

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
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Invest in Physical Fitness

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages residents to make a fitness goal during May's National Physical Fitness Month. According to the American Heart Association, regular physical activity is essential for maintaining overall health, reducing the risk of chronic disease, and improving mental well-being.

“Invest in your own physical fitness and it will pay off,” states Sarah Minnick, Program Manager at SWNPHD. “Being fit is about building the resilience we need to lead healthier, more productive lives over the long term.”

For most adults, the recommendation is at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week, which breaks down to about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Children and teens need at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity daily. In southwest Nebraska over 80% of teens reported being active for an hour or more a week, and 30% of adults reported being active outside of their job.

Start with small successes to build momentum toward your fitness goal:

- **Break it Up:** Instead of 30 minutes at once, do small 5–10-minute bouts of activity throughout the day and you will still get similar benefits.
- **Reduce Sitting Time:** Long hours of sitting can increase health risks. Set an alarm or other reminder to stand up and stretch or move at least once an hour.
- **Consistency:** Spread your exercise throughout the week rather than doing it all in one or two days. Making movement a consistent part of your routine will increase your chances of success.

Walking is one of the easiest and most effective ways to increase physical activity. Just 30 minutes of brisk walking a day can:

- lower blood pressure
- improve heart health
- support weight management
- increase metabolism
- reduce stress
- boost mental well-being
- strengthen muscles and joints
- improve mobility

For more information on physical fitness visit cdc.gov/physicalactivity or join one of SWNPHD's free walking challenges at walktohealth.thrives.app. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook, You Tube, and Instagram or view the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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