



Dear Sheri,

*Here is your weekly fitness plan, which each week includes a physical activity and exercise plan, fitness and healthy living tips, dietary tips, and additional important advice and information from the Lifelong Exercise Institute.*

As always, we are here to help you be successful in your journey to better fitness and health. Life is not a race to the finish, and neither should your fitness goals be.

We're all about slowly altering your bad health habits and establishing lasting, lifelong behavioral changes that will enhance both how long you live and how well. Please let us know if you have any concerns or questions about your weekly plan.

*Enjoy!* Sheri Colberg, PhD, Executive Director, Lifelong Exercise Institute, LLC

---

## **WEEK 1: Weekly Physical Activity and Exercise Plan**

---



### **Life in Motion (daily movement):**

Focusing on daily movement allows you to modify your normal routines and activities to include more physical activity throughout the day. These small changes contribute to your health and your daily calorie expenditure and can have a very positive effect on both.

Weekly Life in Motion Goals for Everyone:

- Make a conscious effort to increase the time you spend doing daily movement, a.k.a. SPA (spontaneous physical activity), if only by standing up longer and taking more steps each day.
- If you have access to a pedometer, measure and record the number of steps you take on a typical weekday and weekend day (or record the total time you spend doing anything active, including shopping, walking to/from your car, cooking, washing dishes, etc.).
- Get a tape measure and use it to record your waist measurement (at the level of your belly button), along with your hips, thighs, and upper arms, if desired.



### **Exercise as Medicine (planned exercise):**

Your planned exercise each week can be creative, flexible, and gradual, including a variety of safe choices of physical activities to keep your enjoyment and motivation high and injury risk low. See below for weekly guidelines and goals (i.e., intensity, duration, and frequency).

If you have been mostly sedentary, follow the goals for the beginner or returning exerciser, and take it slowly. If you're currently active, the listed goals should be the minimum that you do. You can keep doing more if you already are, but keep in mind that increasing the intensity and lowering the duration can be beneficial.

You can find illustrated flexibility and resistance training exercises on the LEI web site at [www.lifelongexercise.com/personalized\\_program\\_tools.asp](http://www.lifelongexercise.com/personalized_program_tools.asp). On that page, you will also find links to online dietary and physical activity trackers, as well as suggested pedometers, resistance bands, fitness/exercise DVDs, and more.

**\*Weekly Goals for the *Beginner or Returning Exerciser*:**

- No structured exercise is planned for you this week.
- Consider doing some stretching several days this week, simply to get your body used to moving more again.

**\*\*Weekly Goals for the *Current or Intermediate Exerciser*:**

- Make sure to engage in a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise 3 non-consecutive days this week; if you're already doing more, make sure you do everything at a moderate pace.
- Walking is an excellent activity to start with, but you can also choose from a variety of others, such as swimming, cycling, aerobics, and conditioning machines. Your intensity level should be moderate, meaning that your workout feels at least "somewhat hard," but you aren't breathing too hard to talk.

---

### **Weekly Fitness and Healthy Living Tip**

---



Each week you'll receive another fitness or healthy living tip that you can easily implement to improve your health and your fitness. Our goal is to help you live your life to the fullest with as much energy and good health as you can possibly have.

#### **Weekly Tip: *Why you're doing this program***

Welcome to the overview of our Fitness and Lifestyle Program. Before you begin, we want you to understand what we're trying to accomplish with this program and how we've structured it in order to achieve significant improvements in your health and fitness. This is *not* your typical exercise plan. The overall objective of this unique program is improvement of your health and well-being, and it is designed to be a lifelong exercise and lifestyle change plan (although you can vary it as time goes on). We'll focus on three main goals to accomplish this: 1) increasing your insulin sensitivity, 2) enhancing your weight loss and/or muscle tissue gains, and 3) elevating your mood through enhanced activity of certain brain hormones. Over the next few weeks, we'll take a closer look at each of these goals so you will understand why they are effective in managing your health and making lasting lifestyle changes.

To meet the overall goals of the program, we are advocating a comprehensive approach to exercise, one that involves many different types of physical movement that can be maintained as lifelong activities. It includes two main levels to start: beginning or returning exerciser and current exerciser. The level you choose is largely determined by your current fitness status and physical activity level. Those new to physical activity, or anyone out of the exercise habit for at least six months, should start with the beginning or returning exerciser program, while others who have been more active can start with the current exerciser plan that allows you to quickly advance to more challenging activities. As your overall fitness improves, you will gradually move to different levels or types of activities, or you can always choose to a maintenance plan.

---

### **Weekly Dietary Improvement Tip**

---



Each week we will also give you a simple tip that can enhance the healthiness of your diet and promote easy weight loss and management. Not all changes need to be a sacrifice, and often small improvements can have a big, positive impact on your overall health!

*Weekly Tip: You are what you eat--so find out what you're made of!*

The dietary changes that we recommend will also help improve your insulin action, provide your body with critical nutrients, and optimize your physical and mental health and outlook. This week, we recommend that you get a baseline of what your diet is composed of, and then you'll have a better idea of where to go from there and how much the tips we give you are likely to personally benefit you and your family.

To do this, measure and record all of your food and beverage intake on one to three typical days this week. Once you have your list compiled, use the free food analysis tool available on the [USDA MyPyramid Tracker](#) to find out how healthy your current diet really is (or isn't). You can also enter your physical activities there as well.

To use [www.MyPyramid Tracker](http://www.MyPyramid Tracker), click on "Assess Your Food Intake," sign in *for free*, and enter your food and beverages. Then click on the "Analyze Your Food Intake" button and "Nutrient Intakes" to find out calories, carbohydrate, fiber, amounts and types of fats (including healthy omega-3s), and vitamin and mineral content. This is much more useful than tracking calories or a specific nutrient (like carbs or fat) alone.

---

### **Other Important Weekly Advice and Information**

---



Each week we'll include some additional advice and information guaranteed to help you increase your fitness most effectively and to transform your health for the better for the rest of your life. Read on to find out what you really need to know this week.

## What You Need to Know This Week:

Before you embark on the physical activity aspects of this program, there are some basic facts and principles that you should be aware of and implement into your active lifestyle. These include proper warm-ups and cool-downs, stretching (flexibility training), and exercise types and intensity. We'll cover the first three this week, and more about exercise types and intensity the next two weeks.

**WARM-UP:** For each structured workout that you do for the program, begin with at least 5 minutes of a warm-up. It can include exercises like shoulder and arm circles, side bends and trunk twists, and hip and ankle circles to warm up the joints. Whatever you do, try to move each joint through its full range of motion. You can additionally warm up by doing a light aerobic activity (e.g., walking slowly) before picking up your pace to a faster speed. A warm-up eases the transition from sedentary to active and reduces the burden on your heart and muscles that can occur with the abrupt onset of moderate to vigorous activities.

**STRETCHING:** It is important to stretch out the muscles and joints that you use during exercise, particularly because we all are losing flexibility as we age and metabolic disorders like diabetes can accelerate these losses. Stretching can be static (which is more traditional) or dynamic (such as stretching during a movement, e.g., lifting your knee up toward your chest). Remember to always stretch opposing muscles on both sides of a joint, such as the biceps on the front of the upper arm and the triceps on the back. The only way you should never stretch is by bouncing ("ballistic" stretching), which actually may end up causing less flexibility and injury to your muscles and joints. For static stretching, after reaching a point of mild discomfort (but not pain), hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds while breathing deeply. Include stretches of all of your major muscles groups. You can stretch before, during, and/or after any activity, but it's usually easier to do once you're warmed up properly.

**COOL-DOWN:** At the end of your aerobic workout, you should never stop abruptly without slowing your pace first beforehand, particularly if you were working at a higher level. A cool-down is similar to a warm-up and usually consists of 5 minutes done at a slower pace. Part of this period can also include static or dynamic stretching. Any lactic acid that has been released from your muscles during exercise is removed more effectively during an active cool-down, as opposed to a passive one like sitting down. If nothing else, remain on your feet and slightly bend and unbend your knees before you stop outright to improve blood flow from your lower extremities back up to your heart. If you ever feel faint when you stop exercising, try to sit or lie down as soon as possible to restore blood flow back to your head. Following resistance workouts, the best cool-down is likely some mild aerobic work and stretching.

---

If at any time you have any questions, comments, thoughts, suggestions, concerns, or other feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us via e-mail at [info@lifelongexercise.com](mailto:info@lifelongexercise.com) or by using our contact page at [www.lifelongexercise.com](http://www.lifelongexercise.com).

---

© 2010 by Sheri R. Colberg