

## ADVICE FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN OLDER ADULTS

- ◆ It is never too late to become physically active.
- ◆ Even a small amount of regular physical activity can improve your health and help you to feel better and enjoy life more.
- ◆ Older people are at higher risk of developing chronic diseases that physical activity can help prevent.
- ◆ Regular exercise can prevent or delay some chronic diseases like cancer, heart disease, or diabetes, and helps with depression, too.
- ◆ Lack of physical activity and poor nutrition are major contributors to the growing epidemic of obesity in the United States.
- ◆ Even as little as 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 or more days a week can have significant benefits on your health.

Moderate activity includes things like:

- A brisk walk
  - Raking leaves
  - Riding a bike
  - Swimming
  - Washing the car
  - Dancing
  - Housework
  - Gardening
- ◆ Physical activity can help manage health problems that are already present, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.
  - ◆ When you are inactive, you lose muscle strength and balance. Without muscle strength and good balance, you increase your risk of falls.
  - ◆ Regular physical activity in older adults increases your ability to live independently!
  - ◆ What you can do to add physical activity to your life:
    - Consult with your doctor about what activities are safe and appropriate for you
    - Choose activities that you enjoy and look for partners to make it more fun
    - Start slowly; try to work up to 30 minutes a day
  - ◆ You can get more information from the senior-friendly web site of the National Institute on Aging, [www.nihseniorhealth.gov](http://www.nihseniorhealth.gov).