
CHOOSE TO MOVE®

To Move or not To Move

The State of Physical Activity: Women's Survey Reveals Gap Between Knowledge and Action

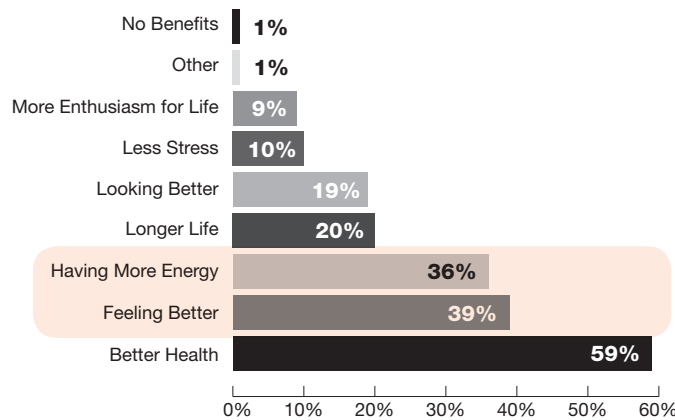
Responses from almost 800 women in Choose To Move's 2nd annual custom survey show that many of you believe physical activity makes you feel good and look good... when you actually do it. The word "when" is the problem. For many, it means "seldom" or "never." Too many of us still don't get the kind of physical activity we need to improve or even maintain our health. With busy social lives, family lives, work lives – and a lack of motivation – most women still put their health on the back burner.

Methodology

Choose To Move's 2nd annual custom survey was administered online Feb. 17-27, 2006. Market research firm Synovate, Inc., used its own online consumer panel to conduct the survey. Findings are based on responses from 777 representative women ages 18 and older.

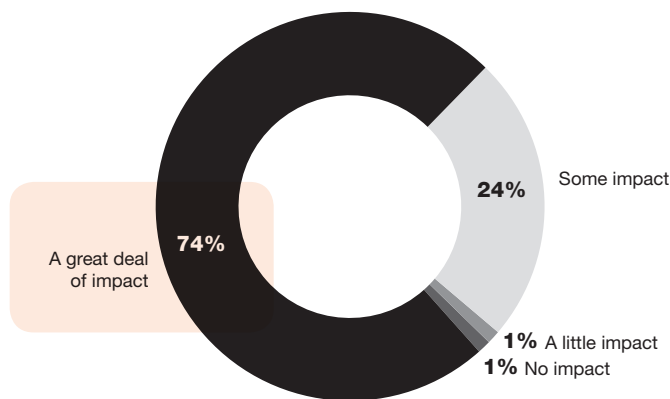
Most of you know that physical activity makes you feel great...

1. What benefits, if any, do you see to being physically active?



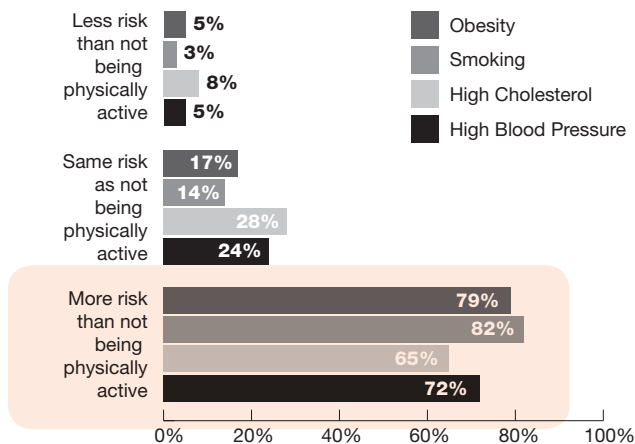
...has tremendous impact on your health...

2. How much impact do you think physical activity has on your health?



...but still don't understand the impact on your heart.

3. How much risk do you think these factors contribute to heart disease compared to not being physically active?



Physical Activity and Heart Disease

Twenty-five years of studies show that physically active and fit adults have fewer incidences of coronary artery disease* (CAD). In fact, simply walking briskly for about 3 hours a week can reduce coronary artery disease risk in women by 30 to 40 percent, *New England Journal of Medicine, 1999.*

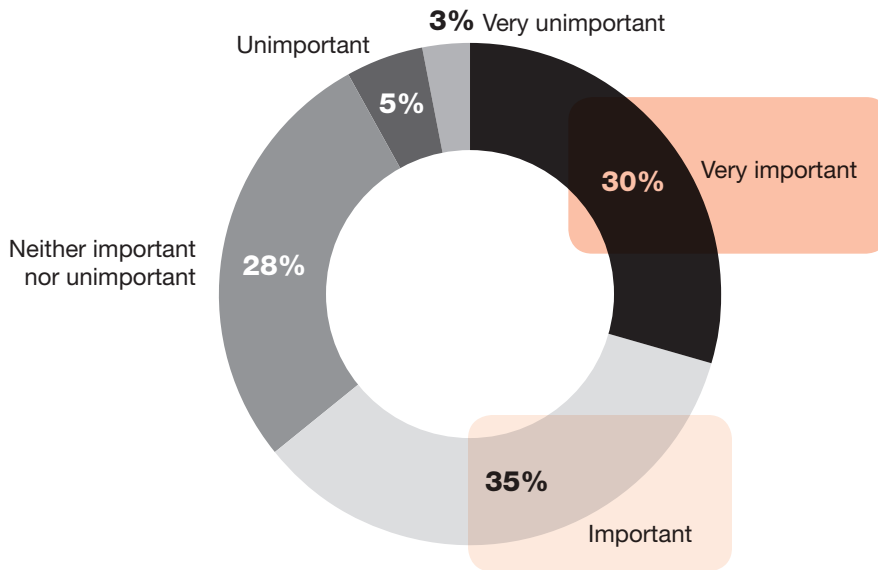
How does physical activity make a difference? It helps reduce and prevent the kinds of risk factors that lead to CAD. As you get physically active your blood pressure, insulin resistance and glucose intolerance decrease. Cholesterol levels may begin to drop, and you will typically lose excess weight, which in itself can reduce the threat of a host of other health problems.

The effect of physical activity depends on how much you do, your intensity of activity and your current health risk factors (e.g., weight, cholesterol levels, etc.). Studies show that to maximize benefits you should participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity on most or all days of the week.

*Coronary artery disease (CAD) is a condition caused by fatty buildups of plaque that thicken the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. When these arteries become narrowed and blocked, the heart is deprived of oxygen and can become damaged. Severe cases can result in heart attack.

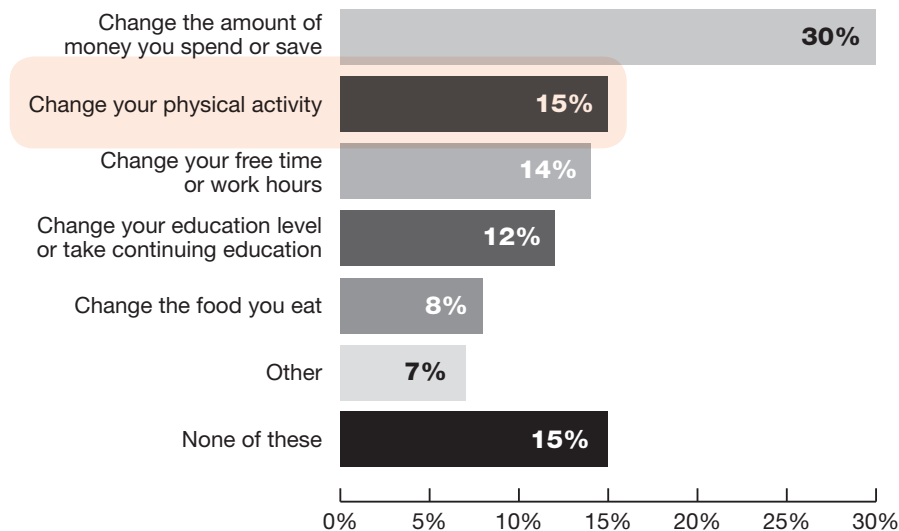
Most of you have identified increased physical activity as an important part of achieving your goals...

1. *How important is physical activity to achieving your goals?*



...but very few of you are willing to actually change your behavior.

2. *Which of the following activities would you be most likely to change to achieve your goals?*



The Importance of Setting Goals

When starting a journey, especially one that involves getting physically active, it can be easy to make a few changes here and there. But if you don't have a specific goal, a busy lifestyle can make it easy to get sidetracked. When you set a goal, you create a vision for yourself and where you want to be.

You need to get **S.M.A.R.T.** about goals. Here's how:

Specific – Set clear, precise goals, such as fit into your college jeans, lose 25 pounds, or run a 5K.

Measurable – How will you know you've made it? Set markers. These might be changes in your weight or body measurements.

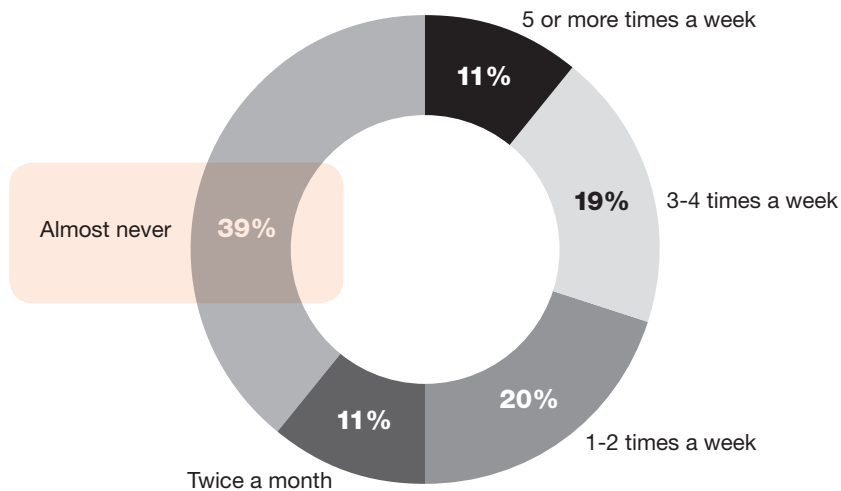
Achievable – Don't set really high goals you expect to reach quickly. Make sure your goal is realistic.

Relevant – Set goals that work for you. If you're scared of heights, you may not want to set a goal to go mountain climbing.

Time-Related – Set short-term goals that will help you get to a larger goal. Short-term and long-term goals will motivate you more than setting a goal for two years from now.

Even though it would help you feel better, look better and have more energy, most of you still don't include at least 30 minutes of physical activity in your daily routine.

1. *How often does your leisure time include moderate-to-vigorous aerobic physical activities such as brisk walking (1 mile in 15 minutes), jogging, biking and swimming for 30 minutes?*



Physical Activity vs. Exercise

Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement that expends more energy than is used when you are resting. This can include such routine things as walking to your parked car, or using the stairs instead of the elevator.

This is different from exercise. Exercise is physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive and purposeful because it is done to maintain or improve your fitness level.

To really make a difference in your heart health, you need at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most — and, preferably all — days of the week. If it were up to us, we'd want you to get it every day, but we know that social events, work schedules and family can get in the way.

Let us help you find ways to truly make physical activity a part of your life. Join Choose To Move and get on the road to healthy living in just 12 weeks. Call 1-800-USA-AHA1 (1-800-242-8721) for your free handbook, or get access instantly by going to www.choosetomove.org.



The Almond Board of California and the Mrs. Dash brand are proud sponsors of the American Heart Association's **Choose To Move** program.

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