

Sinclair Community College, Division of Allied Health Technologies

Health Promotion for Community Health Workers – Cardiovascular disease and stroke

Class #16 Physical Activity

(date)

Course Objectives:

Know risk factors and causes of heart disease, stroke, and cancer

Work with communities and community members to prevent heart disease, stroke, and reduce risk of cancer by encouraging healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control, and stress reduction at the individual, family, and community level.

Show people how to take greater control over their health.

Class/Learning Objectives: By the end of this session, students will be able to:

1. Explain why physical activity is important.
2. Explain to community members the basics of a personal physical activity.
3. Explain how much physical activity is necessary.
4. Explain how physical activity helps you lose weight.
5. Describe ways to motivate people to become more physically active.
6. Describe ways to help the community be more encouraging to physical activity.

Participants:

Instructor(s)

Students

Materials/Resources Needed:

Flipchart, markers, tape, blackboard, chalk and eraser

Prior to the training session make a list of free or low-cost recreation in your community and places for physical activity (for example, community and recreation centers, senior centers, available school facilities, walking groups, walking trails, yoga or Tai Chi classes, dances programs, mall walking programs, or community golf courses.)

Handouts:

- 16-1 My Personal Physical Activity Plan
- 16-2 My Physical Activity Log
- 16-3 Ways to Add Physical Activity into Your Life
- 16-4 Walking Guidelines
- 16-5 Physical Activity and Level of Intensity
- 16-6 Sample Walking Programs
- 16-7 Ideas for Becoming More Physical Active

- 16-8 What Can Communities do to Support Physical Activity

Class Outline

I. Overview

II. Lesson

- A. Why is Physical Activity So Important?
- B. How Do I Get Started?
- C. How Much Physical Activity is Needed?
- D. How does Physical Activity Help Me Lose Weight?
- E. What CHWs Can Do to Help People Become More Physically Active?
- F. How Can CHWs Help Create More Active Communities?

II. Summary

Plan for the Class:

I. Overview

In earlier classes, we have talked about how important physical activity is. We have learned that being physically inactive puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. Heart disease is twice as likely to develop in inactive people.

Unfortunately, men, women, and children are becoming less active. Less than half of the adults in America get the recommended amount of physical activity – at least 30 minutes most days.

Regular physical activity is important at all ages. Middle-aged and older people benefit from regular physical activity just as much as young people do.

III. Lesson

A. Why is Physical Activity So Important?

There are many reasons you should try to be physically active each day. For example, physical activity:

- Reduces the risk of having a second heart attack in people who have already had one heart attack.
- Lowers both total blood cholesterol and triglycerides and increases high-density lipoproteins (HDL or the “good” cholesterol)
- Lowers the risk of developing high blood pressure.

Activity: Why is it important to be physically active?

Ask the CHWs if they can think of other reasons for being physically active.

If the following reasons are not mentioned, add these:

- *Reduces the risk of developing heart disease and the risk of dying from heart disease*

- *Reduces the risk of stroke*
- *Helps reduce blood pressure in people who already have hypertension*
- *Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer*
- *Helps people achieve and maintain a healthy body weight*
- *Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety*
- *Promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces feelings of stress*
- *Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints*
- *Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling or becoming greatly fatigued*

There are four types of physical activity that are important for staying healthy and fit:

- Strength
- Balance
- Stretching
- Endurance

Strength exercises build muscle and increases your metabolism, which helps keep your weight and blood sugar in check.

Balance exercises builds leg muscles and helps prevent falls.

Stretching exercises give you more freedom of movement to do the things you need and like to do.

Endurance exercises are any activity – walking, jogging, swimming, or raking – that increases your heart rate and breathing for an extended period of time.

B. How Do I Get Started?

There are a few things you should know before starting to be more active.

Drink plenty of water before and after exercising, even if you are not thirsty. Special sports drinks are not needed.

Wear comfortable clothes and shoes that give your feet support.

Never wrap your body in plastic! You only loose water weight due to sweating and risk heat stroke.

Do not wear clothing that is too heavy.

Postpone physical activity if you have a fever or are ill.

Most people can be more physically active if they start slowly and sensibly. But it is important to talk to a doctor or nurse if you:

- Have high blood pressure or other heart condition.
- Have pain or discomfort in the chest or shoulder.
- Feel dizzy or lightheaded, or get breathless after mild exertion.
- Are over 40 years old if you are a man, or over 50 if you are a women and want to do a more vigorous activity, like jogging.

People who include regular physical activity in their lives after a heart attack improve their chances of survival. But if a person has had a heart attack it is important that he or she talk to the doctor to be sure that he or she is following a safe activity program that will help prevent heart pain and further damage from overexertion.

Many communities offer free or inexpensive recreation facilities and classes.

Handout 16-1: My Personal Physical Activity Plan

Tell CHWs that setting goals is a good way to get started and to stay on track. Look at Handout 16-1 with the CHWs. Ask them how much physical activity a person should engage in each week. Ask the CHWs to fill out activity plans for themselves. This and 16-2 are good handouts for CHWs to give community members.

Handout 16-2: My Physical Activity Log

Another suggestion to help people stay on track is to keep a Physical Activity Log. This log tracks time spent or miles walked and calories burned. One mile walked or approximately 20 minutes of moderate activity burns 100 calories. People can work towards reaching a physical activity goal of at least 1000 calories burned each week. This is 10 miles or 200 minutes of moderate activity.

You should be aware of the facilities and classes available in your community. Check shopping malls, many of them are open early and late for people who do not want to walk alone, or in the dark, or outside. There are other places such as parks, recreation centers, and schools that have physical activity areas. Remind community members to make sure the area is well-lit and that they are with a friend or two if walking after dark.

Recreation and senior centers often offer water aerobic classes, Tai Chi classes that help improve flexibility and balance and Sittercise classes for those who cannot stand or walk easily.

There are a lot of enjoyable physical activities. The trick is to find one that appeals to you. Some of the most popular are:

- Walking – the most natural exercise of all and it fits with most everyone's lifestyle.
- Gentle exercise – classes provide great opportunities for social interaction and support.

- Swimming – a good all round exercise and a great way to get fit.
- Water aerobics – usually a group exercise class, done in the water, especially popular with older adults.
- Golf – very good for stamina and leg strength if played regularly.
- Weight training – keeps bones and muscles strong.
- Tai Chi – a martial arts form of exercise combining a physical workout, relaxation and skilled learning.
- Gardening provides hours of enjoyment while improving your strength, flexibility and suppleness.

Handout 16-3: Ways to Add Physical Activity into Your Life

Review the examples with Community Health Workers (CHWs).

Discuss how they can use this handout when talking to community members.

If you are still unsure of what type of activity might be best for you, try walking. Walking doesn't require special equipment, it doesn't cost anything and it can be a lot of fun. And...in the Sept. 5, 2002 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine, researcher reported that women who walked benefited their health just as much as women who expend equal amounts of energy doing vigorous exercise.

A goal to set for yourself is walking 10,000 steps each day. The best way to keep track of your steps to buy an inexpensive pedometer (from a discount, drug or grocery store) which you fasten on your belt, pants, or skirt. The pedometer measures your steps. Wear the pedometer for two weeks and at the end of each day write the number of steps you take. Set a goal to slowly start adding 500 steps a week until you finally reach 10,000 steps a day. You can do it!

Handout 16-4: Walking Guidelines

Review the walking programs with the CHWs. Ask them how they can use this handout to help community members start walking programs.

C. How Much Physical Activity is Needed?

Adults should accumulate a total of at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days each week, preferably every day of the week.

If you can't set aside 30 minutes at one time to be active, you can break your activity into shorter periods of 5 to 10 minutes. Just be sure it adds up to at least 30 minutes on most days.

For example, you can:

- Park your car farther away and walk to your office and take the stairs instead of the elevator. This could equal 10 minutes with the return trip after work.
- Take a 10 minute walk at lunch time.
- Dance to your favorite music later in the day for at least 10 minutes.
- On grocery shopping trips, park as far from the store as possible and walk around the store a couple of times before you begin your shopping – another 10 minutes.

Remember, whatever you choose to do, it should equal 30 minutes of moderately intense activity.

How do you know if an activity is at a moderate level of intensity?

A simple method for measuring intensity is the talk test.

The talk test method of measuring intensity is simple. If you are active at a light intensity level you should be able to sing while doing the activity. If you are active at a moderate intensity level you should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably during the activity. If you become too winded or too out of breath to carry on a conversation, the activity can be considered vigorous.

Handout 16-5: Physical Activity and Level of Intensity

Review the handout with the CHWs. Point out the activities like gardening, housework, playing with children. Advise non-active people to start with moderate activity levels and work up to vigorous levels.

D. How does Physical Activity Help Me Lose Weight?

Physical activity burns calories.

A calorie is a measure of the energy in food. You may remember from an earlier chapter that we get nutrients and energy from the food we eat. Food is our bodies' fuel. The more calories in a food, the more energy or activity it takes to burn those calories. Excess calories are stored as fat.

You should burn at least 1000 calories a week by being physically active. This is about 30 minutes, 7 times per week. Burning up to 2000 calories a week may offer even greater health benefits.

Walking 1 mile (2,000 steps) in about 20 minutes burns about 100 calories. Walking 2 miles (4,000 steps), 5 times a week will burn about 1,000 calories.

- One 12-oz. soda (150 calories) per day can add about 10 pounds to your weight each year.

- 30 minutes of brisk walking most days can subtract about 10 pounds to your weight each year.

E. What CHWs Can do to Help People Become More Physically active

If a person has been inactive for a while, encourage him or her to start slowly. Start out with as little as 5 minutes of walking and then gradually add minutes to that time.

Handout 16-6: Sample Walking Program

Review the handout with the CHWs. Ask how they think this information will help people in their community be more physically active.

Help people choose activities they'll enjoy. They will be more likely to stick with them.

Tell them to gradually build the time spent doing an activity by adding a few minutes every few days or so until they've reached at least 30 minutes per day.

As 30 minutes of activity becomes easier, they should gradually increase either the number of minutes or the intensity of the activity.

Encourage people to try new activities – to keep from becoming bored with one and to broaden the range of benefits. They should reward their efforts (with something other than cake and ice cream, of course!)

Unfortunately, no matter how encouraging you are, most people will still find it hard to engage in moderate physical activity on a regular basis.

Activity – there are many reasons why people are not physically active.

Ask the CHWs to share their ideas for these reasons. Write answers on flipchart. If the following reasons are not mentioned, add them to the list.

Possible answers are:

- *Do not have enough time to exercise.*
- *Find it inconvenient to exercise.*
- *Lack self-motivation.*
- *Do not find exercise enjoyable.*
- *Find exercise boring.*
- *Lack confidence in their ability to be physically active.*
- *Fear being injured or have been injured recently.*

- *Lack self-management skills, such as the ability to set personal goals, monitor progress, or reward progress toward such goals.*
- *Lack encouragement, support, or companionship from family and friends.*
- *Do not have parks, sidewalks, bicycle trails, or safe and pleasant walking paths convenient to their homes or offices.*

Handout 16-7: Ideas for Becoming More Physically Active

Ask the CHWs for suggestions for overcoming these problems. Remind the CHWs their suggestions can be used to encourage people in their community to be more active.

F. How Can CHWs Help Create More Active Communities?

To help people in your community, who are at risk for heart attack and stroke, be more active it is important for you to:

- Know where walking trails, parks, and other places to walk are in your community. Have maps available if possible.
- Know about mall walking or other free physical activity program.
- Talk to local recreation groups about sponsoring programs for those who can't afford or do not have free recreation programs where they live.
- Get to know the people in your community and in local non-profit organization who can help promote health and physical fitness.
- Encourage and support people who need to do stroke and heart rehabilitation or other physical therapy activities.

To learn more about programs in your state for promoting physical activity and reducing obesity, visit CDC's State-Based Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases web site at:

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/state_programs/index.htm

Handout 16-8: What Can Communities do to Support Physical Activity?

Ask the CHWs about their communities. What do they see in their communities that support physical activity?

Discuss the handout with the CHWs. Encourage and helping individuals to be active is very important for the health of your community, but it is also very important to create an environment and policies that encourages active lifestyles for all community members.

IV. Summary

CHWs can explain the benefits of physical activity, and help motivate members of their communities to become more active by being a role model, by helping people to overcome road blocks, and by working to

create an environment that encourages active lifestyles for all community members.

Why is it important to be physically active?

Who should talk to a doctor or nurse before starting a physical activity program?

What are some of the reasons people are not physically active?

What can you do to help community members overcome personal barriers to physical activity?

Resources:

Physical Activity: Community Health Advisor Training Manual, UAB Prevention Center

Your Heart, Your Life, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Honoring the Gift of Heart Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and the Indian Health Service

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Nutrition and Physical Activity page: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/index.htm

Marcus BH and Simkin LR. (1993) *The Stages of Exercise Behavior*. Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness, 33, 83-88.

American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.
www.americanheart.org

Shape up America! www.shapeup.org

Senior Health <http://nihseniorhealth.gov> National Library of Medicine

Aim for a Healthy Weight. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
<http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/joinhin/news/nutrition.htm>