



# PREVENTION & WELLNESS PHYSICAL HEALTH

California Department of Developmental Services



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A healthy lifestyle involves making choices that improve health. This means thinking about how to be healthy in all areas of life, including food, exercise, sleep, and handling stress. It also means being proactive, like visiting the doctor and dentist. It is important to make healthy choices in all these areas of life and understand how they may prevent or reduce serious health problems.

Source: [Health Affairs](#)

## Physical Activity and Exercise

Adults should do both aerobic and muscle-strengthening physical activities. Individuals may need to start slowly increasing activities over several weeks. Each week, it is recommended that individuals get at least:

2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, such as brisk walking, swimming, water aerobics, cycling, or wheeling in a wheelchair; OR

1.25 hours of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity 2 or more days a week, such as jogging or wheelchair basketball; AND

Two or more days a week, engage in muscle-strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups, such as working with resistance bands.

Source: [CDC Disability and Health Promotion](#)



Wellness and Safety Bulletins are produced by the Department of Developmental Services to remind direct service providers, regional center staff, and others about specific wellness activities identified with our community. Please provide feedback on this bulletin and what we can do better through this survey: [Bulletin Survey](#)

# Helpful Tips to Improve Physical Activity

## Make physical activity a part of the individual's daily routine

- Include 20-25 minutes of physical exercise or activity in the individual's daily schedule.
- At least once a day, go to places where individuals can be active like public parks, hiking trails, basketball courts, or shopping trips.
- Engage individuals in yard work, like gardening, sweeping, or raking.
- Instead of watching television after dinner, take a 15-minute walk.

## Find accessible places that are a good fit for the individual to exercise.

Invest in inexpensive equipment that encourages physical activity like a kickball, hula hoop, beach ball, or resistance bands.

When exercising, remind those you support to stay hydrated!

Set a positive example by leading an active lifestyle yourself.

Consider how physical limitations (including pain) may affect an individual's ability to be physically active.

- Consult with the individual's doctor or health professional to understand what the individual can do and how exercises or activities can be modified.

Source: [CDC](#)



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## Statistics

According to the most recent NCI survey of California adults with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities:



**28%** ARE CONSIDERED OVERWEIGHT AND **33%** ARE CONSIDERED OBESE, BASED ON BODY MASS INDEX (BMI).



**70%** OF ADULTS INTERVIEWED REPORTED NOT PARTICIPATING IN ANY REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OR EXERCISE.

Source: CA National Core Indicator Survey data [FY 2020-21](#)

## Additional Resources

[Understand How Disability Impacts California](#)

To Download PDF: [CA Disability and Health State Profile FINAL \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[Health Care for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)



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