

# Healthy Aging Communication Network

Living Stronger & Longer



## Older Adults and Physical Activity

### What is the magnitude of the problem?

In 2006, over half of Arizonans older than 55 were at increased health risk due to low levels of physical activity (PA).

### Who is at risk?

For almost everyone, the benefits of being physically active outweigh the health risks for being consistently inactive.

### What are the consequences of low levels of physical activity?

A low level of PA is a contributing cause of:

- Premature death
- Disability
- Loss of independence
- Falls
- Chronic disease
- Depression & anxiety
- Decreased quality of life

Physical activity alone helps to reduce risk but also modifies the following risk factors for cardiovascular diseases and diabetes:

- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Abnormal cholesterol values
- Insulin insensitivity
- Improves the effectiveness of smoke cessation programs

### What is the cost?

It is difficult to establish the actual financial costs and burden in terms of quality of life and death directly attributable to low PA. The costs related to low PA are hidden in the costs of treating chronic diseases and lost productivity.

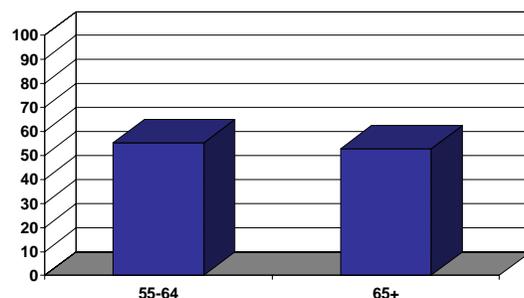
### What is recommended?

Light to moderate-intensity PA on all or most days of the week is a general recommendation to maintain good health. The benefits of PA increase with the amount of activity performed on a regular basis. For increased health benefits, moderate-intensity PA is recommended for 30 minutes or more 3-5 times per week. Older Arizonans may also benefit from strength, balance, and flexibility training on a regular basis. Consult healthcare professionals for additional recommendations.

Visit [www.livingstrongerlonger.org/activity.htm](http://www.livingstrongerlonger.org/activity.htm) for more physical activity resources & information. The Arizona Department of Health Services is helping to build capacity for evidence-based physical activity programming in Arizona communities.

A searchable database of physical activity programs may be found at [www.activeoptions.org](http://www.activeoptions.org).

2006: Percentage of Adults 55+ at Increased Health Risk Due to Physical Inactivity



Arizona Department of Health Services: 2006 Behavioral Risk Factors of Arizona Adults. June 2006 as accessed at <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/bfrs/reports/rpt06.pdf> 11/01/2007