THE HEALTH EMPOWERMENT ZONE STUDY MANUAL

Learn how to become a

COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY SPECIALIST

and how to lead a healthy lifestyle
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What Is This Study About?
The Health Empowerment Zone study is funded by the National Institutes of Health and is directed by researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The purpose of this project is to find out if improvements made to a neighborhood to increase the accessibility of parks, sidewalks, fitness centers, grocery stores, and public transportation will result in higher levels of physical activity and better nutrition for people with mobility limitations. Physical activity and healthy eating are crucial in helping to reduce the risk of developing serious health conditions.

What Are The Goals Of This Research?
- Empower people with mobility limitations to improve their health.
- Make neighborhoods friendlier for people with mobility limitations.
- Train Community Accessibility Specialists to help promote healthier and friendlier neighborhoods for people with mobility limitations.

What Is Empowerment?
People who use assistive devices (wheelchairs, canes, and walkers) experience many barriers in their own neighborhoods. As a result, many people feel that it is very difficult to leave their homes. In this study, we want to empower people who use assistive devices to be able to overcome the barriers in their communities. Empowerment is the process of increasing your ability to make choices and to do the things that you want to do when you want to do them. Empowerment means that you will learn how to make your community more accessible so that you are able to improve your own health and wellbeing.

Introduction

Stairs are a common barrier for people with disabilities.
What Is A Community Accessibility Specialist?
A Community Accessibility Specialist is a trained individual who understands how to identify barriers in the community for people with mobility limitations as well as how to assist in creating a more accessible community that promotes health.

What Will You Be Asked To Do?
You will be trained to become a Community Accessibility Specialist. At the end of the study, you will know how to help make your neighborhood grocery store, sidewalks, transportation, and fitness centers more accessible. As part of the study, you will be asked to choose a grocery store, fitness center, form of transportation, and sidewalk in your neighborhood. Then, you will determine the accessibility of these facilities and paths by using checklists designed to measure the accessibility of these places, which we refer to as Key Health Areas. A UIC staff person will meet you at each of these locations the first time you visit them to help you get oriented and complete the checklists. When choosing your Key Health Areas, you may want to think about how you would answer the following questions:

1. Do I want to go to a Key Health Area (grocery store, transportation, neighborhood walk, or fitness center) that I am already using? You may feel more comfortable going to places that you already know. However, if you experience a barrier, you may not feel comfortable asking for accommodations from a store where you are known. It may depend on your relationship with the store.

2. Do I want to go to Key Health Areas that I do not normally go to but would like to? You may want to use your accessibility training to go to Key Health Areas that interest you.
Areas that you have not gone to before or to areas where you have experienced barriers. These are the areas that are most in need of becoming accessible. Many store managers do not make accessibility improvements because they say, “No people with mobility devices come into my store, so why should I make changes?” An important part of this study is to show those managers that people who use mobility devices do want to be customers at these stores or facilities.

3. Will I be able to use these Key Health Areas once the study is over? You may want to find a grocery store, fitness center, or sidewalk that you could see yourself continuing to use after the study is over. That way, you can continue to improve your health.

Your Civil Rights
The most important tool that you will have is your rights under various pieces of legislation, including the City of Chicago Human Rights Ordinance, Cook County Human Rights Ordinance, and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Knowing what businesses and local governments are required to do under these laws will empower you to let them know when they are not doing it correctly. Understanding your rights under the law is also the first step to becoming empowered. During the workshop, you will receive information regarding your rights and responsibilities with regard to:

- Getting in the door to many businesses and service providers in your neighborhood:
- How to write a letter to a business telling it about the accessibility problems you have identified;
- How to file a complaint if you feel that your rights under the ADA have been violated; and
- Where to go if you have additional questions.

President Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act on the White House South Lawn on July 26, 1990.
Physical Activity And Healthy Eating
As part of this study, we will help you increase your physical activity and healthy eating.

Physical Activity
The training on physical activity will teach you ways to increase your physical activity through exercise as well as things you can do in your daily routine. In this manual:

- We will show you a typical fitness center and explain the different areas you may encounter. We will point out the many details that make a fitness center accessible; that is, easier for you to use.
- You will learn how to use a fitness center and all the safety precautions to make you feel comfortable doing exercise.
- You will learn how to set goals and create an exercise program that meets your needs.
- We will explain the important things to look for when choosing a fitness center.

Healthy Eating
The training on healthy eating will teach you how to increase your daily intake of nutritious foods, explain economically smart meal planning, and provide tips to help you maintain a healthy weight. In this project:

- We will introduce you to the new Food Guide Pyramid and how to use the Pyramid as a guide to healthy eating.
- We will outline the major food groups from the Pyramid and explain how many servings you need from each food group to maintain a healthy weight.
- You will learn how to read a food label.
- We will teach you quick tips to recognize appropriate food portions.
- We will teach you how to include healthy foods in your daily diet through meal planning and smart grocery shopping.
- We will take you on a tour of your favorite grocery store and make recommendations to improve your current diet.
- We will show you how to compare food products and shop healthy but economically.
Getting Around
Whether you use public transportation or drive your own car, it is important to understand the various transportation options available to assist people with disabilities. Many people shy away from using public transportation because they are not aware of the programs that support people with disabilities, including reduced or free fares, lifts on the buses, or curb-to-curb services that will pick you up and drop you off where you want to go.

- Getting around your neighborhood on the sidewalks and streets can be a challenge if the sidewalk surface is broken or there are no sidewalks. Crossing a street can be difficult if there is no curb ramp or the existing ramp is in poor repair. The City of Chicago has a responsibility to maintain sidewalks and curb cuts so that they are useable by people with disabilities. There are programs in place to ensure that the city does what is needed. During the workshop you will learn how to use discount or free programs to gain access to CTA buses, trains, and paratransit services;

- Safely use the sidewalks, curb cuts, and pathways in your neighborhood;

- Who to contact if you find sidewalks and curb cuts that are missing or need to be repaired;

- How to file a complaint if you feel that your rights under the laws have been violated; and

- Where to find additional information.

PACE paratransit offers curb to curb transportation for people with disabilities.
## Important Contacts

1. James Rimmer, Principal Investigator  
   312.413.9650

2. Yochai Eisenberg, Project Coordinator  
   312.413.9410

3. National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD) 1-800-900-8086

4. Nutrition Team  
   312.413.4807

5. Transportation and Walking Team  
   312.996.1059
Why we are giving financial assistance

Many people with mobility limitations not only experience physical barriers but also have many financial barriers that prevent them from participating in the community. The purpose of the Tickets to Health are to remove any financial barriers that might prevent your participation. We want to see if and how you are able to become more active in your community without worrying about financial barriers.

What you will receive

Transportation.
- Depending on your own transportation practices, you may receive either a CTA pass or paratransit vouchers.
- CTA: you will receive one 30-day monthly pass on the day of the workshop. You will receive another monthly pass after one month has passed.
- Paratransit: you will receive 4 books of 10 paratransit vouchers on the day of the workshop. You will receive another 4 books of 10 after one month.

Grocery Coupons.
- On the day of your in person walkthrough or a grocery store, you will receive your first voucher for healthy foods.
- You will receive $10 a week for 6 weeks
- You will be mailed an additional $10 a week if you mail in your receipt (using pre-paid envelope) showing that you bought healthy foods the previous week.

Fitness Center Memberships.
- On the day of your in person walkthrough at a fitness center of your choice, you will receive your membership for approximately 2 months.
UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHTS
Resources for Self-Advocacy in the Community

DBTAC-Great Lakes ADA Center
University of Illinois at Chicago
1640 W. Roosevelt Road, Room 405
Chicago, IL 60608
800-949-4232 (V/TTY)
www.adagreatlakes.org
gldbtac@uic.edu
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is a civil rights law that protects against discrimination on the basis of disability. More information on the ADA is contained elsewhere in this manual.

Air Carriers Access Act (1986)
This legislation protects against discrimination by the airlines during air travel. The airlines are required to provide people with disabilities assistance during ticketing, check-in and boarding. In addition, the legislation provides protections for individuals who are traveling with a service animal, require oxygen while traveling, need a personal assistant to travel, need to store their wheelchair or other equipment during flight or need assistance in-flight.

Fair Housing Amendments of 1988
This legislation that protects against discrimination on the basis of disability in the rental, lease or sale of housing. The actions of landlords, condominium and homeowners associations, leasing agents and real-estate agents are covered by this law. Areas covered by this law include but are not limited to the accessibility of rental/leasing and sales offices, providing information in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities (large print, Braille, electronic, etc.), providing appropriate communication aids during transactions (sign language interpreter, real-time captioning, etc.), In addition, there are accessibility requirements for newly constructed multi-family housing (4 or more units on a single site) which require that key features of a building are accessible including the parking, entrance, common use areas and that the units are adaptable to the needs of someone with a disability. Units constructed before the implementation of the law are not required to be accessible. However, a landlord, leasing agent or condominium association would need to allow an individual to make the necessary changes in their Unit to create accessibility. The individual with a disability would be responsible for the costs of any necessary changes. More information on the Fair Housing Act of 1988 can be found on the internet at:

http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/disabilities/index.cfm
This legislation requires that local and state entities ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in the election/voting process. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that polling places are accessible (parking, entrance, voting booths, restrooms, etc.) and that the process of casting a vote is accessible (electronic voting, assistive devices/aides that can be utilized by someone with a disability to cast their vote, etc.). More information about the Help America Vote Act can be found on the internet at:
http://www.napas.org/issues/voting/hava/

Cook County Human Rights Ordinance
For residents who reside outside of the City of Chicago but within the boarders of Cook County, the Cook County Human Rights Commission enforces this ordinance which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by businesses and employers. Individuals can file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission if they feel that they have been discriminated against. Additional information on how to file a complaint under the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance is contained on page 24.

Illinois Human Rights Act
The Illinois Human Rights Commission enforces the Human Rights Act. This Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in housing, employment and access to businesses and/or services. Anyone who experiences discrimination on the basis of disability while doing business, living or visiting Illinois may file a complaint.
GUIDELINES AND CODES

Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)
The ADA has its own set of accessibility guidelines. Businesses and local/state governments must follow these guidelines to ensure that their buildings and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities. These guidelines provide measurements for key features including the width of a sidewalk or passage way, width of doors, steepness of a ramp, size of an accessible toilet stall and many other features. More information about the specifics of the ADA Accessibility Guidelines can be found on the internet at:

www.access-board.gov

Chicago Building Code
The City of Chicago has its own accessibility requirements incorporated into the Cities Building Code. The City of Chicago monitors and enforces the use of the Building Code and ensures that architects and builders adhere to it. The Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities has an architectural compliance unit which works closely with the City’s building department to ensure that all plans and drawing submitted to the City of Chicago for a building permit are reviewed for compliance with the accessibility requirements. More information about the City of Chicago Building Code and its accessibility requirements can be found online:

www.cityofchicago.org

Choose the Mayor’s Office For People With Disabilities

Illinois Environmental Barriers Act, Illinois Accessibility Code
The State of Illinois adopted an accessibility code in 1986, four years before the ADA was passed into law. The Illinois Accessibility Code is equal to or more stringent in some areas than the ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The requirements are enforced by the Illinois Attorney General’s Office and technical assistance is provided by the Illinois Capital Development Board. More information on the Illinois Accessibility Code can be found on the internet at:

http://www.cdb.state.il.us/IAC.shtml

Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines
Under the Fair Housing Act of 1988 there are guidelines that address what elements a multi-family housing development must have to ensure that it is accessible to people with disabilities. These guidelines apply to any newly constructed multi-family housing development with 4 or more
MORE ABOUT THE ADA

The ADA is a Civil Rights Law. The purpose of the ADA is to:
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability
- Promote integration versus segregation based on a disability
- Ensure that there is equal access to goods and services

The ADA is NOT an entitlement program. There is no monetary benefit and/or specific services required under the ADA.

Employment

Title I of the ADA covers all aspects of employment. Not all employers are covered however. The ADA only covers private employers who have 15 or more employees or Government employers who have 1 or more employees.

All aspects of employment are covered:
- Recruitment/Application
- Interview
- Testing
- Medical questions/exams
- Wages/Pay Scale

Benefits of employment
- Promotion
- Discipline
- Layoff/Discharge

More information regarding the Employment Provisions of the ADA can be found on the internet at: http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada18.html or by calling the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY)

Local and State Governments

Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by any unit of local or state government. All programs, services and facilities should be readily accessible to and useable by people with disabilities. The requirements include ensuring that all buildings and facilities are accessible. This includes but is not limited to the courts, city hall, parks and recreation facilities, schools, libraries, fire stations, etc. All transportation services and facilities provided by a local or state government entity must also be accessible. This includes buses, trains and associated terminals.

More information regarding the Local and State Government Provisions of the ADA can be found on the internet at http://www.ada.gov or by calling the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY)
Telecommunications
Title IV of the ADA requires that all telephone companies provide services to people who cannot utilize the traditional telephone system. This includes individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who have difficulty speaking on the telephone due to their disability. The ADA requires the establishment of a variety of operated assisted services to ensure that people with speech and hearing disabilities are able to communicate with their family, friends, employer or anyone else via the telephone.

More information regarding the Telecommunication requirements and the ADA can be found on the internet at http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/title4.html or by calling the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY).

Miscellaneous provisions of the ADA can be found under Title V. This title is not like the other titles in that it does not deal with any one specific issue. It is where provisions that cut across all titles of the ADA can be found. This title addresses issues such as 1) Prohibition against retaliation on the basis of disability for pursuit of one’s rights under the ADA; 2) Non-discrimination on the basis of disability in the issuance of insurance; 3) Availability of legal fees for individuals who pursue their rights under the ADA.

The general provisions of the ADA promote:
- Integration versus Segregation
- Equal Opportunity to Participate (neutral eligibility criteria that does not screen out someone with a disability)
- Accessibility of the Physical Environment (buildings, transportation, etc.)
- Auxiliary Aids and Services to ensure equal communication for people with disabilities (Braille or Large Print Materials, Sign Language Interpreters, Readers for the Blind, etc.)
- The Modification of Policies and Procedures to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access (i.e. Modify no-pets policy to allow a service animal, etc.)

The ADA does NOT require better access or opportunities than others may receive and provides no additional benefits or services.

What about the physical environment? What can I expect when I go out to the stores and other places? What is required?
Parking
Where parking is provided to the public a minimum of 1 space must be accessible. Additional spaces may be required to be accessible depending on the number of overall spaces available to the public.

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<tr>
<th>Total Parking Spaces in Lot</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Accessible Spaces</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 25</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 to 50</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>51 to 75</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>76 to 100</td>
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<td>201 to 300</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>301 to 400</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401 to 500</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 to 1000</td>
<td>2 percent of total</td>
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<tr>
<td>1001 and over</td>
<td>20, plus 1 for each 100 over 1000</td>
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Entrances
A minimum of 50% or at least one entrance must be accessible to people with disabilities. More entrances may be required to be accessible depending on the local fire code. Main entrances should be accessible. Accessibility means that there should not be any steps or barriers to getting into the building. Automatic doors are not required by the ADA but can be very useful. More and more businesses are recognizing the value of automatic doors for people with all types of abilities (people with disabilities, mothers with strollers, people with suitcases or briefcases on wheels, etc.)

Restrooms
At least one men’s and one women’s restroom and or toilet stall must be accessible. Accessibility includes the ability to get into and out of the restroom/toilet stall and have sufficient room to maneuver within the restroom/toilet stall. There should be grab bars on the back and side wall around the toilet and nothing should be placed in the area around the toilet (i.e. baby changing station, garbage can, etc.). At least one sink should be accessible and have a high enough counter to allow someone with a wheelchair to roll under it. Paper towel, toilet paper and soap dispensers should be within reach. Garbage cans and other receptacles should not interfere with someone’s ability to maneuver within the restroom.
Counters
Service counters should be high enough to allow someone with a disability to pull up to the side in order to sign a credit card slip, get food for take out and/or address customer service staff. You will often find service counters placed at the height of someone who is standing. These are not accessible counters. At least a portion of the counter should be lowered and useable by someone in a wheelchair.

There are many additional requirements to ensure that a building or facility is accessible to individuals with a disability. More information about the architectural accessibility requirements under the ADA can be found on the internet at http://www.access-board.gov or by calling the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY).

Buses
Mainline transportation vehicles are required to have a lift and seating areas designated for people with disabilities. Bus drivers are required to be trained in the operation of the lifts and securement devices. Buses should be equipped with notification systems that let people know what stop they are approaching. Drivers should provide riders with necessary assistance.

Trains
Commuter trains are required to be accessible which includes supplying gap fillers when there is a difference between the edge of the platform and the entrance to the rail car. Conductors are required to assist passengers with the gap filler and notify the passengers stop that a gap filler is going to be needed. Trains should have designated seating areas for wheelchairs and people with disabilities. Train stations should be accessible including having operational elevators and accessible turnstiles. Transit ticket kiosks must be accessible to people who are blind or who use a wheelchair.

What about transportation? Are buses and trains required to be accessible?

Bus Stops
Public transportation agencies are required to ensure that the bus stops are accessible. This includes a level landing pad, sidewalks and pathways that are free of obstructions and that the bus stops connects to an accessible path of travel (sidewalk, street with curb cut, etc.)
What about the sidewalks and streets in my neighborhood?

Curb Cuts
Anywhere that a sidewalk meets a street there should be an accessible curb cut. A curb cut should not be steep and allow for someone using a wheelchair to safely go up or down. Curb cuts should be shoveled/plowed in the winter to ensure that someone with a disability can use them. Broken concrete can cause problems for someone in a wheelchair or who is walking with a walker, crutch or cane. Cities are required to maintain their curb cuts as accessible throughout the year. Curb cuts are also required at alleys and driveways.

Sidewalks
Cities are required to maintain their sidewalks as accessible. The ADA only addresses sidewalks where they already exist. It does not require the installation of a sidewalk. Sidewalks should be clear of obstructions and wide enough for two people to pass each other. Broken concrete makes traveling along a sidewalk very difficult and unsafe.

What can I do if I find barriers?
You have the right to file a complaint under the ADA with one of the federal agencies responsible for enforcement of the law. This may take a very long time and there is no guarantee that your complaint will be addressed by the federal agencies. The ADA encourages “alternative dispute resolution” which is a fancy name for “try to work it out”.

Some ways that you may consider addressing your concerns without filing a formal complaint include:
- Ask to talk to the owner/manager during your visit or by telephone
- Send a letter to the owner/manager (Find out who owns the business and get a name/address)

If trying to work it out with the business informally does not work, you can consider whether or not you want to file a formal complaint.

Choose which way you want to go:
Chicago Human Rights Ordinance (entities within the City of Chicago) – Refer to the fact sheet on the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance on page 23

Cook County Human Rights Ordinance (entities outside of the City of Chicago) – Refer to the fact sheet on the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance on page 25

ADA – File a complaint with the US Department of Justice. Refer to the complaint form on in the side pocket.
Here are some Tips for Documenting Problems

- Collect as many facts as you can
- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- Witnesses?

Write down the facts of the situation and describe what occurred as soon as you can so that you remember all of the details.

Take photos if you have a camera available. Turn the date/time stamp on if your camera has that capability.

Refer to page 22 for a sample letter that you can adapt and send to a business that may not be accessible.

Consider participating in the YELLOW CARD CAMPAIGN. Here is how it works:

1. Carry a supply of Yellow Cards with you when you go out into the community
2. Identify what the problems were with the facility and mark the appropriate category on the Yellow Card
3. Leave the Yellow Card with a supervisor, manager or owner

That’s all there is to it! The Yellow Card contains information for the business owner/manager regarding the problems that you experienced at their place of business. It also provides them with information about where they can go to get assistance in determining what their responsibilities are under the ADA and what they need to do about it.

Copies of the Yellow Card are available by calling the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY). There is no charge for the cards and you are encouraged to distribute them to as many businesses as may need them!

If trying to educate the business and work with them to increase accessibility does not work.....

Consider Other Advocacy Strategies

- Work with disability groups in your community to organize about an issue
- Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago
- Chicago Chapter of ADAPT
- Disability Specific Organizations
  - UCP
  - MS Society
  - PVA, etc.
Use existing Systems to Report Problems

- City of Chicago 311 System
  - Accepts complaints regarding broken sidewalks/curb cuts or missing curb cuts

- CTA Consumer Complaint Number
  - 1-888-YOUR-CTA (1-888-968-7282)
  - CTA’s ADA Officer – Christine Montgomery
    - 312-681-4620
    - cmontgomery@transitchicago.com

If you need to resort to more formal legal representation there are several legal services available to consider:

Disability Specific Legal Services
Equip for Equality
(800) 537-2632

Access Living Legal Services
(800) 613-8549

Non-Disability Specific Legal Clinics
Chicago Legal Clinic
(312) 226-2620

Chicago Volunteer Legal Services
(312) 332-1624

REMEMBER, YOU CAN EFFECT CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY!
BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS!
May 10, 2009

Mom and Pop Grocery Store
2222 Food Lane
Anywhere, USA 11111

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Henry Doit and I live in the neighborhood near your store. I recently tried to shop at your store but was unable to get in the front door because you do not have a ramp. I use a wheelchair and cannot get into buildings that do not have ramps on them. It has been 19 years since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires businesses to remove barriers for people with disabilities.

There are 53 million Americans with disabilities in this country and that number is growing. We want to be able to shop in our neighborhoods but businesses like yours make it very difficult for us to do this. It is your responsibility as a business owner to make changes to your property that would allow individuals who use wheelchairs, crutches or canes to get in the door. There are tax benefits available to assist with the cost of any changes that may be needed. I have included a copy of the U.S. Department of Justice “Guide for Small Business” for your information. This booklet provides additional information on your obligations as a business under the ADA.

As a person with a disability, I have a right to file a complaint against your business with the appropriate authorities. I am currently considering my options but want to make you aware of the problem and give you an opportunity to address it. More information about your responsibilities under the ADA can be found on the U.S. Department of Justice website at www.ada.gov. There is free technical assistance available to businesses through the DBTAC-Great Lakes ADA Center. You can contact it for more information by calling its toll-free number at 800-949-4232 or by visiting its website at www.adagreatlakes.org.

Access is good for business and there are many people like me who cannot shop at your store but want to. Your attention to this matter is appreciated. I would be happy to discuss my concerns with you further as well. You may call me at 222-222-2222.

Sincerely,

Henry Doit
What Is Discrimination?
To win a discrimination case, a complainant must be able to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that:

- The complainant was subjected to unfavorable treatment by a covered individual, business, or government agency (the respondent).

- This conduct was based on the complainant’s status in one or more of these 13 protected categories:
  - Race
  - Color
  - Ancestry
  - National Origin
  - Religion
  - Source of Income
  - Military Discharge Status
  - Sex
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Marital Status
  - Parental Status
  - Age
  - DISABILITY

There are 5 areas covered for discrimination:
- Housing
- Employment
- Public Accommodation
- Credit Transactions
- Bonding

- The conduct took place in the City of Chicago.
- The complainant filed the complaint within 180 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory action.
- The complainant was treated differently because of his or her protected status, and not for other legitimate, non-discriminatory reasons.
How to File a Complaint
Complaints may be filed by mail, by facsimile or in person. Filing by e-mail is not permitted. A Complaint is deemed filed upon receipt by the Commission; however, a facsimile received after 6:00 p.m. or on a weekend or holiday, it is deemed received the next working day. Individuals who wish to come to the office to draft and file a complaint should come no later than 3:00 p.m.

People must use the Commission’s Complaint form or a substantial equivalent. The Commission’s Regulations require that certain content be included in Complaints. This includes the names and addresses of parties and a description of the conduct, policy or practice alleged to constitute the Ordinance Violation sufficient to substantially apprise the Respondent/s and the Commission of the alleged Ordinance Violation.

How Long Does The Process Take?
Some cases are resolved by settlement within a few weeks or months, but full investigations take from several months to over a year. Investigators are required to investigate their older cases first although settlement negotiations can take place any time. If “substantial evidence” of discrimination is found, the conciliation and hearing processes take place over the next few months. Thus the Commission cannot normally provide immediate remedies to complainants.

Questions?
Please call the Commission on Human Relations at 312/744-4111 (312/744-1088 TTY) with any questions about these procedures. Copies of the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance, the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations Enabling Ordinance, and the Commission’s Rules and Regulations are available at the Commission’s office.
The Cook County Commission on Human Rights enforces the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance. Recognizing the need to combat the effects of bias and bigotry throughout Cook County, the Cook County Board of Commissioners adopted the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance on March 16, 1993. The Ordinance is designed to protect all people who live and work in the County from discrimination and sexual harassment in employment, public accommodations, housing, credit transactions, County services, and County contracting.

The Ordinance prohibits these forms of discrimination when they are based upon a person's race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, military discharge status, source of income, housing status, or gender identity.

Complaint Filing
If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you may be able to file a complaint with the Cook County Commission on Human Rights. Visit, write, or call the Commission office to initiate the complaint filing process. After gathering some preliminary information, the Commission will help you prepare a written complaint. You may also prepare your own complaint or have an attorney prepare one for you. However, you must use the Commission's Complaint Form or a substantial equivalent.

The complaint must contain a statement of the facts alleged to constitute a violation of the ordinance, including the date and place where discriminating acts occurred and the basis of the discrimination.

Your complaint must be signed, notarized, and filed with Commission within 180 days of the date of the alleged discrimination. There is no charge or fee for filing a complaint of discrimination.
HEZ MANUAL: NUTRITION

Learn how to choose healthy foods and control portions
What are the risks to my health from being overweight?

Weighing too much may increase your risk of developing many health problems. If you are overweight or obese, you may be at risk for:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Coronary heart disease and stroke
- Metabolic syndrome
- Certain types of cancer
- Sleep apnea
- Osteoarthritis
- Gallbladder disease
- Fatty liver disease
- Pregnancy complications

How can I lower my health risks?

You may be able to lower your health risks by losing weight, doing regular physical activity, and eating healthfully.

- To lose weight and keep it off, try to make long-term changes in your eating and physical activity habits.
- Choose healthy foods, such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat meat and dairy products more often.
- Eat just enough food to satisfy — don’t overeat!
- Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most or all days of the week.
**Are you carrying too much weight?**

Check your Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body mass index (BMI) is a tool that is often used to determine whether a person’s health is at risk due to his or her weight. BMI is a ratio of your weight to your height. A BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is considered healthy; a BMI of 25 to 29.9 is considered overweight; and a BMI of 30 or more is considered obese. You can use the table below to determine your BMI. Find your height in the left-hand column labeled “Height.” Move across to your weight. The number at the top of the column is the BMI for that height and weight.

---

**Body Mass Index Chart to determine your health risks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI</th>
<th>19</th>
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</table>
Benefits of good nutrition and maintaining a healthy weight

- Avoid, control, or resolve diet-related diseases such as adult-onset diabetes (the most common type of diabetes, also referred to as Type 2 diabetes), heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, osteoporosis, some cancers, and stroke.

- Have more energy.

- Improve your mood and self-esteem.

- Reduce stress on your joints.
The Food Guide Pyramid — A guide for healthy choices and good nutrition

Your food and physical activity choices each day affect your health and how you feel today, tomorrow, and in the future. The USDA’s Food Guide Pyramid symbolizes a personalized approach to healthy eating and physical activity. The three key messages from the pyramid are:

- Make smart choices within and among the food groups.
- Keep a balance between food intake and physical activity.
- Get the most nutrients from your calories.

The new Food Guide Pyramid gives specific guidelines about the types and amounts of foods you should eat.
**GRAINS**

**What foods are in the grain group?**
Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples of grain products.

Grains are divided into 2 subgroups, whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.

Some commonly eaten grain products are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole grains:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Refined grains:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brown rice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pasta*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buckwheat</td>
<td></td>
<td>spaghetti</td>
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<tr>
<td>bulgur (cracked wheat)</td>
<td></td>
<td>macaroni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oatmeal</td>
<td></td>
<td>pitas*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>popcorn</td>
<td></td>
<td>pretzels</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>whole wheat cereal flakes</td>
<td></td>
<td>corn flakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>muesli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-grain barley</td>
<td></td>
<td>white bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-grain cornmeal</td>
<td></td>
<td>white sandwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-grain rye</td>
<td></td>
<td>buns and rolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-wheat bread</td>
<td></td>
<td>white rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-wheat crackers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>whole-wheat pasta</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>whole-wheat sandwich buns and rolls</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole-wheat tortillas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wild rice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Most of these products are made from refined grains. Some are made from whole grains. Check the ingredient list for the words “whole grain” or “whole wheat” to decide if they are made from a whole grain. Some foods are made from a mixture of whole and refined grains.*

Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Most refined grains are enriched. This means certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron are added back after processing.
Recommended Grain Intake

Females
- Sedentary:
  - 26-50 years: 6 oz equivalents
  - 51 and over: 5 oz equivalents
- Mod. Active: 26 and over: 6 oz equivalents

Males
- Sedentary:
  - 21-40 years: 8 oz equivalents
  - 41-60 years: 7 oz equivalents
  - 61 and over: 6 oz equivalents
- Mod. Active: 26-45 years: 9 oz equivalents
  - 46-65 years: 8 oz equivalents
  - 66 and over: 7 oz equivalents

What is a 1 oz. grain equivalent?
- 1 slice of bread
- ½ hotdog or hamburger bun
- ½-cup cooked oatmeal
- ½-cup cooked pasta
- 1 4 ½” diameter pancake
- 1 cup dry cereal
- ½-cup rice
What foods are in the vegetable group?

Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts as a member of the vegetable group. Vegetables may be raw or cooked; fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated; and may be whole, cut-up, or mashed. Vegetables are organized into 5 subgroups, based on their nutrient content.

Some commonly eaten vegetables are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dark green vegetables</th>
<th>Other vegetables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bok choy</td>
<td>artichokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broccoli</td>
<td>asparagus</td>
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<tr>
<td>collard greens</td>
<td>bean sprouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>dark green leafy lettuce</td>
<td>beets</td>
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<tr>
<td>kale</td>
<td>Brussels sprouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>mesclun</td>
<td>cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustard greens</td>
<td>cauliflower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>romaine lettuce</td>
<td>celery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spinach</td>
<td>cucumbers</td>
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<tr>
<td>turnip greens</td>
<td>eggplant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watercress</td>
<td>green beans</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>green or red peppers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iceberg (head) lettuce</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mushrooms</td>
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<td>okra</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>onions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parsnips</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tomato juice</td>
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<tr>
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<td>vegetable juice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Orange vegetables

- acorn squash
- butternut squash
- carrots
- hubbard squash
- pumpkin
- sweet-potatoes

Starchy vegetables

- corn
- green peas
- lima beans (green)
- potatoes
Remember
- Buy fresh vegetables in season when less expensive.
- Use more fresh or frozen and less canned (except low-sodium).
- Have salad with dinner every night.
- Add veggies to casseroles, pasta sauce, quick breads, etc.
- Select fast-food salad rather than fries.
- Choose dark salad greens over iceberg.

Recommended vegetable intake
Females
- Sedentary:
  - 26-50 years: 2½ cups
  - 51 and over: 2 cups
- Mod. Active:
  - 26 and over: 2½ cups

Males
- Sedentary:
  - 21-60 years: 3 cups
  - 61 and over: 2½ cups
- Mod. Active:
  - 26-45 years: 3½ cups
  - 46 and over: 3 cups
What foods are in the fruit group?
Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.

Some commonly eaten fruits are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Mixed fruits:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>fruit cocktail</td>
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<td>Apricots</td>
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<td>Avocado</td>
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<td>Bananas</td>
<td>Nectarines</td>
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<td>Berries:</td>
<td>Oranges</td>
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<tr>
<td>strawberries</td>
<td>Peaches</td>
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<td>blueberries</td>
<td>Pears</td>
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<tr>
<td>raspberries</td>
<td>Papaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>cherries</td>
<td>Pineapple</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>Plums</td>
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<td>Kiwi fruit</td>
<td>Prunes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lemons</td>
<td>Raisins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limes</td>
<td>Tangerines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mangoes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Melons:</td>
<td>100% Fruit juice:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cantaloupe</td>
<td>orange</td>
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<tr>
<td>honeydew</td>
<td>apple</td>
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<tr>
<td>watermelon</td>
<td>grape</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grapefruit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Focus on fruit

- Use fruit in salads, toppings, desserts, and for snacks.
- Keep dried fruit handy for snacks (watch your portion — ¼c is a serving of dried fruit).
- Cut up fruit on cereal, pancakes, and waffles.
- Include canned (packed in water or light syrup) and frozen fruits.
- Buy in season when less expensive.
- Choose fruit more often than juice.

Recommended fruit intake

Females

- Sedentary:
  - 26 and over: 1½ cups
- Mod. Active:
  - 26-50 years: 2 cups
  - 51 and over: 1½ cups

Males

- Sedentary:
  - 19 and over: 2 cups
- Mod. Active:
  - 26 and over: 2 cups
**DAIRY**

**What foods are included in the milk, yogurt, and cheese (milk) group?**

All fluid milk products and many foods made from milk are considered part of this food group. Foods made from milk that retain their calcium content are part of the group, while foods made from milk that have little to no calcium, such as cream cheese, cream, and butter, are not. Most milk group choices should be fat-free or low-fat.

Some commonly eaten choices in the milk, yogurt, and cheese group are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Milk</th>
<th>Cheese</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all fluid milk:</td>
<td>hard natural cheeses:</td>
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<tr>
<td>fat-free (skim)</td>
<td>cheddar</td>
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<tr>
<td>low-fat (1%)</td>
<td>mozzarella</td>
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<tr>
<td>reduced-fat (2%)</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole milk</td>
<td>parmesan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>flavored milks:</strong></td>
<td><strong>soft cheeses:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>chocolate</td>
<td>ricotta</td>
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<td>strawberry</td>
<td>cottage cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td>lactose-reduced milks</td>
<td>processed cheeses:</td>
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<tr>
<td>lactose-free milks</td>
<td>American</td>
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<td><strong>Milk-based desserts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yogurt</strong></td>
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<td>puddings made with milk</td>
<td>all yogurt:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice milk</td>
<td>fat-free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frozen yogurt</td>
<td>low-fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice cream</td>
<td>reduced-fat</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>whole-milk yogurt</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Focus on dairy
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk most often.
- Drink fat-free or low-fat milk with meals and snacks.
- Choose low-fat cheeses.
- Use low-fat milk to make hot cereals.
- Have low-fat yogurt as a snack.
- Use lactose-free products if needed.
- Select non-dairy high-calcium foods and beverages if desired (spinach, greens, sardines, soy milk).

Recommended dairy intake
Male and female adults, as well as 9- to 18-year-olds, and some younger children, should have 3 cups of low-fat milk or low-fat dairy equivalents daily.

What equals a 1-cup serving in the dairy group?
- 1 cup low-fat or fat-free milk.
- 1 cup low-fat or non-fat yogurt.
- 1-1/2 oz. of cheese, 1/3-cup shredded, or 2 slices = 1 cup of milk.
- 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese = 1 cup of milk.
- 1 cup frozen yogurt.
# Nutrition

## MEAT

### What foods are included in the meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts (meat and beans) group?

All foods made from meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds are considered part of this group. Dry beans and peas are part of this group as well as the vegetable group. Most meat and poultry choices should be lean or low-fat. Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils, so choose these foods frequently instead of meat or poultry.

Some commonly eaten choices in the meat and beans group are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meats</th>
<th>Poultry</th>
<th>Soy beans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lean cuts of:</td>
<td>chicken</td>
<td>split peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beef</td>
<td>duck</td>
<td>tofu (bean curd made from soy beans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ham</td>
<td>goose</td>
<td>white beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamb</td>
<td>turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork</td>
<td>ground chicken and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>veal</td>
<td>turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game meats:</th>
<th>Eggs (yolks are high in cholesterol)</th>
<th>Soy beans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bison</td>
<td>chicken eggs</td>
<td>soy beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rabbit</td>
<td>duck eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lean ground meats:</th>
<th>Dry beans and peas:</th>
<th>Soy beans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beef</td>
<td>black beans</td>
<td>split peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork</td>
<td>black-eyed peas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamb</td>
<td>chickpeas (garbanzo beans)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>falafel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kidney beans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lentils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lima beans (mature)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>navy beans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pinto beans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lean luncheon meats</th>
<th>Some commonly eaten choices in the meat and beans group are:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liver</td>
<td>nuts &amp; seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giblets</td>
<td>Almonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cashews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hazelnuts (filberts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pecans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pistachios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pumpkin seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sesame seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunflower seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walnuts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nutrition

MEAT & BEANS

- Include nuts in snacks, salads, and main dishes.
  - 61 and over: 5½ oz equivalents
  - Mod. Active:
    - 26-65 years: 6½ oz equivalents
    - 66 and over: 6 oz equivalents

Fish
- Finfish such as:
  - catfish
  - cod
  - flounder
  - haddock
  - halibut
  - herring
  - mackerel
  - pollock
  - porgy
  - salmon
  - sea bass
  - snapper
  - swordfish
  - trout
  - tuna

- Canned fish such as:
  - anchovies
  - clams
  - tuna
  - sardines

Shellfish such as:
- clams
- crab
- crayfish
- lobster

Meat and Beans Recommended Intakes

Females
- Sedentary:
  - 26 and over: 5 oz equivalents
- Mod. Active:
  - 26-50 years: 5½ oz equivalents

Males
- Sedentary:
  - 21-40 years: 6½ oz equivalents
  - 41-60 years: 6 oz equivalents

What counts as 1 ounce in the meat and beans group?
- 1 ounce of beef, pork, or poultry
- 1 ounce cooked fish or shell fish
- 1 egg
- ¼-cup nuts and seeds
- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- ¼-cup of cooked beans, peas
- 2 tbsp hummus
Oils: Tips for healthy choices

- Use vegetable oils rather than solid fats.
- Substitute nuts for meat or cheese as snack or in a meal.
- Use the Nutrition Facts Label to select foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol.
- Select foods prepared with little or no fat or oil.
- Select lean or low-fat foods most often.

Healthy choices for oils include those from vegetable sources and nuts and seeds.

Learning how to shop and read labels is important to healthy eating. The Nutrition Facts Label allows you to determine the amount of calories and nutrients in one serving of food. The information on the label is important in determining whether you’re eating a healthy, balanced diet. The label, which is included on every packaged food product, lists the amount of:

- Fat
- Total fat
- Saturated fat
- Trans fat
- Cholesterol
- Sodium
- Total carbohydrate
- Dietary fiber
- Sugars
- Protein
- Vitamins and minerals
What is a serving size?
Serving size is the first item listed on the label. A serving size is the amount of food that is typically eaten in one serving. It is listed as a general household measurement, such as pieces, cups, or ounces (for example, 7 potato chips or 1/2-cup of cereal).

Serving size is an important part of a healthy diet. Eating very large servings, or portions, can contribute to weight gain because as the portion size increases, you’re also eating more calories. If you double a serving size, you must also double all the other values on the nutrition label.

What is the Percent Daily Value?
You are supposed to consume a certain amount of fat, carbohydrate (especially fiber), protein, and vitamins and minerals each day. You are also supposed to limit certain types of unhealthy ingredients, such as saturated and trans fats. The nutrition label provides a list of percentages (called the Percent Daily Value) that tell you how much of a certain nutrient one serving of food contains, to how much of that nutrient you should consume daily.

One serving of food with **5% or less of the daily value is considered low.** One serving of a food with **20% or more of the daily value is considered high.**

The Percent Daily Value is based on a daily diet of 2,000 calories. You will need to adjust the percentages if you eat more or less than 2,000 calories per day.
What ingredients should I limit in my diet?

- **Saturated fat.** Saturated fat can increase your risk of heart disease and high cholesterol. The average adult should consume no more than 20 grams of saturated fat per day.

- **Trans fat.** Trans fat also increases your risk of heart disease. Ideally, you should get 0 grams of trans fat per day. When you read a nutrition label remember that companies are allowed to list the amount of trans fat as “0 grams” if it contains less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. This means that your food can contain some trans fat even if the nutrition label says “0 grams” per serving! Always check the ingredient list for trans fat, which will appear as “hydrogenated vegetable oil” or “partially hydrogenated vegetable oil.” Trans fat is usually found in commercially prepared baked goods, fried foods, snack foods, and margarine.

- **Cholesterol.** Limit your total cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams per day (and less than 200 milligrams per day if you have heart disease). Read our handout on cholesterol for more information.

What ingredients should I get more of in my diet?

- **Fiber.** Fiber aids in digestion, as well as lowering your risk of diabetes and heart disease. A food is considered high in fiber if it contains 5 grams of fiber or more per serving. Men age 50 and younger should get at least 38 grams of fiber per day, while women age 50 and younger should consume at least 25 grams of fiber per day. Fiber is found in foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Look for the words “whole grain.”

- **Vitamins and Minerals.** The nutrition label lists vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron. You should try to get more of these nutrients in your daily diet, as well as other vitamins and minerals that are not listed on the label. You can learn more about vitamins and minerals here.
Avoiding portion distortion

Balancing your energy is challenging today because average portion sizes have grown over the past 20 years. It’s challenging to find a small portion in a restaurant these days. The plate arrives and there’s often enough food on it for two or even three people.

These ever-larger portions are changing what Americans think of as a “normal” portion, and that affects how much we eat at home as well. Cutting back on portion size is a great way to help keep calories in check. It doesn’t take lots of calories to disturb your energy balance. Still aren’t sure how much portion sizes have changed? Check out these examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20 Years Ago</th>
<th>Today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Portion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagel</td>
<td>3&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheeseburger</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaghetti w/</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meatballs</td>
<td>sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 sm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meatballs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soda</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberry muffin</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PORTIONS
Use these visual aids to avoid portion distortion
1 serving looks like:

GRAIN PRODUCTS
1 cup of cereal flakes = a fist
1 pancake = compact disc
½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, or potato = ½ baseball
1 slice of bread = cassette tape
1 piece of cornbread = bar of soap

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT
1 cup of salad greens = baseball
1 baked potato = fist
1 med. fruit = baseball
½-cup of fresh fruit = ½ baseball
¼-cup of raisins = large egg

DAIRY AND CHEESE
1½ oz. cheese = 6 stacked dice or 2 cheese slices
½-cup of ice cream = ½ baseball

OILS
1 tsp. margarine or spreads = 1 die

MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES
3 oz. meat, fish, and poultry = deck of cards
3 oz. grilled/baked fish = checkbook
2 tbsp. peanut butter = ping pong ball
**Eat healthy, live wealthy**
We only have one body, but few of us take the time to plan how we will fuel our bodies. Eating healthy takes time and planning, but isn’t your body worth the effort? Three steps to delicious, low-cost meals:

1. Prepare a food budget.
2. Plan nutritious menus.
3. Shop wisely.

**Food budgeting tips**
- Start by planning your food budget. It is one of the most important things you can do to save money.
- Determine how much you can spend each month.
- Include food stamps, WIC vouchers, and cash.
- If you shop once a week, divide your food dollars into four envelopes, one for each week. If you do most of your shopping once a month, be sure to budget part of your food dollars for items you must buy later in the month.

**Menu planning**
Nutritious low-cost meals do not just happen — they are planned. Follow these tips to plan menus:
- Schedule time to plan menus.
- Use the Food Guide Pyramid as a guide to how much and what to eat.
- Read grocery store advertisements to take advantage of specials. You can save time and gasoline by shopping at a store that will match competitors’ prices.
- Start by planning the evening meal. Choose some family favorites, budget stretchers, and quick-to-fix meals.
- Use leftovers as planned-overs for a convenient lunch.
Getting healthy foods
There can be barriers outside and within grocery stores, which can prevent you from accessing healthy food. It makes it difficult to make dietary changes, if healthy and affordable food is not available.

Accessibility of Store Entrance
- Accessible parking
- Accessible ramp
- Entrance at least 32 inches
- 18 inches pull space at entrance
- Accessible entrance threshold
- Force of exterior door <8.44 lbs
- Entrance has electric eye
- Entrance has push button/plate

Accessible parking spaces should be available, so that people have access to the stores they want to go to.

Electric eyes make doors open automatically without having to push or pull.
Accessibility within Store

- Space to maneuver wheelchair at aisle ends
- Aisle greater than 36 inches
- Shopping baskets and carts
- Shelves no higher than 48 inches
- Force of refrigerator door less than 4.96 lbs.
- Refrigerator door operable with fist
- Plastic produce bags no higher than 48 inches
- Food ordering counter no higher than 37.18 inches

Americans with Disabilities Act The ADA is a federal civil rights law that requires businesses to provide access to goods and services to you. For healthy eating, it is important that you know your rights and bring your concerns to the attention of the staff.
**Wise shopping tips**

- Shop once a week or less. The more frequently you shop, the more money you will spend.
- Use a shopping list.
- Do not shop when you are hungry.
- Compare quality. Store brands are often just as good or better than name brands and usually cost less.
- Read labels to determine the foods’ nutritional value.
- Compare prices.
- Use coupons.
- Buy in bulk if the price is lower and you have extra money. Divide the product into meal-size portions. Freeze for later use.
- Replace staples, like flour and sugar, when they are on sale.

**References**

*Adapted from:*


HEZ MANUAL: TRANSPORTATION

Learn about the accessibility of public transportation and sidewalks
In 2006, the City of Chicago was sued by a group of advocates claiming that the City had failed to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The major complaint was the lack of accessible curb ramps throughout the commercial and residential areas in the City of Chicago. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that local government entities identify physical barriers and remove the barriers.

The settlement of this lawsuit called for several action items by the City of Chicago including but not limited to:

1. Establish an advisory committee regarding Curb Ramps to advise the Department of Transportation on priority areas

2. Establish a system for consumers to report areas throughout the City where curb ramps are needed or where the current curb ramp is broken and needs to be repaired and/or replaced.

3. Report to the Public on an annual basis the status of all curb ramp complaints and installations (This information is posted on the Department of Transportation Website at: www.cityofchicago.org/transportation/)
HOW DO I USE THE PROGRAM?
Dial 3-1-1 to report missing curb ramp or curb ramps that need to be repaired.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO HAVE?
- Location where the curb ramp is needed/missing including the intersection (i.e. Northeast corner of Ashland and Roosevelt Road)
- Location where the curb ramp is broken and needs to be repaired and/or replaced including the intersection (i.e. southeast corner of Michigan Ave and 18th Street)
NOTE: Riders must have an RTA-issued Circuit Permit to take advantage of free transit rides.

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) system allows free rides on fixed-route transit to riders issued a “Circuit Permit” as part of the People with Disabilities Ride Free Program. This program provides free rides on fixed-route transit (regularly scheduled CTA, Metra, and Pace buses and trains) to persons with a disability in the Illinois Circuit Breaker program. Processing applications for this enrollment-based program takes approximately four weeks.

**Requirements:**
- Individuals who are enrolled in the Circuit Breaker program with a disability must apply for the RTA-issued “Circuit Permit” that will allow them to ride free on fixed-route transit in the RTA service region.

**Using the Circuit Permit:**
- On CTA and Pace buses, permit holders will insert the permit into the fare box or insert it in the turnstile for CTA trains. It will show them they may board free of charge.
- Metra riders will need to show their Circuit Permit to the conductor. Metra personnel may also request a second piece of government identification.

**Eligibility:**
The People with Disabilities Ride Free program requires that **the individual MUST be enrolled in the Illinois Circuit Breaker program as a low-income person with a disability**. Once they are enrolled, they will be eligible to apply for the People With Disabilities Ride Free program. Only Illinois residents are eligible.
For those NOT enrolled in the Circuit Breaker program:
The Illinois Circuit Breaker program provides grants to low-income senior citizens and persons with disabilities to help them reduce the impact of taxes and prescription medications on their lives. The Circuit Breaker program is administered by the Illinois Department on Aging.

Income levels for eligibility range from $22,218 to $36,740, depending on household size. To learn more about the Circuit Breaker program, individuals can visit www.illinois.gov/transit or call 1-800-252-8966 [TTY: 1-888-206-1327]. Information is also available at senior citizen centers, the Mayor’s Office on Disabilities in the City of Chicago, and Independent Living Centers.

For those already enrolled for the Circuit Breaker program and DO NOT have an RTA Reduced Fare Permit:
Circuit Breaker enrollees will need to fill out an application at the RTA’s Customer Service Center at 165 N. Jefferson in Chicago or at one of the registration centers around the six-county RTA region that includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties by calling 312-913-5414 [TTY: 312-913-3111] or referring to the attached list of centers.

Applicants will need a government-issued picture I.D. and a photo of themselves that is 1.5 inches square. Some centers may charge up to $5 for taking your photo. The RTA’s Customer Service Center does not charge for this service. After verifying the applicant’s eligibility with the Department on Aging, the RTA will issue a “Circuit Permit” within 3-4 weeks with an expiration date of June 30, 2009. This permit will allow for free rides on fixed-route transit.
HEZ MANUAL: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Learn how to use a fitness center and how to exercise safely and effectively
What is inside the fitness chapter?
This section of the manual is your roadmap for becoming a healthier you! It will help you begin to use your health club or fitness facility and start your new exercise program. It will also help remind you about what you learned at the training session, as well as give you some additional facts about exercising in a fitness facility.

There are three main sections:
1. The first section gives an introduction to exercise. You will read about why exercise is important, general types of exercise, ways that exercise can benefit your life, and some things that may be difficult or get in your way of being successful.

2. The second section teaches you all about what to expect in a fitness center. It talks about the different areas and equipment that are generally available, as well as some questions that you can ask the staff when you go to your facility.

3. The third section is meant to help guide you through your exercise program. It gives you information on different physical activities and safety tips related to your exercise program.
Physical Activity
BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

Exercise is a key factor in maintaining and improving health for individuals with and without disabilities. It can help prevent medical problems and increase overall quality of life. Structured exercise programs provide the most benefits.

Exercise may help you:

- Increase your energy level so that it is easier to do more activities during your day.

- Improve your ability to do daily activities so that you can maintain or improve independence. Some activities that exercise might help you with include: dressing, grocery shopping, and going out into the community.

- Improve weight control so that it is easier to have a healthy body weight.

- Protect against development of other diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or cancer.

- Reduce anxiety and depression by improving overall mood and increasing feelings of well-being.

Exercise Example: NuStep
Cardiovascular or cardio (strengthens your heart and lungs)
- Cardiovascular activity is also known as cardio, aerobic, or endurance activity. Cardiovascular activity can be described as any activity that increases your heart rate (makes your heart beat faster) for an extended period of time.

Strength (builds strong bones and muscles)
- Strength training is also known as resistance training, weight lifting, or toning. Strength training helps to increase muscle strength and endurance, control weight, increase bone mass (helping to prevent or treat osteoporosis), strengthen muscles and tendons to prevent and/or rehabilitate injuries, and improve a person’s ability to do their activities of daily living.

Flexibility (stretches muscles)
- Flexibility refers to the ability to move a joint through its complete range of motion. Good flexibility is important for doing activities of daily living, such as taking a shower and putting on clothes.

Balance (lowers your risk of falling)
- Balance exercises involve maintaining good posture in different situations and can help reduce falls.

Exercise Example: Upright Bike
Keep a positive self-image
It is important that you realize that you are capable of becoming healthy. You have every right to use a fitness facility. It is easy to become overwhelmed and feel uncomfortable when you are doing physical activity. Although it is normal to compare yourself to other individuals in the facility, keep your mind on your personal goals and do not worry about what others are thinking or doing. You are there to improve your health, just like everyone else.

Stay motivated
There are many different ways to stay motivated to continue exercising, including:

- Follow a program that is made just for you and your goals.
- Start with things you enjoy and slowly add more challenging activities.
- Try to add small amounts of physical activity into your daily routine.
- Establish regular workouts (the same time of day).
- Stay focused on your goals.
- Keep a record of what you are doing and of progress you are making.
- Exercise with a partner or in a group.

- Tell family and friends about your new exercise program to get their support.

Set realistic goals
One of the main roadblocks to being physically active is that people tend to set goals that are too high, and then get frustrated when things do not turn out the way they had planned. The best way to overcome this roadblock is to learn how to set goals you can achieve.

Be aware of the physical environment
When you visit a fitness facility, be aware that there may be some physical barriers that will prevent you from using different areas. Some older buildings may not have an elevator to the second floor, or there may be an obstacle in your way. In addition, you may find it difficult to use some of the equipment in the facility. If you experience any difficulty using some of the equipment, bring these problems to the attention of the staff and ask for assistance so that you have full use of the facility. If you are still having problems after speaking with staff at the facility, call our office (National Center on Physical Activity and Disability) at (800) 900-8086.
Manage cost
Being a member of a fitness facility requires a monthly payment. However, there may be options for you to pay less. Refer to the questions on cost on page 52 for some ideas. Explore all your options before choosing a facility. Do not let cost stop you from becoming active and healthy.

Fight for accessible programs and services
The facility may offer services or programs that are not accessible to you. Again, it is important that you know your rights and bring those rights to the attention of the staff. Certain accommodations that will allow you to use the facility are required by law. You can call the NCPAD office (800-900-8086) for more information on your rights.

Leg Press at Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
Important questions to ask before you begin

There are many ways to gather information on a fitness facility, including:

- Ask family and friends what facilities they use.
- Request a tour of the facility.
- Consult your doctor, fitness professionals, or NCPAD (800-900-8086) for places to exercise.
- Check the phone book for locations in your neighborhood.

There are many questions to ask and things to consider when choosing a fitness facility and starting an exercise program. The facility staff may even give you a free day pass so that you can try it out.

Location

- Is the location of the facility convenient for me?
- How will I get there and back?
- Is the facility accessible by public transportation?

Cost

- What are the membership fees? Generally, you will be asked to pay a fixed amount to join and then a monthly fee.
- What is included in the membership fee?
- If the equipment or other parts of the facility are not accessible to you, will the facility give you a discount?
- Does the facility offer a discount based on income?
- Do they offer family or joint memberships to couples, partners, or friends?

TIP: Avoid signing up for a membership that extends beyond one year.

TIP: Many fitness centers offer special rates at certain times of the year, such as the peak season (January) or during the summer when many individuals decide to exercise outdoors.

Hours

- What are the facility hours?
- What are the busy times?

TIP: To decrease your waiting time for using fitness equipment, try off-peak times such as 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. or 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.
**Equipment**
- Does the facility have specific equipment you may need?
- Is the equipment laid out with enough space around it so that you can get to and use the equipment?
- Do they have any exercise equipment that is accessible to people with disabilities (i.e., can be used by a person using a wheelchair)?
- How often is equipment cleaned?

**Policies**
- Is there a dress code?
- If there is a locker room, do you need to bring your own lock?
- Are there any rules, guidelines, or restrictions for use of certain parts of the facility that you should be aware of?
- Are people with disabilities required to have medical clearance or a health history? If so, are ALL members required to submit this information?

**Accessibility**
- Overall, is the building accessible to you?
- If you need parking, are there accessible parking spaces near the entrance?
- If the exercise facility is on more than one floor, is there an elevator available?
- Are lockers, showers, and rest rooms accessible?

**General**
- Do you feel comfortable and welcome in the facility?
- Does the facility appear to be clean?
### Using a Fitness Center

#### What to wear:
- Comfortable shoes, preferably with rubber soles.
- Loose pants or pants made with a stretchy material and a t-shirt or sweatshirt to allow your arms and legs to move more freely.
- Some gyms do not allow tank tops, so be sure you know the specific rules about dress at your facility.
- Most gyms will have locker rooms or at least bathrooms that you can use to change if you decide that you do not want to get dressed at home.

#### What to bring:
- A bottle of water (plastic with a closed top).
- Bring your music or a book that you can enjoy while doing certain exercise activities such as riding a stationary bike.
- Lock for your locker if you are planning to use the locker room, if your facility does not provide one.
- Towel, if your facility does not provide one.
- Membership card.

This may be your first time using a fitness center and you may be nervous about what you are about to experience. Going to a fitness center for the first time can be intimidating. You are not alone in feeling uncomfortable.
**Entrance Areas**

Often, when you enter a fitness facility, there is an open area before the members-only area. There will be staff who can answer any questions you may have or provide you with facility brochures.

Accessibility considerations:
- If there are stairs leading up to the entrance area, a ramp or elevator should be available for public use.
- Entrance doors should be automatic, wide enough for a wheelchair to fit through, and easy to enter.
- Rugs or carpets in the entrance area should be secured to the ground to avoid tripping hazards and to make the area easier to move through.
Reception Counter
Between the entrance area and the activity areas, there is generally a reception counter that only members can go through.

Staff:
If there is ever a time when you have a question and cannot find a staff member, it is helpful to remember that there are always staff at the reception counter who can help you.

Accessibility considerations:
- The counter level should be at an appropriate height for you to see the staff that are behind it and for them to see you.
- If there is a turnstile, there should also be an accessible entrance for anyone with a mobility device.
Locker rooms
Once you enter the facility, you can go to the locker room to put your things away and change into your exercise clothes, if necessary.

Locks and lockers: Some facilities will have locks on the individual lockers and some will require you to bring your own. Make sure you know the rules of your facility. Be sure to lock up your belongings, because the facility will not be held responsible for lost of stolen items.

Towels: In some fitness centers, you will check out a towel; in some, the facility will lend you one; and in some facilities, you have to bring your own.

Showers: Many facilities offer showers. If you choose to use the shower, be sure to bring something to wear on your feet and your own shower supplies.
Accessibility considerations:

- Some locks are easier to open and close than others. Be sure to keep this in mind when choosing a lock. If you need a lock, please let us know (800-900-8086) and we will have one sent over to you.

- Locker height, distance between the bench and the lockers, width and height of the bench, and method of opening the individual lockers can affect your ability to use the locker room.

- Look for a shower that allows you to enter easily using your mobility device (if you have one), and provides a place to store your mobility device while you shower.

- Benches may be built into each individual shower or may be available on request.

- Showers may have a shower head that is fixed or one that you can take out and hold in your hand.

- The design of the knobs affects how easy or difficult they are to turn.
FITNESS EQUIPMENT AREA

What should I expect as I enter the fitness equipment area?

You will notice that the cardiovascular equipment and strength equipment are often in separate areas, with extra space for stretching and mat exercises.

- Cardiovascular (Cardio) Equipment Area (Below): Some gyms have regulations concerning which pieces of cardio equipment you can use and for how long. There may be a sign-up system in place. Other times, you are free to use any piece of equipment as long as it is available. Select equipment that you are comfortable and familiar with or ask how to use the equipment.

- Strength Training Area (next page): There is often an area that has machines, an area with benches and free weights, and an additional open area for stretching and balance. Select equipment that you are comfortable and familiar with or ask how to use the equipment.

Cardio Equipment Area: Arm cycle ergometer
What do people do in the fitness equipment area?
You will notice that everyone is doing something slightly different within a fitness equipment area. Individuals are free to do whatever fitness-related activities they choose in an unstructured format. Staff are there to answer questions if you have them, but otherwise you can just enter the room and do whatever kind of exercise you choose as long as it is safe for you and others.

- Cleaning up: Always put away any equipment that you use and clean off the equipment after you finish using it. Most facilities will provide a cleaning product for you to use.

What programs can I participate in?
The most common programming seen in the fitness equipment area is personal training. This usually involves one-on-one instruction and generally costs extra.

What staff are present in the fitness equipment area?
If you have any questions about how to use a particular machine, there is generally someone available at the entrance of the room or walking around. Take advantage of the opportunity to ask the staff person questions and learn more about what is available to you.

Strength Training Area
GROUP FITNESS ROOMS

What should I expect as I enter the group fitness rooms?
Group fitness rooms are generally an open space used for classes on different types of exercise. Mirrors line the walls so that you can watch what you are doing and make corrections if something does not look right. Depending on what the room is used for, there may be different types of equipment (dumbbells, resistance bands, jump ropes, etc.) along the walls or in a closet to be used during the class. During class, the instructor will usually stand in the front of the room and lead you through a series of exercises.

What do people do in the group fitness rooms?
Group fitness rooms are generally only open for use during the times that there are classes scheduled. If you are interested in taking a group exercise class, ask at the reception counter what types of classes are available.

What programs can I participate in?
Most fitness facilities offer group exercise classes. These classes give you the opportunity to exercise as a group led by an instructor. There are a variety of group exercise classes that are generally offered that focus on all different types of exercise (cardio, strength, flexibility, and balance). Facility brochures and staff should be able to explain to you what each type of class involves and for what age group. Below you will find general information on some of the more popular classes. If you decide on taking one of these classes, make sure that you ask the instructor for certain modifications of the exercises or routines if you are unable to do them. You can also call our hotline (800-900-8086) if you have questions about any exercise that you are having difficulty doing in your class.
Toning and sculpting (below):
- Toning and sculpting classes (which come with a variety of different names) involve resistance training exercises. Sometimes the class will focus on specific parts of the body and sometimes the whole body will be covered.

Yoga/Pilates (next page):
- These classes focus on the mind/body connection, as well as strength, balance, and flexibility. Often, classes will use equipment such as blocks and straps to modify exercises for each individual. The exercises in these classes will help you to improve balance and strength in your everyday movements.
Aerobic dance: Aerobic dance classes are a fun way to get a good cardio workout. These classes generally involve moving to the rhythm of the music.

Classes Designed for People with Disabilities (next page): On occasion, the facility will offer group exercise classes specific to people with disabilities or seniors. This may include chair yoga, water fitness for individuals with arthritis, or seated aerobics.

What are possible accessibility accommodations or concerns in group exercise classes?
Often group exercise classes are not specific to people with disabilities, but modifications can be made so that everyone can participate. Some of the exercises can be done in a seated position with just the addition of a chair or seated on a mat. Instructors should know how to modify certain exercises to meet your needs if you have limited mobility at a certain joint or in a certain limb. Resistance tubing or wrist weights can be used in place of dumbbells or barbells.
What staff are present in group exercise classes?
The instructor is your main support in a group fitness class. They are experts in what they are teaching and should know many modifications for each exercise. Talk to them before, during, and after class so they know your individual needs. They need to know what limitations you have so that they can help you make appropriate accommodations while still benefiting from the activity.
What should I expect as I enter the pool area?
You may see a lap pool, a leisure swimming area, or a diving well. Be aware that the floors can be very slippery.

What do people do in the pool area?

- **Aquatic Strength Training**: Strength training in the water allows the limbs to move more freely. It allows those with weakness to complete exercises they may not otherwise be able to do. You can do exercises in both shallow and deep water. If you are exercising in shallow water and have some trouble with your balance, you can hold on to the railings or sides of the pool for support.

- **Lap Swimming**: Many individuals will use the pool to simply swim laps. Check with your gym to see what times the pool is open for lap swimming. You may also want to inquire about the length of the pool, so you know how far you will be swimming.

- **Leisurely Swimming**: If there is a shallow water pool, people will often come to spend some leisurely time in the water.

Accessibility Example: Pool Lift
What programs can I participate in?

- *Water Exercise Classes*: Many fitness centers that have a pool provide water exercise classes. These classes are very similar to many of the group fitness classes done on land. The only difference is that they are done in the pool. Exercising in the water is easier on your joints and provides extra stability for individuals with limited balance. It is possible to achieve improvements in your endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance while doing exercises in the water.

What are possible accessibility accommodations or concerns in the pool area?

Many features can be added to a pool to make it easier to enter. These include:

- Pool lift or hoist (Should have armrests on both sides, a footrest, and accessible controls from deck level)
- Wet/dry ramp
- Zero-depth entry
- Transfer wall (Should be 12-16 inches wide and non-abrasive)
- Stairs with handrails

What staff are present in the pool area?

In most fitness facilities, there will be a lifeguard on duty during all hours that the pool is open. They will be able to assist in any sort of emergency. If you have questions or concerns, other staff should be available to help.

Accessibility Example: Zero Depth Pool Entry
Cardio equipment

NuStep:
- The NuStep is an aerobic exercise machine that allows you to exercise with both your arms and legs. It can be useful if you have pain in your joints.
- A major advantage of the NuStep is its ability to offer you the option to use the machine with just your arms, just your legs, or both.

Recumbent bicycle:
- Similar to the NuStep, this bike allows you to work your lower-body muscle groups while giving you good back support in a seated position. This machine has a wide bike seat and handlebars to help keep you comfortable and balanced.

Upright Bicycle:
- Unlike the recumbent bicycle, the upright bike requires more stability to maintain proper posture because there is no back support; however, handlebars are located in the front to help with balance.
Treadmill:

- Before exercising on a treadmill, you should make sure that you have adequate balance and do not experience joint pain. It would be a good idea to have an exercise professional supervise the first couple of times that you use a treadmill as a safety precaution and to answer any questions you have. It is important to begin at the lowest possible settings to avoid risk of injury and to wear the treadmill safety clip (if one is available) throughout your activity.

- To start, straddle your legs on either side of the moving belt. After you have established your balance, turn the treadmill on to its lowest setting. When the belt starts to move, place one foot at a time on the moving part and begin to walk in a nice and controlled manner. Increase speed and/or incline, if appropriate.
Physical Activity

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT CONT...

Elliptical:
- These low impact cross-training machines are a combination of walking and cycling without the added stress on the joints. Use of ellipticals requires balance and should be done under close supervision for the first few attempts.

Arm Cycle Ergometer:
- Arm cycle ergometers give you the opportunity to do an aerobic workout without using your legs. The machine is similar to an upright or a recumbent bike, only it is the arms doing the work instead of the legs. Depending on the model, you can either be standing, seated in a wheelchair, or transfer into a seat.
Strength training equipment

Weight Machines (below):
- In general, weight machines have been considered safer to use and easier to learn than the use of free weights if they are properly adjusted for you. In addition, machines provide more support for your back by stabilizing your body while you do the exercise.
- In order to determine which muscle groups can be worked on which machines, ask one of the staff on the floor. In addition, there are often signs on the machine itself that will tell you which muscles are used.

Resistance tubing and bands (below):
- Resistance tubing and bands improve strength, range of motion, and coordination of muscle groups. They often come in different colors to indicate how heavy the resistance is, with each level determined by the thickness of the tubing or band (the thicker the tubing or band, the harder the resistance).
- The advantages of using tubing and bands are that they are portable, can be used to do many different types of strength exercises, and generally cost much less than other exercise equipment while still achieving similar results.
Free weights:
- Many of the weight machine exercises can be done with free weights, in addition to a variety of other exercises. However, using free weights requires some training because there can be some risks associated with using this type of equipment.

- Free weight exercises offer the advantage of resembling daily activities, such as combing hair, dressing, and bathing, as well as carrying a bag of groceries or lifting a box off a high shelf.

Adaptive equipment:
Activity mitts:
- Activity mitts and wrist cuffs can be used when grip strength or hand function is limited. Activity mitts are very helpful and effective for hands to grip weight machines or dumbbells.

Ankle and wrist cuff weights:
- Cuff weights can be used for a variety of exercises and can replace the need for gripping devices or activity mitts.
Stability straps/gait belts (below):
- For those individuals who have difficulty with balance and stability, stabilizing straps and gait belts will aid in proper seating and positioning.

What are some things to consider about the accessibility of equipment?
Depending on your ability level, some equipment may be more accessible than other equipment. Here are some things to consider when choosing a piece of exercise equipment:
- Is the seat wide and comfortable?
- Is there a back support?
- Does the equipment require transferring from a wheelchair if one is used?
- Are foot pedals large enough or have strapping for my feet?
- Does the equipment start at a light weight, slow speed, low incline, etc.?

After your visit
When you have an enjoyable experience at a park, fitness program, or facility, be sure to let the staff know. The program staff and facility managers want to know that they are serving their customers well. They will appreciate your compliment and most likely continue to work hard to provide programs and facilities that are accessible and usable to you and other members.
Let your doctor know that you are going to start an exercise program.

General safety principles and considerations:

- Do not exercise if you are recovering from an injury or do not feel well.
- Do not do activities that cause any unusual pain or aggravate a medical condition.
- You may experience some soreness in the muscles following an exercise program. If the muscles are very sore the day after exercising, be careful to not exercise too hard the next time.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and shoes with good support.
- If you have high blood pressure, it might be good to have a staff member check your blood pressure before, during, or after you exercise, if possible.
- Remember to take all necessary medications at the times that the doctor told you to take them.

- Your body is safest and most functional when you maintain good posture to the best of your ability. When engaging in any sort of physical activity, and even when you are just sitting around, one of the most important things to do is to be aware of your posture.
- Drink plenty of water, particularly if sweating, during and after activity.
- Stop exercising if you experience pain, discomfort, nausea, dizziness, lightheadedness, chest pain, irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, or clammy hands.

Please see your doctor if you experience any difficulty with your exercise program and are not feeling good as a result of it.
Setting goals for yourself
It is important to set goals for your exercise program. Write them down and stick with them. One goal could be that you go to the fitness center at least 2 days a week. Another goal could be that you exercise on a bike or in the pool for at least 30 minutes each time you go to the fitness center.

It also is helpful to keep track of your progress by writing down what you would like to do each visit or what you have completed after going to the fitness center. Create a calendar (or use the included goal log) and document what you intend to do on a given day. After the workout, write down what you did at the fitness center that day. You want to challenge yourself to work hard, but not push so hard that you never achieve the goal.

General exercise guidelines and goals:
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day a minimum of five days a week. This can be done at the fitness center, at home, or outdoors.
- Each time you exercise, do so for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- Do muscle strengthening exercises for all major muscle groups (to the best of your ability) on 2 or more days per week.

- Work up to 30 minutes a day of exercise but if you cannot exercise this long, decrease the amount of time until you get stronger. *Any exercise, even 5 minutes, is better than no exercise.*

3 essential parts of an exercise program
1. Warm-up
   - The purpose of a warm-up is to prepare your muscles for exercise. You should start with 5-10 minutes of light activity such as slow walking or cycling.
   - A warm-up reduces your risk of injury and should always be done before beginning to exercise or stretch.

2. Exercise or Activity
   - Do activities that strengthen your heart and lungs (aerobic exercise) or muscles (strength exercise), work on your balance, and stretch your arms, back, and legs (flexibility exercise).

3. Cool Down
   - The purpose of the cool-down is to bring your body back to a resting level and should include 5-10 minutes of light activity, including some stretching activities.
YOUR CARDIOVASCULAR (AEROBIC) EXERCISE PROGRAM

Examples of cardiovascular activities
- Walking (outside, treadmill)
- Cycling (stationary bicycle, arm or leg ergometer)
- Recumbent stepper
- Elliptical machine
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Group fitness aerobics classes or videos

Use the “talk test” as a general marker of how hard you are exercising. If you are doing light-intensity activity, you should be able to sing while doing the activity. If you are doing moderate-intensity activity, you should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably while engaging in the activity. If you are winded or out of breath and cannot carry on a conversation, the activity can be considered vigorous. Be careful that you are not having any problems exercising at this very hard level.
How to get started
Start by doing just a few minutes of exercise followed by rest. Try to do this on the first few days that you begin exercising. The activity should make you breathe a little quicker and increase your heart rate slightly.

How to move forward
Increase the time of your workout gradually until you become used to the exercise with a goal of reaching 20-30 minutes without stopping. It is also possible to divide up your session into shorter, 10-minute segments, giving you more time to rest.

Reminders
- Doing too much, too fast will increase your risk of injury and may cause you to quickly lose interest in exercising.
- Take slow, deep breaths and “think tall” to maintain good posture.
- Be sure to drink lots of fluids (particularly water) before, during, and after your workout.

Cardio Exercise Example: NuStep
Examples of strength activities

- Weight machines
- Free weights
- Plastic tubing
- Your own body weight
- Medicine balls or other “toys”
- Circuit training
- Group fitness muscle toning classes

How to get started

Begin with light or no added resistance and long periods of rest between each set or exercise. If you are unable to complete the exercise 8-10 times comfortably, the weight is too heavy and you need to use a lighter weight.

How to move forward

You can make the exercise more difficult by doing more repetitions, doing more sets, or decreasing how much rest you take. As a general rule of thumb, when the weight can be lifted 25 times for 2 sessions in a row, increase the weight or resistance. Your goal should be to do strength training 2-3 days a week.
Reminders

- Training with weights should be done every other day so that your muscles have time to recover.

- To make sure that you are not overdoing it, you should be able to maintain a normal conversation while you are doing the exercises.

- Be sure to continue breathing throughout each exercise. Never hold your breath.
YOUR FLEXIBILITY (STRETCHING) PROGRAM

Examples of flexibility activities
- Stretching
- Yoga
- Pilates

How to get started
Start with just one day of stretching each major muscle group to the point of very mild discomfort for about 10 seconds for each muscle group.

How to move forward
As your get used to the exercises, add additional days of flexibility training into your exercise program. Increase the amount of time you hold each stretch and the number of stretches that you do. Flexibility training should be done before and after every cardiovascular and strength workout. Flexibility training can be done on every day of the week.

Stretching Example: Group Stretching (below)
Reminders

- Stretch until you have mild discomfort in the stretched muscle, but the feeling should not be painful.
- A rule of thumb is to hold each stretch for 20-30 seconds. Never hold a stretch for less than 10 seconds.
- Breathe normally, with a deep inhale through the nose and a long exhale through the mouth.
- Do not bounce while you stretch. Move slowly as you stretch.
- Before you stretch, walk or wheel for a few minutes to warm up your body.
YOUR BALANCE PROGRAM

Examples of balance activities

- Stand on one leg
- Stand with one foot in front of the other
- Stand or sit on a soft surface
- Close your eyes and try to balance
- Sit on a stability ball

How to get started
Start by practicing balance exercises on one day each week. Begin with four or five balance-specific exercises, holding each for 10 to 15 seconds.

How to move forward
Balance training can be easily done every day and should be a regular part of your exercise program. Increase the time of each exercise to 30 seconds and do two to three sets of 8-10 specific exercises.

Balance Example: Walking on Balance Beam
Reminders

- With safety being a critical factor, it is necessary to clear the environment of any obstacles.
- Balance exercises do not require equipment and can be done anywhere.
- The wider your feet are and closer your limbs are to your body, the easier it is to balance.
- Be sure that you do not hold your breath while you are doing balance exercises.
- If you have poor balance, you should hold a rail or stand next to a wall while you do the exercises until you feel comfortable doing them without holding on to something.

Balance Example: Standing on One Foot
Simple ways to add physical activity into your life

It is important to remain as physically active as possible even when you are unable to exercise. Below is a list of suggested ways to increase your physical activity throughout your day.

- Walk/wheel to and from the post office/mailbox.
- Walk/wheel to the grocery store.
- Climb your staircase an extra time each day.
- Practice getting up from a seated position and walking around your home several times a day.
- Try some home exercise videos.
- Practice seated stretches (reaching to the ceiling, large and small circles with your arms, seated twist, reach over your ankles).
- Do mini-exercises during commercials.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk or wheel the rest of the way.
- Take your time when adding new activities to your daily routine. Give your body time to adjust to the changes you are making, and gradually increase your activity each day.
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EXERCISE,
CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT
(800) 900-8086

www.ncpad.org