

# Mission In Motion

Health & Wellness Monthly Newsletter  
January 2013—Physical Fitness



## this issue

Making Physical Activity a Priority	P.1
Boosting Your Physical Activity	P.1
You Can Be Active At Any Size	P.1
How Fit Are You?	P.2
Take a Break & Take a Walk	P.3
Monthly Smarts	P.3
Walking Club	P.3
Cartoon Corner	P.4
Up Coming Events	P.4
Healthy Recipe	P.4
Burn Calculator	P.4

## Making Physical Activity a Priority

A growing body of evidence reveals that Americans' bodies are growing—nearly 60 million are considered to be obese. Lack of physical activity is a big reason why. If your “get up and go” has fizzled out, here are some easy ways to fit in activity several times a day:

- ⇒ Do housework yourself instead of hiring someone else to do it
- ⇒ Stand up while talking on the phone
- ⇒ Keep exercise equipment repaired and use it
- ⇒ Walk while waiting for the plane at the airport
- ⇒ Take along a jump rope when you travel & exercise in your hotel room
- ⇒ Make a date with a friend to enjoy your favorite physical activities
- ⇒ Dance with someone or by yourself

If you long to put more pep in your step, take these simple ideas about physical activity & un with them. Get going to Blue Access for Members at [www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com) and find more practical fitness facts for a healthier lifestyle every day. *Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; American Heart Association*

## Boosting Your Physical Activity

Introducing more movement into your daily life is easier than you may think. Plus, the many health-related benefits are well worth the extra effort.

- ◆ Opt for “people-powered movement” whenever you can. Use the stairs instead of the elevator. Walk or bike ride to places rather than take the car.
- ◆ Schedule specific days & times for exercise so it becomes a habit.
- ◆ Add fun & motivation by including a friend or family member. Join a gym together or plan daily walks. *Source: Positive Promotions*

## You Can Be Active At Any Size

Is your weight holding you back from physical activity? While there may be special challenges for large people who want to be physically active, overcoming the following barriers can make all the difference:

**Barrier:** I don't have enough time.

**Solution:** Be active for a few minutes at a time throughout day

**Barrier:** I feel self-conscious when I'm active

**Solution:** Be active at home doing household chores and find ways to move during day-to-day activities.

**Barrier:** I'm worried about my health or injury when I exercise.

**Solution:** Consult a health care professional first, & consider finding a personal trainer to guide you.

**Barrier:** I just don't like exercise.

**Solution:** Try dancing to your favorite music, taking the stairs, & walking outdoors with friends.

*Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease*

# How Fit Are You?

Self-assessment tests can help you gauge your fitness level so you have a better idea where you are at and how far you need to go to meet your goals. Check your progress periodically to make sure what you do is working.

## 2-Minute Step Test

Measures: **Aerobic Endurance**

**Equipment:** Masking tape \* A stack of books at the appropriate height against the wall also can be used for a knee-height marker  
\* Stopwatch

### Test Procedures:

- \* Stand up straight next to a wall. Place a piece of tape on the wall at the midpoint between your knee cap and the top of your hip bone.
- \* Stand sideways to wall. Practice lifting your knee to the tape mark.
- \* On "Go," begin counting yourself as you alternate knee lifts to the mark on the wall in marching motion. Do as many knee lift cycles (right knee / left knee) as possible in 2 minutes. Both knees must reach the tape mark for the cycle to be counted.

### Aerobic Endurance Score

Very poor (52 knee-lift cycles)

Very good (135 knee-lift cycles)

**Chair Sit and Reach Test Measures:**  
**Lower body/hamstring flexibility**

**Equipment:** Chair against the wall \* 18" ruler

### Test Procedures:

- \* Extend your preferred leg straight out in front of you, with your heel on the floor, ankle flexed, toes toward the ceiling.
- \* With your hands overlapping and your middle fingers even, pull your abdominals in and slowly reach toward your toes as far as you can. Do not bounce.
- \* After two practice trials, use a ruler to measure the third time. Zero (0) is our toes. Anything toward your body is a minus (-). Anything past your toes is a plus (+).

### Lower Body and Hamstring Flexibility Score

Very poor (-7)

Very good (+8.7)

Average flexibility (0)

Remember to breathe and keep the knee of your extended leg as straight as possible without locking your knee.

**Back Scratch Test Measures:**  
**Upper Body (shoulder) flexibility**

**Equipment:** 18" ruler

### Test Procedures:

- \* Stand tall.
- \* Place one hand over the same shoulder, palm down and fingers extended. Slowly reach down the middle of your back with your elbow pointed up.
- \* Place your other hand around the back of your waist with the palm out. Slowly reach up toward the middle of your back and your other hand.
- \* Attempt to touch or overlap your middle fingers.
- \* After two practice trials, have someone use a ruler to measure the third time. Zero (0) is your extended middle fingers touching. Any space between your middle fingers is a minus (-). Overlapping middle fingers is a plus (+).

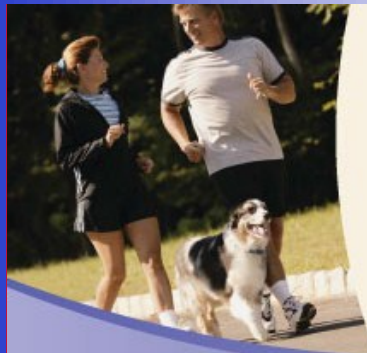
### Lower Body and Hamstring Flexibility Score

Very poor (-11)

Very good (+5)

Average flexibility (0)

Caution: Stop if you feel pain. Remember to breathe. Do not make rapid movements.



## Take a break and take a walk



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### Take a Break and Take a Walk

One of the best ways to improve your health is to get to the heart and “sole” of the matter. So grab some comfortable shoes, lace them up and get going on a walking program. Walking is a gentle, low-impact exercise that can ease you into a higher level of fitness and health. It’s safe, simple, doesn’t require practice, and the health benefits are many. And it can help you lose those “love handles,” too.

If you’re crunched for time, you can even fit walks in during your work breaks and lunch. Always remember to warm up and stretch first. Also, keep your posture straight and avoid exaggerated movements to help prevent injury and setbacks. To stay motivated:

- ⇒ Set performance goals
- ⇒ Make it fun
- ⇒ Vary your route or routine

Here’s another healthy habit you can fit into your breaks—the Personal Health Manager, available through Blue Access for Members at [www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com).

*Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research*

### City of Mission Walking Club

Did you know that City of Mission has a Walking Club? That’s right, we started the Walking Club last month and you are encouraged to join us!

**When:** Tuesdays and Thursdays

**Where:** Birdwell Park (off of Stewart Road across from Agape)

**Time:** Stretches begin at 5:20 p.m. and Walking begins at 5:30 p.m.

**Distance:** 1 mile

Contact Human Resources to register for the Walking Club and receive a free t-shirt and pedometer!

### MONTHLY SMARTS

#### FOOD SMARTS

Watch your intake of foods that have added sugars, added fats, or alcohol, since they produce calories, but not the nutrients you need.

#### HEALTHCARE CONSUMER SMARTS

When grocery shopping, pay attention to the “Unit Price” tags on grocery shelves, located just below each item. They provide an accurate way to compare prices so you can choose the best deal.

#### SAFETY SMARTS

Pack a flashlight, some blankets, water, and snacks if you’re hitting the highway in case your vehicle becomes disabled and you have to wait for help in cold weather.

*Source: Positive Promotions*





### January Health & Wellness Seminar:

**Topic:** Physical Fitness

**Date:** January 24, 2013

**Time:** 2:30–3:30 pm

**Speaker :** To be announced

**Location:** City Hall—Council Chambers

#### Fruited Rice Pudding

Make the fruited rice pudding ahead of time, refrigerate and serve cold. Or serve this dessert warm, right from the oven. Serves 8.

**Ingredients:**

- ⇒ 2 cups water
- ⇒ 1 cup long-grain rice
- ⇒ 4 cups evaporated fat-free milk
- ⇒ 1/2 cup brown sugar
- ⇒ 1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
- ⇒ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⇒ 6 egg whites
- ⇒ 1/4 cup crushed pineapple
- ⇒ 1/4 cup raisins
- ⇒ 1/4 cup chopped apricots

**Directions:**

In a medium saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to a boil. Add the rice & cook about 10 minutes. Pour into a colander & drain thoroughly. In the same saucepan, add the evaporated milk & brown sugar. Cook until hot. Add the cooked rice, lemon zest & vanilla extract. Simmer over low heat until the mixture is thick & the rice is tender, about 30 minutes. Remove from the heat & cool. In a small bowl, whisk together the egg whites. Pour into the rice mixture. Add the pineapple, raisins & apricots. Stir until well blended. Preheat oven to 325 F. Lightly coat a baking dish with cooking spray. Spoon the pudding & fruit mixture into the baking dish. Bake until the pudding is set, about 20 minutes. Serve warm or cold.

#### Health & Wellness Seminars

February 2013—Healthy Heart / High Blood Pressure

March 2013—Nutrition

(Topics subject to change)

\*If you have a subject or topic that you would like more information on, feel free to make your request at 956-580-8630.

#### Burn Calculator: Walking

You can burn up to 40 calories for every 10 minutes you walk. Schedule a “walking meeting” for your next one-one-one or small-group meeting. Enjoy the sunlight and fresh air while you burn calories!

### Mission In Motion

**Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.**

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