

Working short bursts of activity into the day is a great way to increase physical activity, especially during May — National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.

You're not limited to just after work to get your heart rate up. Include a few of these simple exercises to energize and help your family stay active throughout the day.

- Football foot drill. At practice, football players practice rapidly tapping their feet in place, simulating a run. Do the same thing while seated, for 30 seconds at a go.
- Elevated pushups. Lean on a sturdy piece of furniture and slowly push your body off of it in a sort of standing push up.
- Wall sits. Rest your back against a wall and move your feet away from the wall. The wall should be supporting the weight of your back and your knees should be bent. Hold the position as long as possible.
- Pretend jump rope. Move your arms as if you are turning a jump rope while tapping one foot in front of you. Alternate feet.

Just 30 minutes of moderate exercise per day, five days a week, can help adults reduce their risks for high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes – all of which affect Oklahomans at a higher rate than the national average. Health experts encourage children and teenagers to get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day to improve muscular fitness, along with bone and heart health.

“The key is movement – getting up and moving more,” said Amanda Haag, Jackson County Health Department WIC Nutrition Therapist and JCCHAT Nutrition & Fitness coalition member. “It doesn’t take much time to ‘Get Your 30,’ but the benefits for your health – and how you feel – can be tremendous over time.”

Whether young in years or young at heart, people of all ages can incorporate easy ways to become more physically active. It can be as simple as stretching, taking a brief walk or climbing stairs while at work, or tossing a ball, riding a bike or walking to a nearby friend’s house. Group activities with friends or family members add to the possibilities.

“It is never too late to start to move more and eat better – and you don’t have to make it complicated,” said John Friedl, Physical Activity and Nutrition Manager, Center for the Advancement of Wellness at the Oklahoma State Department of Health. “Start out with a 10 minute walk and try a new vegetable cooked in a healthy way, like steaming or baking. Build up your physical activity by a few minutes and replace one unhealthy food choice with a healthier one each day. Soon, moving more and eating better will be your way of life.” The website [www.ShapeYourFutureOK.com](http://www.ShapeYourFutureOK.com) links visitors to sites that suggest options for adults, kids and families to be physically active in ways that are fun, practical and beneficial and provides links to healthy recipe websites as well.

In addition to offering tips to families and individuals, [www.ShapeYourFutureOK.com](http://www.ShapeYourFutureOK.com) also explains how residents can help their local communities, workplaces, schools, and afterschool and child care facilities become healthier through policy change and program participation.

“Shape Your Future” is a collaborative campaign by the Oklahoma State Department of Health and TSET, the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, that invites Oklahomans to “eat better, move more and be tobacco free.”

Locally, the Jackson County Community Health Action Team ~ Nutrition & Fitness Task Force is active in helping schools, afterschool programs, workplaces and communities encourage more physical activity and with passing policies that support healthy eating. To learn more about what is happening with physical activity and nutrition in Jackson County, contact Tara Davis, CX Nutrition & Fitness Coordinator at 482-7308 or [tarad@health.ok.gov](mailto:tarad@health.ok.gov).

## **ABOUT JCCHAT**

Jackson County Community Health Action Team is an active coalition working towards improving the health of all communities within Jackson County. JCCHAT began meeting in March 2002 as a partner of the Oklahoma Turning Point Initiative. JCCHAT starts at the local level, building broad community support and participation by setting priorities within a community and then engaging residents to take action. For more information, contact Dennie Christian at [denniec@health.ok.gov](mailto:denniec@health.ok.gov).