

Fitness Counseling-Physician Guide



The University of Rochester Medical Center's commitment to help Rochester become America's healthiest community by 2020



Advice for Physicians

- Counseling your patients on the benefits of exercise can double their chances of adopting a regular exercise regime.
- Repeat discussions about physical activity at each office visit to convey the importance of exercise.
- Physical activity counseling is most effective when it is tailored to the individual's physical and psychological needs.

Discussion Guide

1 Ask

- Do you get regular exercise (5 days a week, 30 minutes a day)?
- If no, would you like some help getting started?
Continue to step 2
- If yes, keep up good work.
- End discussion.

2 Advise

- Why do you want to exercise? - Discuss risks and benefits regarding personal motivators (weight loss, reduce stress, increase energy.)
- If you do not exercise, do you know the beneficial effect regular exercise has on your health?

3 Assess

- Do you want to set a date to start exercising?
- If no, provide information about the benefits of exercise and offer assistance when the patient is ready to seek help.
- If yes, establish a start date (within 2 weeks of office visit) and continue to step 4

4 Assist

- Recommend a exercise diary
- Offer support materials
- Refer to personal trainers, fitness centers, exercise clubs

5 Arrange

- Arrange a follow-up visit after start date
- Send a follow-up letter or call patient within 7 days of office visit

Advice for Patients

- Start slow and increase your frequency, duration and intensity
- Keeping a diary will help set goals and track progress
- Finding a support system to keep you on track

Fitness Status

- Inactive
- Mildly active (1-4 days/week)
- Regular exercise (5 or greater days/week)

Start Date:

Anything's possible.

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