifts and squat thrusts were really about! But, because your muscles need time to recover, you need only do strength training on two (or more) days per week.

So, again, you may ask, “Is this all there is, my friends?” If you recall, that song went on to say, “Then let’s keep dancing....” I believe the song had an entirely different message but for our purposes, the answer is, “There *is* more than this.... Let’s *do* keep dancing!”

Source:

“Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans”, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, October 7, 2008;

Website: www.health.gov/paguidelines.

Know how. Know now.



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