



A safe, private place to get doctor-approved information on health, emotions, and life.

Easy Exercises for Teens

Finding it hard to fit in fitness? Just getting through a day of school and after-school commitments can leave most of us wondering where to find time.

Experts recommend that teens do 60 minutes or more of physical activity every day. Most of that should be moderate to vigorous aerobic activity. Aerobic activity is anything that gets your heart going — like biking, dancing, or running. Then take a few minutes for some strength training. Exercises like the ones below help build muscle and boost metabolism. Flexibility is the third component of well-rounded exercise. Check out yoga as one way to stay flexible.

You can do these three strength-building exercises at home. There's no need for special equipment, expensive gym fees, or lots of time. Just check with your doctor, PE teacher, or coach first to be sure these exercises are OK for you.

Sit Backs: Step 1

- Sit on floor, legs bent
- Arms straight in front



Sit Backs: Step 2

- Lean back gradually
- Keep arms straight and tummy tight
- Take it as far back as comfortable
- Slowly return to sitting position
- Repeat



Chair Squats: Step 1

- Stand tall
- Chair behind you

**Chair Squats: Step 2**

- Arms straight in front
- Slowly start to sit down
- Stop before your butt hits the chair
- Slowly straighten to standing
- Repeat



Butterfly Breath: Step 1

- Stand tall
- Feet hip width apart
- Arms lifted out to the sides



Butterfly Breath: Step 2

- Exhaling, lift right knee and touch it with left elbow
- Inhaling, return to position one
- Switch sides and repeat



About Sets and Reps

Most fitness instructors recommend repeating a particular strength training exercise several times in a row. These are known as repetitions, or “reps,” and they’re done in “sets.” Each set consists of a specific number of reps, usually between 8 and 15. Fitness instructors often recommend that people rest after one set and then perform another set (or more) of the same number of reps. For the exercises shown above, start with 10 reps, adding sets of 10 as you get comfortable. Rest for 30 seconds between sets.

Reviewed by: Mary L. Gavin, MD
Date reviewed: June 2018

Note: All information on TeensHealth® is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses, and treatment, consult your doctor.

© 1995-2020 The Nemours Foundation. All rights reserved.

Images provided by The Nemours Foundation, iStock, Getty Images, Veer, Shutterstock, and Clipart.com.