



10 FUN WAYS TO STAY ACTIVE

Being active is an important part of living a long and healthy life. Regular exercise can boost your energy, help you maintain your independence, and manage symptoms of pain from preexisting conditions or illnesses.

The good news is that it's never too late to start. According to Canadian guidelines, older adults are encouraged to get 150 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity each week. Participating in weight-bearing exercises and resistance training at least two times a week is a great way to build strong bones and muscles. And let's not forget about balance—it's important for older adults to participate in activities that help increase stability and prevent falls.

The intensity of your exercises should be determined by paying close attention to your body. If something begins to hurt, don't push it; an injury will set you back and may cause some serious damage if you overexert yourself.

The key to sustainable activity level is to build a routine that you can maintain over time; a great way of accomplishing this is to find a way to incorporate extra activity into things you already enjoy. Before starting any physical activity program, check with your doctor or health professional.

Here are some activities that are beneficial to older adults:



GEOCACHING

Love playing hide and seek as a kid? Well geocaching is for you! This outdoor recreational activity gets participants to use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or mobile device to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches". The great thing is there are geocaches all over the world so you can be active anywhere and you can do it any time!



PICKLEBALL

One of the fastest growing sports in Canada, pickleball can be played by doubles or singles. A hybrid between tennis, ping pong and badminton, pickleball is a great way to get your heart pumping, all while being a low-impact activity. It has a great social aspect and can be played on an indoor or outdoor court. It is also great for all ages, so why not take the grandchildren with you and make it an activity for the whole family!



LAWN BOWLING

Looking for a fun sport that involves being outdoors and surrounded by friends? Look no further than lawn bowling. This activity involves a bit of everything—walking up and down the green, bending and rolling a weighted ball, problem solving and strategizing, and of course, team spirit.



AQUAFIT

Basically, an exercise class done in water, aquafit is a playful way to get your heart pumping. The natural buoyancy and turbidity of water offers light resistance to help strengthen your muscles, while supporting your body weight. When performed in warm water it can provide relief for stiff muscles and sore joints, ideal for those with arthritis, fibromyalgia, and lower back pain.



TAI CHI

Often practiced in groups in outdoor parks and open spaces, tai chi is all about flow and balance. Drawing on aspects of health, meditation and martial arts, tai chi involves slow, methodical repetition of defined movements. This activity is easy on joints but will help with strengthening muscles and clearing the mind as well.



YOGA

Yoga can be an ideal activity for individuals of all ages, abilities, and skill levels. It involves transitioning to various positions slowly and in a controlled manner. Yoga can be a great activity for busting stress and increasing strength and flexibility and can be adapted to all levels by using a chair or stability ball for support. Namaste!



DANCING

From ballroom to square dancing, moving to your favourite song is a great way to get active in groups and have fun. Added bonus: having to remember dance sequences and steps is a great exercise for the brain as well.



GARDENING

Bending, squatting, stretching, and lifting are just some of the many physically-demanding components of gardening. You can even sneak in some resistance-type moves if you are doing some heavier digging and/or shoveling. Enjoy the tranquility of being outdoors and building a beautiful garden, all while supporting your health simultaneously.



SNOWSHOEING

Winter in Newfoundland and Labrador can be a great way to stay physically active while enjoying the great outdoors. Get together with a few friends or join a community snowshoe group and hike the trails. Stop along the way for a bite to eat and share some stories with each other before heading back from your outdoor adventure.



BERRY PICKING

What's a summer without berries?! Berry picking is a great activity for all ages to enjoy in all areas of the province. Hiking to your secret location to pick blueberries, partridgeberries, or bakeapples can be great for your balance and strengthening of your bones and muscles. If you don't eat them all before you get home, add them to your favourite smoothy or yogurt parfaits and enjoy!