



MINISTRY OF  
**HEALTH &  
WELLNESS**

# Staying Active During COVID-19



**Physical Activity is the best and cheapest medicine for our bodies.**

**Love Yuh BODY**

TREAT YUH BODY RIGHT



JAMAICA MOVES

Health Promotion and Education Unit



# **STAYING ACTIVE AT HOME DURING COVID-19**

Prepared by:  
Charmaine Plummer  
and  
George Gillespie

**First Edition**

©2020 Ministry of Health and Wellness.

**All rights reserved.**

**This guide is protected by copyright. No part of it may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher.**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Section 1

Physical Activity during COVID-19  
Physical Activity Recommendations  
Physical Activity for Persons with Special Conditions

## Section 2

Physical Activity and Mask Wearing  
Use of Equipment during Workout Session  
Working out in a Group Setting

## Section 3

Low Intensity Activities  
Moderate Intensity Activities  
Vigorous Intensity Activities  
Other Simple Activities

1

2

3

5

6

7

9

10

11

17



# SECTION





# Physical Activity during COVID-19

Physical activity is body movement that allows the body to utilize energy. It builds the immune system which helps the body to fight viral infections. It also burns extra calories, reduces stress and improves the way you look and feel about yourself.

Physical Activity is vital for one's mental, social and physical well-being. Staying active or becoming active despite of COVID-19 restrictions is therefore very important.

## Physical Activity at Home

Whether you are at home because school is online, your company has allowed work from home or you fall in the category of high risk for severe complications of COVID-19, it is important that you be very intentional about allotting time to do physical activity.

There are simple ways you can incorporate physical activity:

- ◆ If you have stairs, increase the frequency and pace you go up and down.
- ◆ Take frequent stretch breaks when using your computer, tablet, phone or watching TV for extended periods
- ◆ Go for a walk
- ◆ Dance to your favorite music
- ◆ Put a little more energy in doing household chores: gardening, raking the yard, sweeping the yard, and cleaning the house
- ◆ Be creative and try a new activity on a regular basis
- ◆ Balance TV, games and phone screen time with physical activities in between
- ◆ Engage in virtual work out challenges with friends and family members
- ◆ Download apps that encourage you to move
- ◆ Use electronic games that encourage movement (Kinect Xbox Series, Wii)
- ◆ Stand instead of sitting sometimes when watching TV or playing on the phone/tablets and video games

There are also simple exercises that you can do at home which are demonstrated in this booklet.





# Recommendations for Physical Activity

## Children

- ◆ 3-5 years old - at least 60 minutes of structured activity and several hours of free play daily.
- ◆ 6-17 years old - at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise/activity at least 5 days per week.

The 60 minutes for both age groups should be a combination of muscle and bone strengthening activities. E.g. Hop scotch, skipping, jumping jacks, etc.

## Adults

- ◆ At least 30 minutes of moderate to intense physical activity each day for some health benefits
- ◆ At least 60 minutes each day for weight loss
- ◆ At least 90 minutes each day for weight loss and to maintain a healthy weight

## Adults 65 years and above:

- ◆ At least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days per week or at least 25 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity at least three days per week.
- ◆ Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes duration
- ◆ For additional health benefits, 60 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, five days per week or 30 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, five days per week OR a combination of moderate-intensity and vigorous-intensity activity
- ◆ **Persons with a medical condition or poor mobility should do physical activity based on abilities**



# Physical Activity for Persons with Special Conditions

If injury, disability, illness, or weight problems may limit your ability to undertake all the previously mentioned activities, the following tips will offer similar results:

- ◆ Warm up with stretches e.g. arm swing & shoulder roll
- ◆ Cycle on a stationary bike
- ◆ Use a portable pedal exercise device while comfortably seated at home, watching TV, listening to music or reading
- ◆ Walk as briskly as you can in an open space in the yard or house
- ◆ Attach resistance bands to heavy furniture, door knob or chair for pull down exercises to strengthen shoulder and arms
- ◆ Hold weights in both hands and air-punch sitting up straight
- ◆ If unable to run or jog alone, do so on a regular basis with a family member or friend
- ◆ Use a rail (metal or rope) as a guide to jog or run
- ◆ Run on the spot for a prescribed period twice per day



## NB

**If you have to use an assistive device/equipment please ensure that you:**

- ◆ Practice proper hand hygiene
- ◆ Clean surface and equipment before and after use
- ◆ Practice physical distancing (do activities that require limited contact with others)

**Before you start to workout, the following are important tips to note:**

- ◆ Talk with your doctor before you start a physical activity programme
- ◆ Always warm-up before your main workout session
- ◆ Not all exercise is suitable for everyone
- ◆ If you feel faint, dizzy, pain or physical discomfort stop
- ◆ Make time for the activity
- ◆ Do different types of activity to make it interesting
- ◆ Drink water before, during and after your workout
- ◆ Wear appropriate clothing for your workout
- ◆ Use your choice of music to make the workout fun
- ◆ Work with a partner
- ◆ End routine with a full body stretch
- ◆ Maintain physical distance



# SECTION





## Physical Activity and Masks

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that people should NOT wear masks when exercising.

Wearing a mask while doing physical activity routine will decrease the flow of air into your lungs. **This means insufficient** oxygen in your lungs, bloodstream and muscles, which is what makes doing the activity more difficult. Sweat can make the mask become wet more quickly which makes it difficult to breathe and promotes the growth of microorganisms.

The important preventive measure during exercise is to maintain physical distance of at least (6) feet from others.





## Use of Equipment during Workout Sessions

If possible, you are encouraged to participate in physical activities that require little or no equipment. However, when using equipment during your workout session, ensure that you follow strict hygiene practices at all times. Clean or sanitize equipment before and after each use. Avoid unnecessary touching/holding equipment or surface. Wash or sanitize hands after using equipment.





## Working out in a Group Setting

If possible, participate in types of activities that require little or no contact with other people. When doing activities in a group setting, it is recommended that you maintain physical distance at all times (6 feet apart). Practice proper hygiene at all times.



6 feet apart



**PHYSICAL  
DISTANCING**





# SECTION

# 3





## Low Intensity Activity

Activities that are done at a comfortable pace with little or no discomfort

### Sky reaches

Do this three times:

1. Stand up.
2. Swing arms up to the sky.
3. Rise up on your tippy toes.
4. Reach for the sky while keeping your body tight.
5. Hold for 15 seconds.
6. Lower your heels and arms.



### Shoulder blasts

Do this 10 times:

1. Hold your arms straight out to the sides.
2. Make arm circles forward (start with small circles, then gradually larger circles).
3. Reverse direction and make arm circles backward (large circles, then gradually smaller circles).
4. Raise your arms in front of your body and move your arms up and down.
5. Raise your arm above your head and wave them side to side, like a windshield wiper.
6. Pump your arms above your head to “raise the roof.”



# Moderate Intensity Activity

Activities that require fairly quick movement and result in persons breathing harder than normal and finding it a little difficult to talk.

## Brisk walking

Brisk walking is a safe and easy way to be physically active.

Hold your head high

Look straight ahead

Move shoulders naturally, freely

Keep your chin parallel to the ground

Swing your arms in a natural motion while walking briskly

Gently tighten stomach muscles

Position your feet comfortably, shoulder width apart

Tuck your pelvis under your torso (mid section)

## Skipping

1. Hold the rope while keeping your hands at hip level.
2. Rotate your wrists to swing the rope and jump.
3. Jump with both feet at the same time, one foot at a time, alternating between feet, etc.
4. Repeat until the set is complete.



# Vigorous Intensity Activity

Activities that require very quick movement and result in persons breathing much harder than normal and talking is very difficult and laboured.

## Jump lunges

Do this 12 times slowly, making sure to stay balanced:

1. Stand tall with your feet together.
2. Place your hands on your hips or hold your arms out straight for balance.
3. Move into a lunge position by stepping one foot forward and bending your knee (don't extend your knee past your toes).
4. Hop and switch your feet so that your back foot comes forward to a bent-knee position, while the other foot goes back.
5. With this exercise, form is more important than speed.



## Chair push-ups

Do this 12 times:

1. Put your hands firmly on the edge of the chair.
2. Move your feet back so you're leaning into the chair.
3. Bend your elbows and slowly lower your body toward the chair, keeping your back straight.
4. Push yourself away from your chair.

Make sure the chair is stable and feet don't slip on floor. To increase difficulty, you can move your feet back farther from the chair or move their hands closer together on the chair.





## Squats

Do this 10 times slowly:

1. Stand with your legs a little wider than shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold your arms out in front of your body.
3. Slowly bend your knees and squat down until your thighs are parallel to the floor, like you are sitting on a chair.
4. Rise up slowly then repeat.



## Hand walks

Do this five times:

1. Bend forward at your waist.
2. Reach down and touch hands to floor.
3. Walk your hands out for a count of 8.
4. Walk your hands to the left for a count of 4.
5. Walk your hands back to the center for a count of 4.
6. Walk your hands to the right for a count of 4.
7. Walk your hands back to the center for a count of 4.
8. Walk your hands back for a count of 8.



## Hand pushes

You can push your hands together as hard and as long as you want to, without hurting yourself:

1. Put your hands in front of your face, with your palms touching.
2. Push your palms and fingers against themselves.
3. Keep pushing your hands together for 10-15 seconds.

You can push your hands together as hard as they are comfortable as long as it doesn't hurt. Make sure you breathe during this exercise; many tend to hold their breath while pushing. Challenge yourself to stand on one leg while pushing, then repeat standing on the other leg.

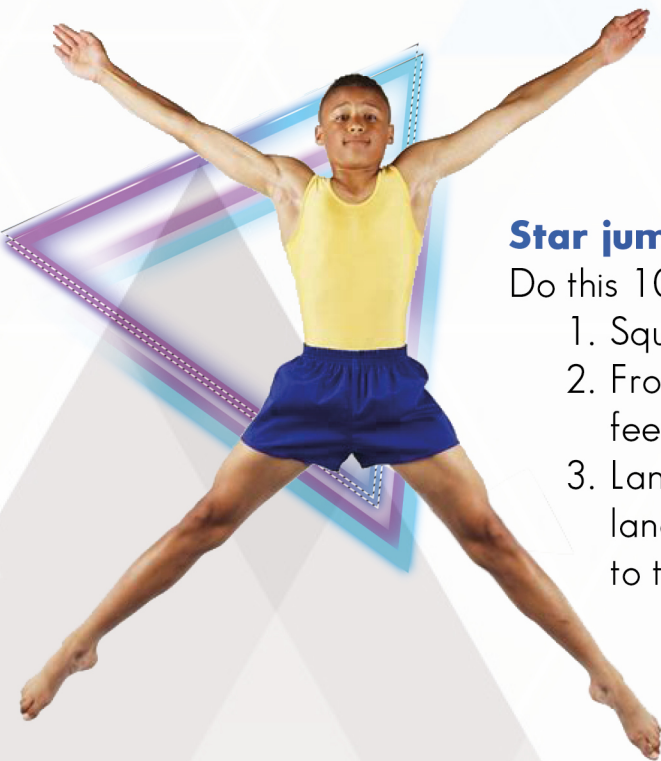




## Frog jumps

Do this dynamic exercise 12 times:

1. Start in the squat position (see squats), feet a little wider than shoulder-width apart.
2. Put your hands between your legs, like a frog.
3. Jump upward, and softly land back to the frog position.  
You may try this variation: While jumping up, click your heels together.



## Star jumps

Do this 10 times:

1. Squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
2. From this position, jump up reaching your hands and feet out like a star.
3. Land softly on the ball of your feet, bend the knees on landing to cushion your body weight, dropping back to the squat position.

## Mountain climbers

Do 20 foot switches:

1. On the floor, go to a plank position by putting your:
  - ◆ Hands flat on the floor
  - ◆ Hands shoulder-width apart
  - ◆ Arms straight
  - ◆ Back flat and mimic a running motion by switching one foot at a time
2. Persons can add intensity by adding speed.





## T push-ups

Do this 10 times slowly:

1. On the floor, start in the plank position (see mountain climbers).
2. Lift one arm up and turn your body sideways so that your body looks like the letter T.
3. Hold the T for 5 seconds.
4. Return to the plank position, then repeat with your other side.



## Burpees

Do this 10 times:

1. Stand tall with your hands at your side.
2. Squat down to the floor (see squats).
3. Put your hands on the floor.
4. Jump to the plank position (see mountain climbers).
5. Jump your feet back to the squat position.
6. Star jump back up.





## The following guide is a 8-week walking programme for beginners.

### BEGINNERS WALKING PROGRAMME

Make sure you stretch appropriately before and after walking.

	WARM UP	WALK	COOL DOWN	Total Workout Time:
Wk 1	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 5 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	15 Mins
Wk 2	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 7 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	17 Mins
Wk 3	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 9 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	19 Mins
Wk 4	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 11 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	21 Mins
Wk 5	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 13 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	23 Mins
Wk 6	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 15 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	25 Mins
Wk 7	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 18 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	28 Mins
Wk 8	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 20 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	30 Mins

### MODERATE EXERCISE PROGRAMME

Make sure you stretch appropriately before and after walking. Drink lots of water before, during and after exercise.

	WARM UP	WALK	COOL DOWN	Total Workout Time:
Wk 1	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 10-15 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	20-25 Mins
Wk 2	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 15-20 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	25-30 Mins
Wk 3	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 20-25 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	30-35 Mins

Wk 4	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 25-30 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	35-40 Mins
Wk 5	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 30-35 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	40-45 Mins
Wk 6	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 35-40 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	45-50 Mins
Wk 7	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 40-45 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	50-55 Mins
Wk 8	Walk slowly 5 mins	Walk briskly 60 mins	Walk slowly 5 mins	70 Mins

### ADVANCED EXERCISE PROGRAMME

Make sure you stretch appropriately 5 minutes before and after exercising. Drink lots of water before, during and after exercise.

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Wk 1	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 2	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 3	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 4	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 5	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 6	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 7	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats
Wk 8	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats	30mins Brisk Walk	30mins Brisk Walk	Abs, Push-up, Squats



MINISTRY OF  
**HEALTH &  
WELLNESS**

**JAMAICA  
MOVES**

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## DAILY GUIDE



It's all about...What I put in,  
What I keep out and how much I do.



# HOW TO GET STARTED

Always start from your head then move downwards to your toes.

## STEP 1

Stretch side of neck.

1. Sit or stand with arms hanging loosely at sides.
2. Twist head sideways, first one side then the other.
3. Hold for 5 seconds
4. Repeat 1-3 times.



## STEP 2

Stretch back of neck.

1. Sit or stand with arms hanging loosely at sides.
2. Gently tilt head forward to stretch back of neck.
3. Hold for 5 seconds
4. Repeat 1-3 times.



## STEP 3

Stretch side of shoulder and back of upper arm.

1. Stand or sit in an upright position, place left hand on right shoulder gently pull with left hand right elbow across chest toward left shoulder and hold for 10 to 15 seconds.
2. Repeat 1-3 times.



## STEP 4

Stretch triceps, top of shoulders, waist.

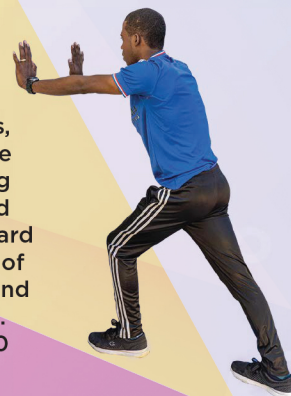
1. Keep knees slightly flexed.
2. Stand or sit with arms overhead.
2. Hold elbow with hand of opposite arm.
3. Pull elbow behind head gently as you slowly lean to one side until mild stretch is felt.
4. Repeat on the opposite side.



## STEP 5

Stretch calf.

1. Stand a little way from wall and lean on it with forearms, head resting on hands. Place right foot in front of you, leg bent, left leg straight behind you. Slowly move hips forward until you feel stretch in calf of left leg. Keep left heel flat and toes pointed straight ahead.
2. Hold easy stretch for 10 to 20 seconds.
3. Do not bounce.
4. Repeat on the opposite side.
5. Do not hold breath.



## STEP 6

Stretch front of thigh (quadriceps).

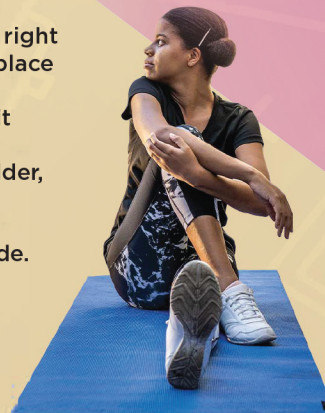
1. Stand a little away from wall and place left hand on wall for support.
2. Standing straight, grasp top of left foot with right hand. Pull heel toward buttock.
3. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds.
4. Repeat on the opposite side.



## STEP 7

Stretch inner thigh, groin.

1. Sit on floor with left leg straight out in front. Bend right leg, cross right foot over, place outside left knee.
2. Bend left elbow and rest it outside right knee.
3. Turn head over right shoulder, rotate upper body right.
4. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds.
5. Repeat on the opposite side.



## STEP 8

Stretch inner thigh, groin.

1. Stand with feet a bit wider than shoulder.
2. Bend the right knee slightly and move left hip downward toward right knee.
3. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds.
4. Repeat on the opposite side. NB hold on to something for support if needed.



## STEP 9

Stretch back of leg and lower back.

1. Stand with feet a bit wider than shoulder width. Bend the right knee slightly and move left hip downward toward right knee.
2. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds.
3. Repeat on the opposite side. NB hold on something for support if needed.



## STEP 10

Stretch shoulders, arms, hands, feet and ankles.

1. Lie on floor, extend arms overhead, keep legs straight.
2. Reach arms and legs in opposite directions.
3. Stretch for 5 seconds, relax.





# Movement Calendar

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
Jumping Jacks High Knees Quick Feet Crunches Leg Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Walk a mile (15 minutes on spot walking equals a mile) Stair Climb Yoga Stretch for 10 minutes	Jumping Jacks High Knees Quick Feet Squats Calf Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Front Plank Left side Plank Right side Plank Reverse Plank Stretch for 10 minutes	20 minutes Gospel workout (dance to gospel) Stretch for 10 minutes
DAY 6	DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10
Knee Push Up Arm Circles Arm Raise Reverse Chair Push ups Stretch for 10 minutes	Mountain Climbers Jumping Jacks Kick Backs Chest Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Wide Leg Squat Alternate lunges Calf Raise Pulsing Squat Stretch for 10 minutes	Walk a mile (15 minutes on spot walking equals a mile) Step ups Yoga Stretch for 10 minutes	20 minutes Socacise (dance to soca) Stretch for 10 minutes
DAY 11	DAY 12	DAY 13	DAY 14	DAY 15
Jumping Jacks High Knees Calf Raise Crunches Leg Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Walk a mile (15 minutes on spot walking equals a mile) Stair Climb Yoga Stretch for 10 minutes	Jumping Jacks High Knees Standing Heel Touch Squats Calf Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Front Plank Left side Plank Right side Plank Reverse Plank Stretch for 10 minutes	20 minutes Latin dance (YouTube) Stretch for 10 minutes
DAY 16	DAY 17	DAY 18	DAY 19	DAY 20
Knee Push Up Arm Circles Arm Raise Reverse Chair Push ups Stretch for 10 minutes	Mountain Climbers Hip Trust Kick backs Chest Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Wide Leg Squat Alternate Lunges Calf Raise Stretch for 10 minutes	Walk a mile (15 minutes on spot walking equals a mile) Stair Climb Yoga Stretch for 10 minutes	20 minutes Dance Hall workout 10 minutes Stretch for 10 minutes

**N.B. For each activity do 3 sets of 15  
(YouTube can be used to aid your workouts)  
Physical Activity is the best and cheapest medicine for our bodies.  
"Love Yuh Body Treat Yuh Body Right"**





MINISTRY OF  
**HEALTH &  
WELLNESS**

If you have further questions, please contact the

**Ministry of Health and Wellness**

at (876) 542-5998 or (876) 542-6006-7

or the

**Parish Health Department**

**For more information contact:**

**888-ONE LOVE(663-5683) | 888-754-7792**

[www.moh.gov.jm](http://www.moh.gov.jm)

@themohwgovjm

