



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 73

Overcoming Barriers to Being Active

Barriers to Being Active Quiz

Directions: Listed below are reasons that people give to describe why they do not get as much physical activity as they think they should. Please read each statement and indicate how likely you are to say each of the following statements:

How likely are you to say?	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
1. My day is so busy now, I just don't think I can make the time to include physical activity in my regular schedule.	3	2	1	0
2. None of my family members or friends like to do anything active, so I don't have a chance to exercise.	3	2	1	0
3. I'm just too tired after work to get any exercise.	3	2	1	0
4. I've been thinking about getting more exercise, but I just can't seem to get started.	3	2	1	0
5. I'm getting older, so exercise can be risky.	3	2	1	0
6. I don't get enough exercise because I have never learned the skills for any sport.	3	2	1	0
7. I don't have access to jogging trails, swimming pools, bike paths, etc.	3	2	1	0
8. Physical activity takes too much time away from other commitments—like work, family, etc.	3	2	1	0
9. I'm embarrassed about how I will look when I exercise with others.	3	2	1	0
10. I don't get enough sleep as it is. I just couldn't get up early or stay up late to get some exercise.	3	2	1	0
11. It's easier for me to find excuses not to exercise than to go out and do something.	3	2	1	0
12. I know of too many people who have hurt themselves by overdoing it with exercise.	3	2	1	0
13. I really can't see learning a new sport at my age.	3	2	1	0
14. It's just too expensive. You have to take a class or join a club or buy the right equipment.	3	2	1	0
15. My free times during the day are too short to include exercise.	3	2	1	0
16. My usual social activities with family or friends do not include physical activity.	3	2	1	0

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How likely are you to say?	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
17. I'm too tired during the week, and I need the weekend to catch up on my rest.	3	2	1	0
18. I want to get more exercise, but I just can't seem to make myself stick to anything.	3	2	1	0
19. I'm afraid I might injure myself or have a heart attack.	3	2	1	0
20. I'm not good enough at any physical activity to make it fun.	3	2	1	0
21. If we had exercise facilities and showers at work, then I would be more likely to exercise.	3	2	1	0

Scoring

- Enter the circled number in the spaces provided, putting the number for statement 1 on line 1, statement 2 on line 2, and so on.
- Add the three scores on each line. Your barriers to physical activity fall into one or more of seven categories: lack of time, social influence, lack of energy, lack of willpower, fear of injury, lack of skill, and lack of resources. A score of 5 or above in any category shows that this is an important barrier for you to overcome. For your key barriers, try the strategies listed on the following pages and/or develop additional strategies that work for you. Check off any strategy that you try.

$$\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{8} + \frac{\quad}{15} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Lack of time}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{9} + \frac{\quad}{16} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Social influence}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{10} + \frac{\quad}{17} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Lack of energy}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{11} + \frac{\quad}{18} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Lack of willpower}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{12} + \frac{\quad}{19} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Fear of injury}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{6} + \frac{\quad}{13} + \frac{\quad}{20} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Lack of skill}}$$

$$\frac{\quad}{7} + \frac{\quad}{14} + \frac{\quad}{21} = \frac{\quad}{\text{Lack of resources}}$$

(over)

Suggestions for Overcoming Physical Activity Barriers

Lack of time

- ___ Identify available time slots. Monitor your daily activities for 1 week. Identify at least three 30-minute time slots you could use for physical activity.
- ___ Add physical activity to your daily routine. For example, walk or ride your bike to work or shopping, organize social activities around physical activity, walk the dog, exercise while you watch TV, park farther from your destination, and so on.
- ___ Make time for physical activity. For example, walk, jog, or swim during your lunch hour, or take fitness breaks instead of coffee breaks.
- ___ Select activities requiring minimal time, such as walking, jogging, stair climbing.
- ___ Other: _____

Social influence

- ___ Explain your interest in physical activity to friends and family. Ask them to support your efforts.
- ___ Invite friends and family members to exercise with you. Plan social activities involving exercise.
- ___ Develop new friendships with physically active people. Join a group, such as the YMCA or a hiking club.
- ___ Other: _____

Lack of energy

- ___ Schedule physical activity for times in the day or week when you feel energetic.
- ___ Convince yourself that if you give it a chance, exercise will increase your energy level; then, try it.
- ___ Other: _____

Lack of willpower

- ___ Plan ahead. Make physical activity a regular part of your daily or weekly schedule and write it on your calendar.
- ___ Invite a friend to exercise with you on a regular basis and write it on both your calendars.
- ___ Join an exercise group or class.
- ___ Other: _____

Fear of injury

- ___ Learn how to warm up and cool down to prevent injury.
- ___ Learn how to exercise appropriately considering your age, fitness level, skill level, and health status.
- ___ Choose activities involving minimal risk.
- ___ Other: _____

Lack of skill

- ___ Select activities requiring no new skills, such as walking, climbing stairs, or jogging.
- ___ Exercise with friends who are at the same skill level as you are.
- ___ Find a friend who is willing to teach you some new skills.
- ___ Take a class to develop new skills.
- ___ Other: _____

Lack of resources

- ___ Select activities that require minimal facilities or equipment, such as walking, jogging, jumping rope, or calisthenics.

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- ___ Identify inexpensive, convenient resources available in your community (community education programs, park and recreation programs, worksite programs, etc.).
- ___ Other: _____

Are any of the following additional barriers important for you? If so, try some of the strategies listed here or invent your own.

Weather conditions

- ___ Develop a set of regular activities that are always available regardless of weather (indoor cycling, aerobic dance, indoor swimming, calisthenics, stair climbing, rope skipping, mall walking, dancing, gymnasium games, etc.).
- ___ Look on outdoor activities that depend on weather conditions (cross-country skiing, outdoor swimming, outdoor tennis, etc.) as “bonuses”—extra activities possible when weather and circumstances permit.
- ___ Other: _____

Travel

- ___ Put a jump rope in your suitcase and jump rope.
- ___ Walk the halls and climb the stairs in hotels.
- ___ Stay in places with swimming pools or exercise facilities.
- ___ Join the YMCA or YWCA (ask about reciprocal membership agreement).
- ___ Visit the local shopping mall and walk for half an hour or more.
- ___ Bring a small tape recorder and your favorite aerobic exercise tape.
- ___ Other: _____

Family obligations

- ___ Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbor, or family member who also has small children.
- ___ Exercise with the kids—go for a walk together, play tag or other running games, get an aerobic dance or exercise tape for kids (there are several on the market) and exercise together. You can spend time together and still get your exercise.
- ___ Hire a babysitter and look at the cost as a worthwhile investment in your physical and mental health.
- ___ Jump rope, do calisthenics, ride a stationary bicycle, or use other home gymnasium equipment while the kids watch TV or when they are sleeping.
- ___ Try to exercise when the kids are not around (e.g., during school hours or their nap time).
- ___ Other: _____

Retirement years

- ___ Look on your retirement as an opportunity to become more active instead of less. Spend more time gardening, walking the dog, and playing with your grandchildren. Children with short legs and grandparents with slower gaits are often great walking partners.
- ___ Learn a new skill you’ve always been interested in, such as ballroom dancing, square dancing, or swimming.
- ___ Now that you have the time, make regular physical activity a part of every day. Go for a walk every morning or every evening before dinner. Treat yourself to an exercycle and ride every day during a favorite TV show.
- ___ Other: _____