

Introduction to Physical Health



Physical health and physical activity

Physical health means having good cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition, [and] eating healthy foods.¹

When we think about physical health, we generally think about physical activity. **Physical activity is defined as any movement of your body that results in an increased use of energy.**²

Factors that may impact our physical health include:

- sleep
- personal hygiene
- regular medical check-ups
- avoiding harmful habits including smoking and consuming alcohol



Why is physical activity important?

Physical activity is a crucial aspect of being physically healthy, as it helps us build strength throughout our body, increases our endurance, helps us remain active for longer, and improves our flexibility.

Physical activity can also be good for:

- **your brain** - it helps with concentration and being focused on the task at hand.
- **your mental and emotional wellbeing** - it releases endorphins that can help decrease anxiety, can be a new fun way to make new friends, become part of a team, or meet people who share your interests.
- **your body** - it helps your digestion, blood flow, heart health, and even helps you to recover from injuries more quickly.

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Research tells us that kids in Canada are spending the majority of their time in front of screens, and therefore, do not get enough physical activity.³

The 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth - developed by The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology - recommend for ages 5 to 17:⁴

- 60 mins of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day
- no more than two hours of recreational screen-time per day

- 8 to 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night depending on the child's age
- several hours of light physical activity per day.

For more information or to check out the other Canadian 24-Hour Movement and Canadian Physical Activity guidelines, go to csepguidelines.ca.

4-H Canada's Physical Health Resource

In this resource, you will find tip sheets for both yourself as a 4-H leader, and for your 4-H members. You will find that these tip sheets complement each other and share important information that connect to all aspects of healthy living!

Tip sheets for members:

- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Get Active, Be Productive
- Taking Control of your Physical Literacy
- The Importance of Sleep
- Leading Through Physical Activity

Tip Sheets for leaders:

- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Physical Activity and Productivity
- Physical Literacy 101
- The Importance of Sleep
- Leading through Physical Activity

As a companion to the tip sheets for 4-H leaders, you will also find an Activity Guide that outlines ways to incorporate physical health into your 4-H meetings.

4-H Canada's accompanying webinar presentation will introduce you to the Healthy Living Initiative by walking you through the activities, to further assist you in using this resource and help you feel confident putting them into action!

This webinar and all the above resources are available at 4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving.

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