

The Circle

Let's get moving!



Geisinger

Exercise makes you stronger, boosts your energy and helps improve balance. It can also help with depression and prevent or delay conditions like diabetes, osteoporosis and heart disease.

And the best news? Even a little bit can make a big difference. Start low and go slow. Soon, doing more will be as easy as it is fun.

“Exercising helps you maintain your independence and quality of life,” says Theresa Craig, wellness coordinator for Geisinger 65 Forward Health Center in Scranton. “Any senior exercise routine should include a mix of cardio activities, strength training, balance and flexibility challenges. The exercises can be tailored to anyone’s fitness level.”

Ready to get moving for better health?

Open up this special exercise edition of the Circle!

Don't start any new exercise program without consulting your doctor. And tell them immediately if you notice any of these issues while exercising:

- Chest pain or pressure
- Trouble breathing
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Balance problems
- Nausea



Editor's letter

Dear *Circle* readers and friends,

Movement becomes increasingly important as we age. That's why we created this special edition of *The Circle* to illustrate modes of fitness and well-being, highlighting the transformative power of these practices.

Throughout the edition, we're thrilled to showcase exercises performed by our peers and

members of our wellness staff. Their dedication and passion for fitness serve as inspiration for us all. We explore how various forms of movement can improve strength, flexibility and mental acuity, and we feature tips and tools to help find renewed vitality through forms of healthy living.

I hope this edition encourages you to see movement as a profound expression of self-care and love. Join us as we celebrate movement and its game-changing effects on our lives.

With inspiration and aspiration,

Linda Rowe
Silver Circle Program Manager/Editor

The Circle

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The Silver Lining

Journal prompts to consider:

Find your "why". Why do you want to start this fitness journey? Now, take that answer and ask "why" again. Continue this process until you can no longer answer. The combination of these answers is your ultimate WHY.

Create a vision of what you hope your future self to be in 6 months or one year. What changes do you need to make to achieve that vision?

Motivational quotes:

"If you wish to move mountains tomorrow, you must start by lifting stones today."

— African proverb

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

— Lao Tzu



Working up to working out

Ready to talk with your doctor about starting an exercise program? If you've been sedentary or have medical concerns, here are a few good questions to ask before taking the next steps in your fitness journey.

What types of exercise would be best for me?

Your doctor knows your medical history better than anyone. They can recommend activities that are safe and won't put too much strain on your body. That's especially key in the early days of a new workout routine, when doing too much too soon can be discouraging — or painful. So, keep this mantra in mind: Start low and go slow. You can always do more as your body adjusts.

What activities should I avoid?

Some physical activities might not be right for you, especially if you've had surgery or a serious medical issue recently. Your doctor can guide you in the right direction. For example, swimming puts less stress on your joints than jogging. Once you do start exercising, be sure to tell your doctor right away if you have issues like chest pain, dizziness or shortness of breath.

Does my medical condition affect my ability to exercise?

If you have a chronic medical condition like arthritis, diabetes or heart disease, you might need to adjust your exercise routine to suit your body's needs. But don't be intimidated by the thought of exercise or physical activity. Many yoga poses, which are good for strength, balance and flexibility, can be done while seated in a chair — no need for a floor mat. Anyone can do it!



Embark on a “step-by-step” path to fitness

Lacing up a supportive (and stylish) pair of sneakers and simply taking a stroll is a great way to get these five health benefits.

1. Manage or lose weight

Walking burns calories and, depending on your pace and how long you walk, it can help you lose weight. It's a form of cardio most people can do and especially good for folks who can't do higher intensity moves because of joint pain.

It just takes 30 minutes each day to get the most out of your daily walk. If you're looking to lose weight, pick up your pace or increase the distance.

2. Reduce your risk of chronic disease

Taking an hour-long walk just one or two days per week is enough to help you decrease your risk of developing a chronic disease. In fact, walking is a recommended method to help lower blood sugar levels and the risk of diabetes.

3. Strengthen your heart

Just 30 minutes of walking each day can help decrease your risk for heart disease. And the longer you walk, the more that risk decreases. Walking can also help improve your cholesterol and blood pressure levels.

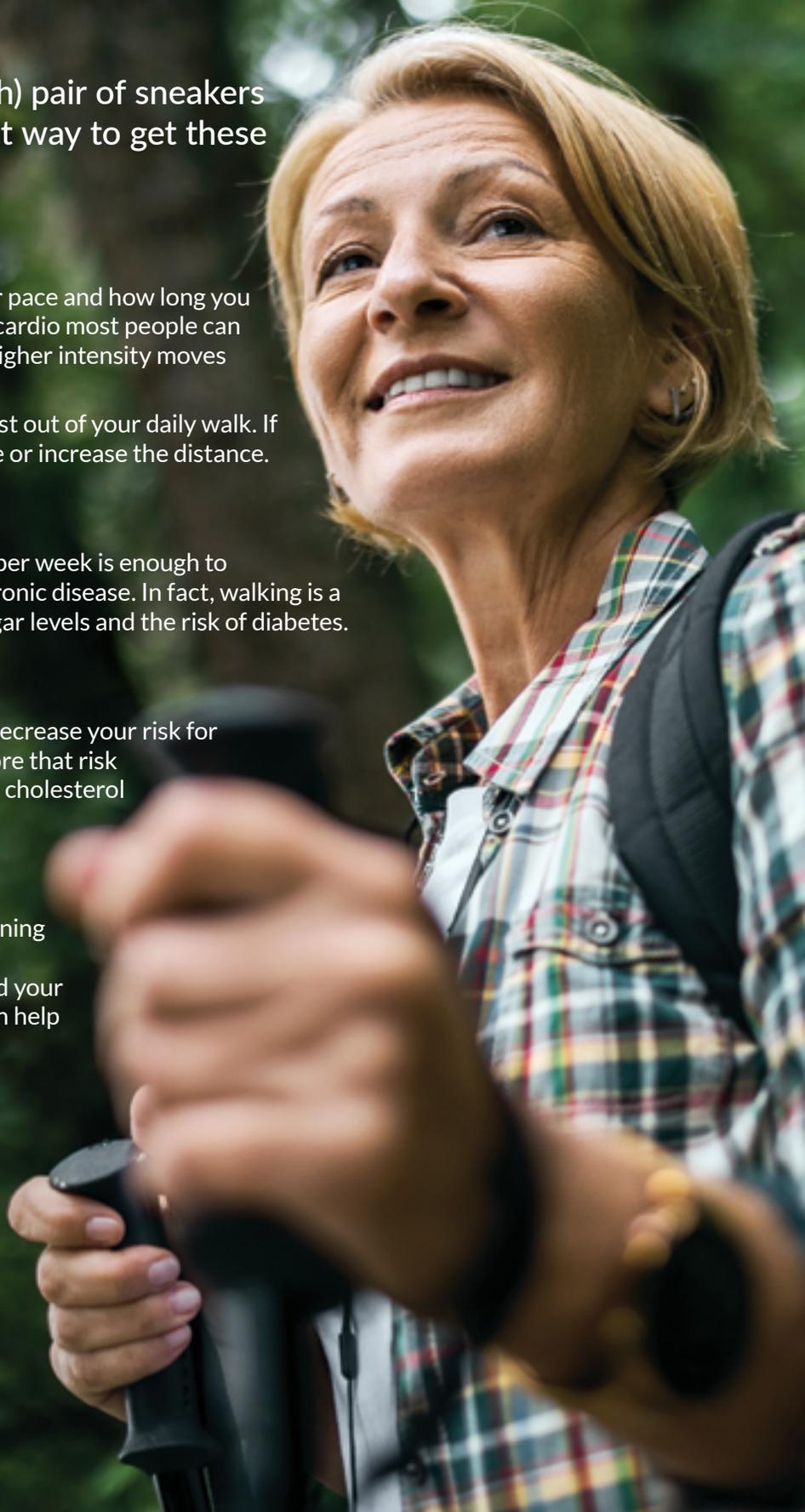
4. Ease joint pain

Walking helps protect your joints by strengthening the muscles around them. For example, your hamstring and quadricep — the muscles around your knee — are strengthened by walking, which can help reduce knee pain.

5. Boost your mood

Walking can modify your nervous system to decrease anger and depression. And being outdoors surrounded by nature and sunlight is a natural way to improve your mood and can help with seasonal depression.

Walking can be a social activity, too. So, lace up your sneakers, grab a friend and have some healthy fun!



Fitness journal

Download a copy of our Fitness Journal to track your workouts. It's a great way to see your progress and stay motivated.



Goal for the week:

Date	Start time	Area(s) of focus <input type="radio"/> Balance & core <input type="radio"/> Lower body <input type="radio"/> Cardio <input type="radio"/> Flexibility <input type="radio"/> Upper body	Total time
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Exercise	Sets	Reps	Weight (if used)	Notes

Date	Start time	Area(s) of focus <input type="radio"/> Balance & core <input type="radio"/> Lower body <input type="radio"/> Cardio <input type="radio"/> Flexibility <input type="radio"/> Upper body	Total time
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Exercise	Sets	Reps	Weight (if used)	Notes

Remember to do your warmup and cool down and hydrate. Every day you show up for yourself is a win!

Warm up and cool down

Doing 5 to 10 minutes of light activity before your workout will help improve your performance and prevent injuries. You'll gradually rev up your cardiovascular system by raising your body temperature and increasing blood flow to your muscles.

Examples include slow walking or swimming, brisk walking before running and arm circles, shoulder shrugs and jumping jacks.

Your cool down is just as important. Do another 5 to 10 minutes of low-intensity cardio then stretch to bring your heart rate, blood pressure and blood flow back to normal.

**“Some people want it to happen,
some wish it would happen,
others make it happen.”
– Michael Jordan**



Cardio

Benefits:

- Lowers blood pressure
- Strengthens immune system
- Regulates blood sugar
- Reduces asthma symptoms
- Reduces chronic pain
- Improves sleep
- Improves mental health
- Contributes to healthy weight
- Stimulates brain activity
- Reduces risk of falls



Modified jumping jacks

1. Stand with feet together and arms at your sides
2. Raise hands above head while stepping right foot out to side
3. Return to home position
4. Repeat on the left side
5. Repeat steps for 30 seconds to 1 minute



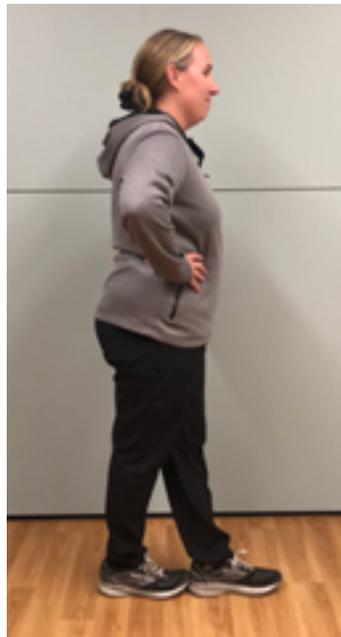
Sit to stand

1. Sit toward the front of a chair with feet hip-width distance apart and arms across chest
2. Tighten abdominal muscles and stand
3. Return to home position
4. Repeat for 30 seconds to 1 minute

Core stability and balance

Benefits:

- Helps lower fall risk
- Improves strength in pelvis, hips, lower back and abdomen
- Improves coordination
- Decreases back pain
- Improves confidence in walking
- Improves posture



Heel-to-toe walk

1. Stand tall next to a wall or countertop
2. Look straight ahead, then place right heel in front of left foot with heel touching the toes, using the wall or counter for balance if needed
3. Repeat with left heel in front of right foot
4. Take up to 10 steps, then turn around and repeat



Standing balance with forward reach

1. Using a sturdy chair, lift left leg
2. Reach forward with the right hand and touch the upper left corner of the seat
3. Return to starting position
4. Repeat up to 10 times
5. Repeat while standing on left foot

“Increased physical activity enhances positive energy.” – Lailah Gifty Akita



Reverse crunch

1. Sit on a sturdy chair with arms crossed on chest
2. Engage abs
3. Slowly lean back then return to upright position
4. Repeat up to 10 times for up to 3 sets



Chair plank

1. Use a sturdy chair
2. Start with hands on the seat, back flat and head in neutral position
3. Step back and keep hips down so spine is straight
4. Hold position for 5 counts
5. Repeat 3 to 5 times



Seated knee lifts

1. Sit on a sturdy chair with good posture
2. Engage abs
3. Alternate lifting right and left knees
4. Complete 10 reps for up to 3 sets

Strength training

Benefits:

- Improved bone health
- Strength
- Weight maintenance

You'll need light weights for these exercises — either dumbbells, soup cans or water bottles.



Bicep curls

1. Hold weights at sides with palms facing inward
2. Alternate curling arms up toward shoulder, rotating your palm up
3. Repeat 10 times on each side



Front raises

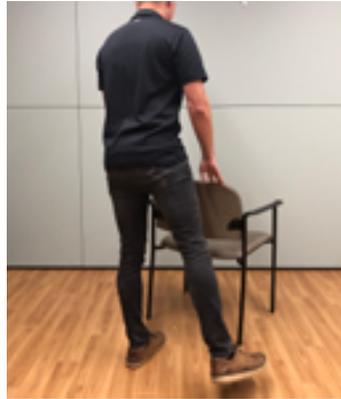
1. Stand with knees slightly bent and weights by your sides
2. Alternate raising weights to shoulder height, keeping elbows locked
3. Repeat 10 times on each side



Wall push ups

1. Place hands on a wall
2. Slowly bend elbows and lower yourself toward the wall, keeping back straight and abs engaged
3. Slowly push back to starting position
4. Repeat 5 times

**“A champion is someone who gets up when they can’t.”
– Jack Dempsey**



Hip abduction/adduction

1. Start with feet together
2. Alternate raising legs out to side
3. Complete 1 to 3 sets of 10 to 12 reps



Squats

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart
2. Slowly bend knees to 90-degree angle at most, with weight in your heels and back straight
3. Straighten and repeat 10 to 12 times up to 3 sets



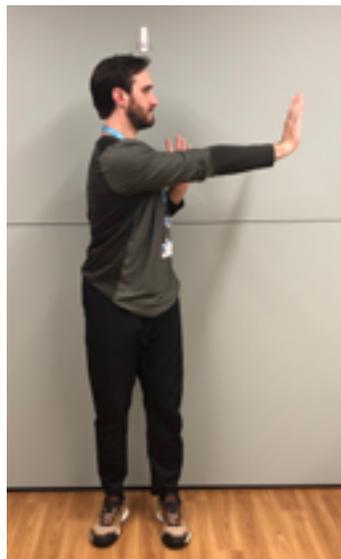
Body-weight forward lunges

1. Start with feet shoulder-width apart and hands on hips
2. Alternate stepping forward until thigh is parallel to the floor, keeping knees behind toes
3. Complete 1 to 3 sets of 10 to 12 reps
4. Add dumbbells as you gain strength

Flexibility

Benefits:

- Improved range of motion
- Reduced risk of injury
- Improved posture
- Reduced joint pain and stiffness



Spinal rotation + presses

1. Stand tall with feet together
2. Keep hands up, palms forward, just in front of shoulders
3. Slowly rotate the upper torso as far as possible, pressing the opposite arm in the same direction
4. Alternate for 5 to 10 repetitions each side



Lower torso rotations

1. Lay down with knees bent and lower back pressed to the floor
2. Keeping shoulders down, drop knees side to side
3. Repeat 10 times per side

Dip a toe into exercise

Not ready for vigorous exercises or moves that stress your joints? You can still exercise. Consider these options.



Water aerobics

If you have access to a pool — and arthritis or joint pain — water aerobics are a wonderful, gentle way to work out. The buoyancy of the water puts less stress on your joints and offers natural resistance to help build strength with minimal stress on the body.

Try aqua jogging next time you're in a pool. You may never switch back to land!



Chair yoga

Not ready for yoga on a floor mat? No problem. Many traditional poses have been adapted for sitting in a chair. In fact, it's become one of the most popular forms of exercise for older people. No matter how you approach it, yoga improves muscle strength, balance and flexibility. It can also help with anxiety and depression and leave you with a sense of calm and well-being.



Resistance bands

Give these elastic bands a good steady pull and they'll give your workout resistance without putting too much strain on your joints and muscles. They're less expensive than most fitness equipment, so there's less strain on your wallet, too.



Strength training with dumbbells

Light dumbbells are great accessories for exercises, including some of our moves of the month. Use them right in the comfort of your own home. You'll not only burn calories faster — you'll improve your balance and flexibility, too.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit.”
—Aristotle



Find your fitness fuel



A balanced diet that includes protein, healthy fats, carbohydrates and fiber helps keep your body strong and ready to take on a new exercise routine. It also helps you manage your weight and can prevent diabetes, heart disease and other medical issues.

Make sure your diet includes:

- Five servings of fruits or vegetable a day
- Beans, fish and lean meats
- Whole grain bread, cereal and pasta
- Calcium from milk, cheese and yogurt to keep bones strong

Stay away from sugary snacks and beverages and packaged, processed foods that are loaded with additives and preservatives. Red flags to watch for:

- Hydrogenated oil and other trans fats
- Sodium nitrate — often found in canned tuna, sausages and deli meats
- Artificial food coloring
- High fructose corn syrup
- Aspartame
- The preservatives BHA and BHT

Last but not least, drink water throughout the day. It's the healthiest beverage — hydrating and naturally calorie-free!

**Pump
up your
protein**



Scan the QR code to see our recipe for peanut butter cereal bars.



Peanut butter banana smoothie

Fuel your workout with this delicious, healthy drink.

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 ripe bananas
- 1 cup skim milk
- 1½ tablespoons creamy peanut butter
- ½ tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1½ cups ice

Directions:

Peel bananas, chop into small pieces and place in freezer until hard. Put all ingredients in a blender and blend on high until smooth. Pour into two glasses and enjoy!

Source: myplate.gov

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