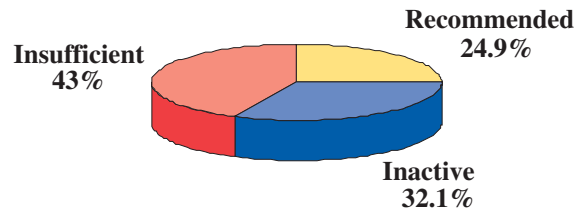


## Did You Know...

Alabama ranks among the most inactive states in the nation

### Physical Activity Levels Among Adults in Alabama



Legend:  
recommended activity = 5 times/week for 30 minutes or more  
insufficient activity = less than 5 times/week for 30 minutes  
inactive = no reported physical activity  
Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2000 (BRFSS).

- 32% of adults report being inactive-no physical activity.
- 30% of the population age 50 and over is sedentary.
- 33% of men and 50% of women age 75 and older engage in no leisure-time activity.
- 46% of Alabama students watch more than 3 hours of TV on an average school day.
- 68% of middle and high school students do not attend PE daily.
- Only 39% of students in grades 9 - 12 attend PE class one or more days of the week.

## Health Benefits of Regular Physical Activity

Activity that is performed on most, preferably all, days of the week:

- Reduces the risk of developing heart disease and high blood pressure.
- May reduce blood pressure in those who already have high blood pressure.
- Reduces the risk of developing certain cancers.
- Reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- Reduces the risk of obesity and chronic obesity-related diseases.
- Helps maintain a healthy weight.
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints.
- Relieves the symptoms of many kinds of arthritis.
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety.
- Increases mental alertness.
- Helps older individuals stay healthy and active.

For additional information:

Alabama Department of Public Health  
Cardiovascular Health Program  
Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit  
1-334-206-5656

The Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness  
1-334-242-4496

ADPH-N&PA-22-1-03-kw

## Physical Activity in Alabama



### The Alabama Department of Public Health

### The Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness

" People who aren't regularly active create for themselves a risk for heart disease that is at least the same as smoking or having high blood pressure."

James F. Sallis, PhD



## Physical Activity Decreases the Risk of Chronic Disease

*Heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, arthritis and osteoporosis are major chronic conditions that can be significantly improved by increased physical activity.*

- Alabama ranks 6th among the states in deaths due to heart disease and 7th in deaths due to stroke.

Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of developing heart disease and high blood pressure.

- Of all states, Alabama ranked 8th in rate of death due to diabetes in 1999, and diabetes-related death rates are rising in Alabama.
- The incidence of type 2 diabetes is increasing among youth nationwide.

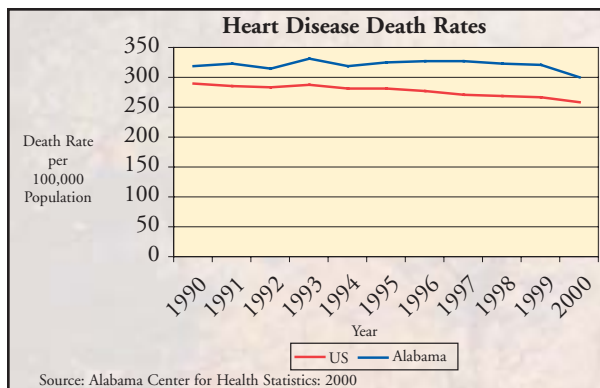
Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

- Overweight and obesity are associated with an increased risk of developing heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, high blood cholesterol and certain cancers such as colon and breast cancer.
- Obesity rates in Alabama are increasing.

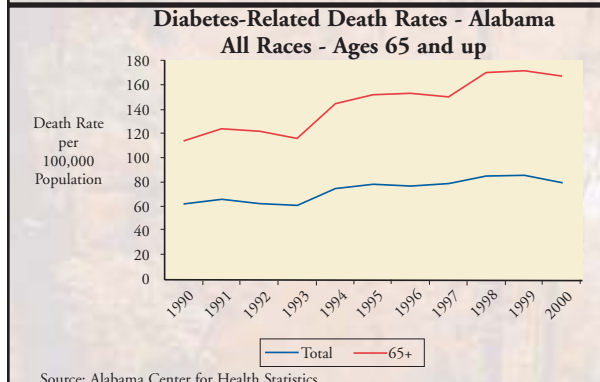
Regular physical activity helps maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of overweight and obesity.

- Arthritis is a leading cause of disability nationwide.

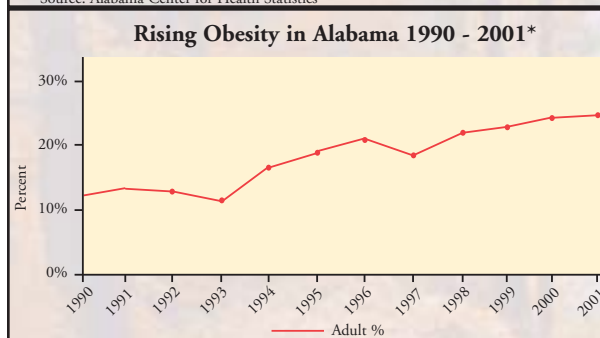
Regular physical activity relieves the symptoms of many kinds of arthritis.



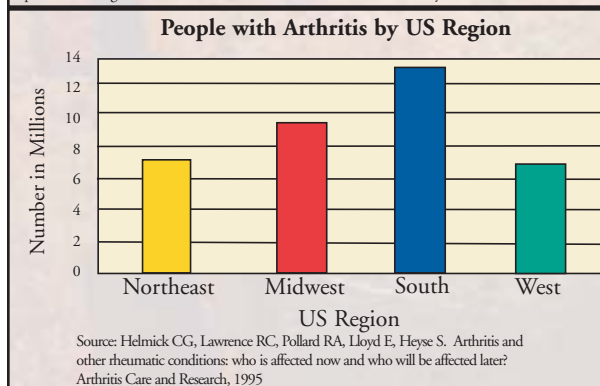
Source: Alabama Center for Health Statistics: 2000



Source: Alabama Center for Health Statistics



\* Obesity defined as body mass index (BMI)  $\geq 30$ . For the average adult, BMI  $\geq 30$  indicates thirty or more pounds overweight. Source: Alabama Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 1990-2001.



Source: Helmick CG, Lawrence RC, Pollard RA, Lloyd E, Heyse S. Arthritis and other rheumatic conditions: who is affected now and who will be affected later? Arthritis Care and Research, 1995

## Take Steps... To Improve Health and Fitness, and Reduce Risk of Disease

- Pick activities that you enjoy: take a walk, plant a garden, shoot baskets, dance, skip, swim, ride a bike, take a hike.
- Make the time: park the car farther away and walk, use the stairs instead of the elevator, make a coffee break an exercise break, walk the dog, walk or bike to school.

## Take Action!!!

- Advocate for daily quality Physical Education in all school grades.
- Be active parents teaching children to love exercise.
- Reduce time spent watching TV.
- Create more opportunities for physical activity at worksites.
- Make community facilities available and accessible for physical activity for all people.
- Advocate for changes that create and promote a healthy environment in which physical activity options are readily accessible. (e.g.: Sidewalks, parks, walking and biking trails)
- Make physical activity a regular part of your life.

## Recommended Levels of Physical Activity

*A minimum of 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity (such as brisk walking) is recommended and can be divided into three 10 minute segments with the same health benefits. Greater health benefits can be achieved by increasing the amount (duration, frequency, or intensity) of physical activity. Children and adolescents should engage in at least 60 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 5 days a week.*

*Consult a physician before beginning a new program of physical activity and start slowly working up to the minimum 30 minutes a day.*