



# WISEWOMAN

*Physical Activity for a  
Healthy Heart*

July 2023



WISEWOMAN™

Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation  
for WOMen Across the Nation

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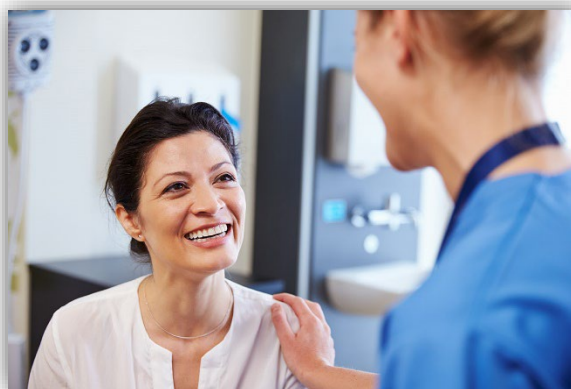
DELAWARE HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

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## Introduction

The WISEWOMAN (**W**ell-Integrated Screening and **E**valuation for **W**OMen **A**cross the **N**ation) program was created to help women understand and reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke by providing services to promote lasting heart-healthy lifestyles. Working with low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women ages 40 to 64 years, the program provides heart disease and stroke risk factor assessments and services that promote healthy behaviors including referrals to healthy behavior support services such as the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP), Walk with Ease (WWE), and the Heart Healthy Ambassador Program. The WISEWOMAN program is currently administered and funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention \(DHDSP\)](#) and is operated on a state-by-state basis. Quality Insights is a contractor working on behalf of the Delaware Division of Public Health and the WISEWOMAN Program. Delaware is fortunate to have this program to serve this at-risk female patient population.



In order to be eligible for the WISEWOMAN program, women must first be enrolled in the Delaware Screening for Life (SFL) program. Strategies to achieve WISEWOMAN goals include monitoring cardiovascular clinical measures, implementing team-based care to reduce cardiovascular risk, and developing clinic/community links with bidirectional referrals to evidence-based lifestyle change programs for at-risk women. The long-term outcomes of the program are increased blood pressure control and improved detection, prevention, and control of cardiovascular disease.

## Purpose of Module

This module provides medical providers and other health care professionals with tools and resources to help improve access and sustainability of physical activity with a special emphasis on the WISEWOMAN population. There is a patient-facing section in this module to assist WISEWOMAN clients in achieving and sustaining their physical activity goals.

## Benefits of Physical Activity

Physical activity can make people feel better, function better, sleep better, and reduce the risk of a large number of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease. According to the second edition of The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):



- Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day.
- Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity gain some health benefits.
- For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate intensity, or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity.
- Preferably, aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week.
- Some physical activity is better than none.
- Additional health benefits are gained by engaging in physical activity beyond the equivalent of 300 minutes (five hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity a week.
- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on two or more days a week, as these activities provide additional health benefits.

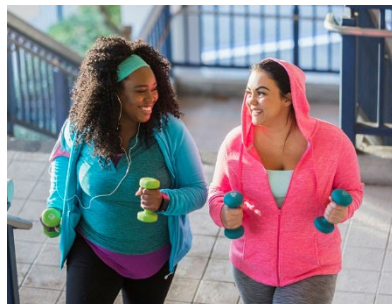
## Healthy People 2030

Healthy People 2030 has several [objectives](#) around physical activity and exercise that focus on increasing the proportion of adults who do enough physical activity (aerobic and/or muscle strengthening) for health benefits (substantial or extensive). In 2020, 26.1% of adults aged 18 and older engaged in no leisure-time physical activity. The goal is to reduce this percentage to 21.8% by 2030. Healthy People 2030 has [15 evidence-based resources](#) to help you help your patients increase their physical activity including encouraging the use of stairs, family-based interventions, and community-based interventions. Quality Insights is a designated Healthy People 2030 Champion and can help support your practice in achieving this goal, including enrollment in the WISEWOMAN program.

## Impacts of Lack of Physical Activity

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes physical inactivity as a serious and growing public health problem and aims to reduce physical inactivity by 10% by 2025. [An analysis](#)

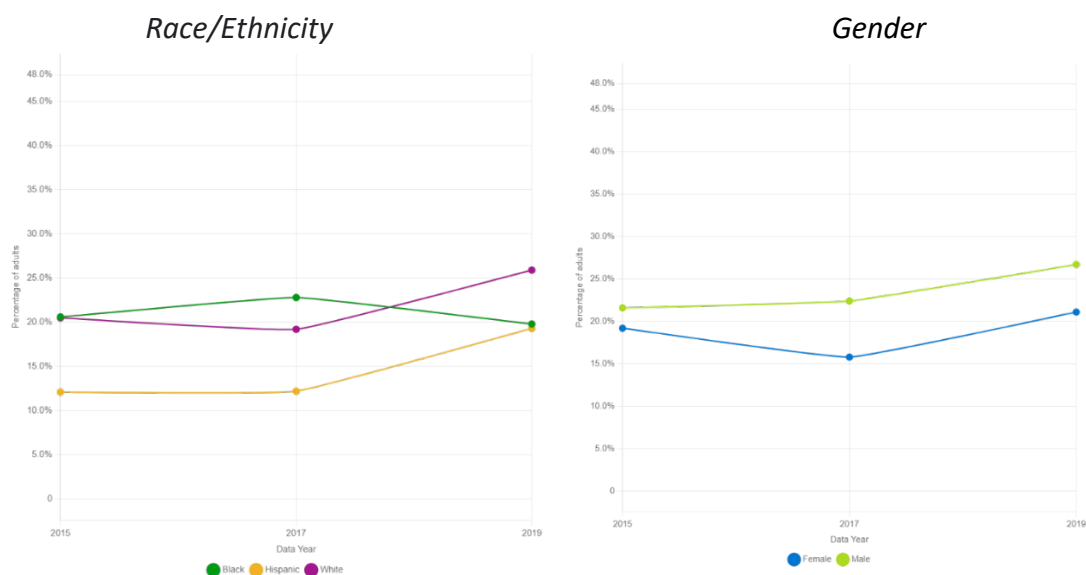
[published](#) in 2018 in *The Lancet Global Health* found that more than a quarter of adults globally are insufficiently physically active. Across most countries, women are less active than men (global average of 31.7% for inactive women vs. 23.4% for inactive men). Addressing the gender gap could significantly impact overall population health.



The CDC's [Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity](#) uses national and state surveys to track the levels of physical activity among adolescents and adults. To attain the most health benefits from physical activity, adults need at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking or fast dancing, each week. Adults also need muscle-strengthening activities, like lifting weights or doing push-ups, at least two days each week. The CDC reports that only one-quarter of all adults get the recommended amount of physical activity. Not getting enough physical activity can contribute to serious health problems including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, several cancers, and obesity. A 2011 study documented in the *Journal of Physical Activity & Health* found that 67.6% of Hispanic adult respondents did not meet physical activity recommendations of at least 150 minutes per week, as compared with 55.6% nationally. Overall, the most frequently reported barriers for Latinos included **"lack of time," "very tired," and "lack of self-discipline"** to exercise.

America's Health Rankings reports that in Delaware physical activity trended positively from 2017-2019 for both white and Hispanic populations, but trended negatively for the black population. While female physical activity trended positively from 2017-2019, it continues to be about 5% less than the male population.

**Figure 1. Exercise Population Trends in Delaware, 2023**

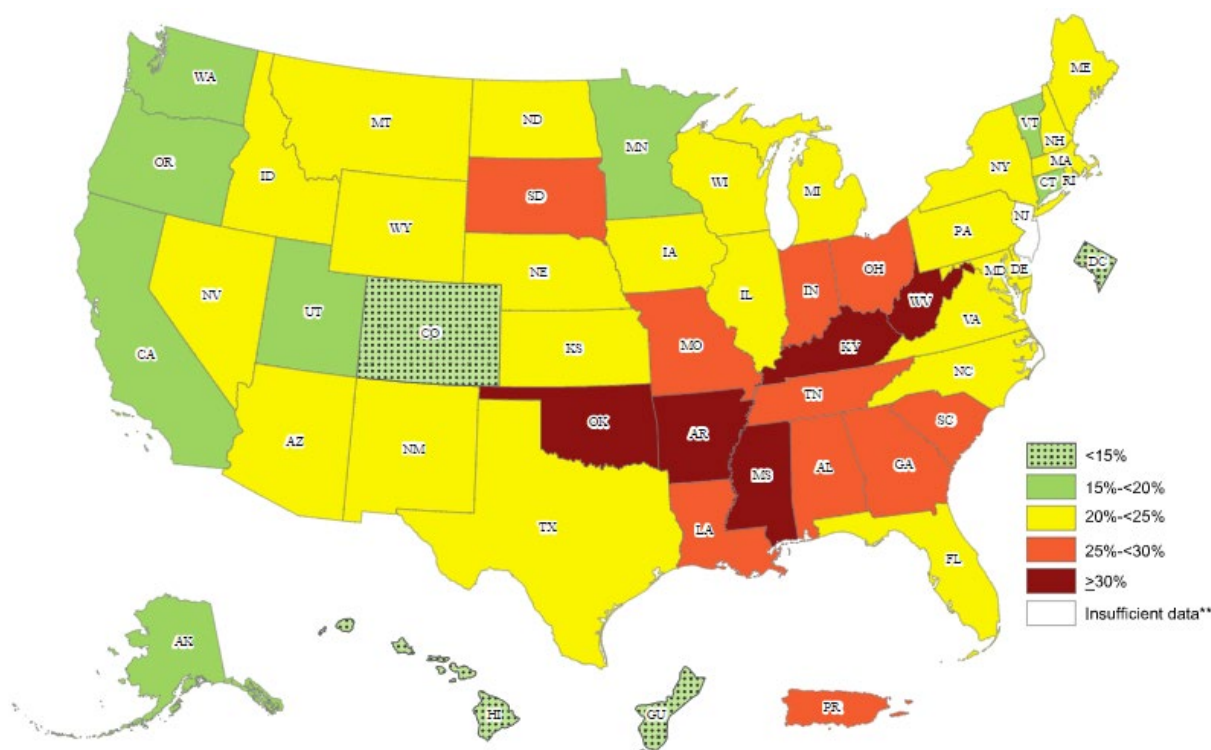


Source: [America's Health Rankings](#), 2023.



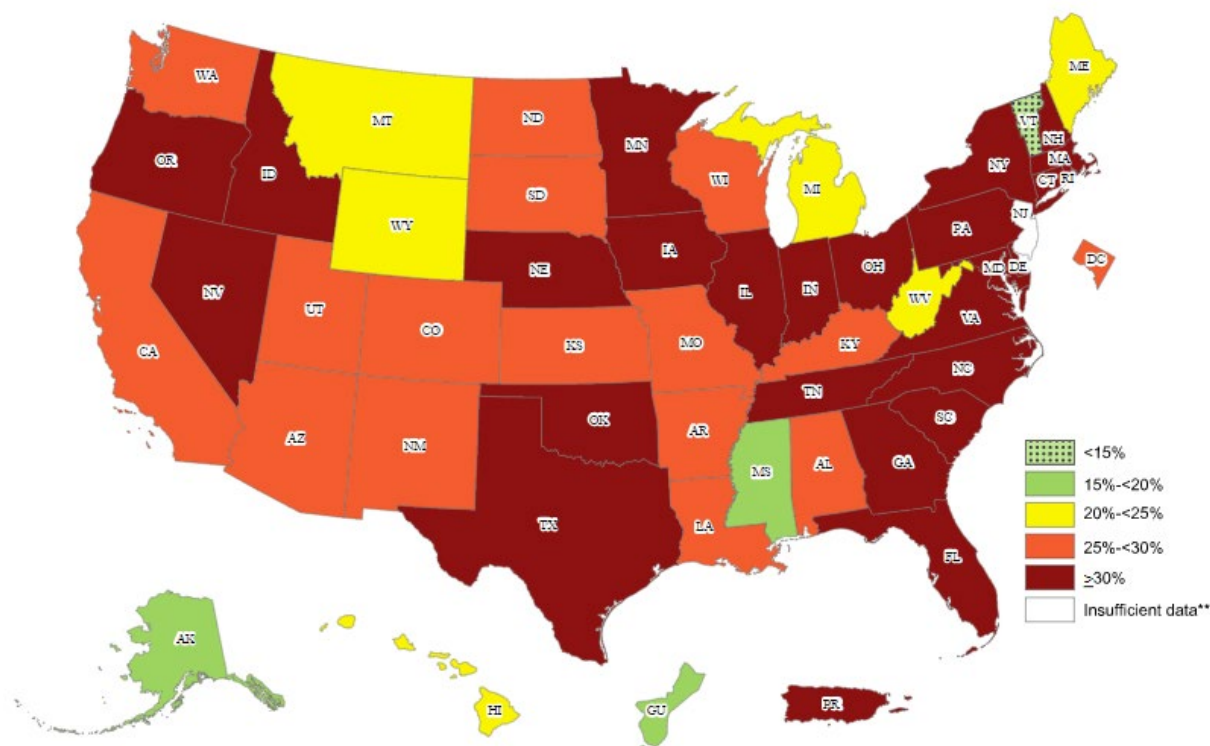
- More than 60% of U.S. women do not engage in the recommended amount of physical activity.
- More than 25% of U.S. women are not active at all.
- Physical inactivity is more common among women than men.
- Social support from family and friends has been consistently and positively related to regular physical activity.

**Figure 2: Prevalence of Self-Reported Physical Inactivity\* Among Non-Hispanic White Adults by State and Territory, BRFSS, 2017-2020**



Source: *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System*, 2017-2020.

**Figure 3: Prevalence of Self-Reported Physical Inactivity\* Among Non-Hispanic White Adults by State and Territory, BRFSS, 2017-2020**



Source: [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#), 2017-2020.

## Disparities in Physical Activity

### Exploring Physical Activity in Hispanic Woman

In studies exploring physical activity in Hispanic women, community health workers (CHWs) (including health coaches) were often used to promote physical activity among Hispanic populations. The use of CHWs may have served multiple purposes including an increase of trust and enhanced cultural appropriateness of the interventions. Additionally, the community advisors were often bilingual members of the communities they were serving, so they were naturally accepted by the clients they were serving. The ability to communicate in the participants' preferred language may facilitate behavior change. Having a bilingual medical staff from the communities your practices serve, or utilizing a centralized Quality Insights health coach for the WISEWOMAN program, can assist in uptake of physical activity with Hispanic patients.

The WISEWOMAN program is uniquely designed to help women to overcome barriers to physical activity by offering health coaching, referrals to lifestyle change programs and community based resources. All of these activities alone can help WISEWOMAN participants to

achieve their physical activity goals, but in combination they can have the greatest impact. Our WISEWOMAN health coach is serving her own community and is passionate about helping women make the necessary changes to increase their physical activity and thereby reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease.

## Actions to Take with Patients to Increase Physical Activity

1. Avoid the term “exercise” and instead use “physical activity” or “movement.”
2. Disassociate physical activity with long-term outcomes such as disease prevention and weight loss. Instead, associate physical activity with things like being able to play with grandchildren or taking a walk with a friend/family member.
3. Speak about and identify personal patient goals and associate physical activity with a personal goal.
  - a. Example: Patient goal - “I don’t want to be on medicine for the rest of my life.”  
Physician Response: “Would you be interested in setting a goal of exercising 10 minutes per day for 2 months? We can talk again in two months and see how you are feeling and possibly set another goal to work towards coming off the medication.”
4. Assess physical activity and if necessary, make the physical activity recommendation regardless of a patient’s body mass index (BMI). Assess every patient.
5. Develop community-clinical linkages to refer your patients to community resources and programs that provide safe opportunities for physical activity. Examples of programs include:
  - a. [National Diabetes Prevention Program](#)
  - b. [Heart Healthy Ambassador Program](#)
  - c. [Walk with Ease](#) and other [lifestyle management programs](#) for arthritis
  - d. [Park prescriptions](#)
  - e. [WISEWOMAN Program](#)
6. Utilize [Active People, Healthy Nation Tools for Action for Healthcare](#)
7. Consider documenting physical activity as a [5<sup>th</sup> vital sign](#).

Source: [Salud America! Why Telling Latinas to “Just Exercise” is a Big Mistake](#), 2018.



## Patient Facing Resources

### Barriers to Physical Activity for Women

According to the [Better Health Channel](#), there are many reasons why women are unable to achieve the recommended amount of weekly physical activity. Table 1 shows the primary barriers for women and physical activity and mitigating strategies you can use.



**Table 1: Primary Barriers for Women and Mitigation Strategies to Use with Patients**

Barrier	Mitigating Strategy
<b>Lack of time</b>	As small as 10 minutes of activity can make a difference. Start with just 10 minutes. If successful, try 10 minutes of activity three times a day. Three 10-minute sessions of physical activity over the course of the day has the same benefits as one 30-minute session.  Build activity in with your family such as a neighborhood walk or a walk in the park.
<b>Lack of motivation/energy</b>	Physical activity should be enjoyable and does not need to occur within the four walls of a gym. Try adding dancing to a daily routine, or find a partner at church who might be interested in walking after a church service. Community centers are a great way to connect with others in the community who enjoy similar activities. Regular physical activity that you enjoy will become more energizing over time.
<b>Parenting demands</b>	Ask for help with parenting duties to give time for physical activity. Asking for help when needed is a lifelong strength that can impact more areas than just physical activity. Swapping childcare services within your neighborhood could be another option.
<b>Health Problems</b>	Physical limitations do not rule out all physical activity, but rather just limit the types of activity that are most appropriate. Discuss alternative exercise options with your doctor, such as water activities.
<b>Financial</b>	One of the least expensive forms of exercise is walking. The Walk With Ease program is evidence-based and can be performed remotely.
<b>Gender Stereotyping</b>	Some women feel the sole responsibility for child rearing and domestic duties and therefore experience guilt when taking time for themselves. The most important step a woman can take to take better care of their families and home is to take care of themselves by including physical activity in their days.

Source: [Better Health Channel](#), 2016.

## Technology-Based Tools to Help Increase Physical Activity



According to the [Journal of Clinical Medicine](#), sedentary behavior has been identified as one of the major causes of many chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease. Technology plays a complex role in sedentary behavior. Some emerging technologies (e.g., sedentary video games and computer games) have contributed to sedentary behavior and physical inactivity, while other innovative technologies have energized and promoted physical activity. For example, newly emerging technologies such as mobile device applications, health wearable devices, and active video games have been adopted to promote health.

As technology continues to evolve as an ever more prevalent part of everyday life and population-based health programs seek new ways to increase lifelong engagement with physical activity, the two have become increasingly linked.

[LifeHack](#) has nine apps that are all free and can motivate by different mechanisms, including one app that you only pay for if you do NOT complete the workout, and another that is similar to a social media app but for fitness and social connections.

## Move Your Way® Community Resources

Move Your Way® is the promotional campaign for the [second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#). The campaign's goal is to help people live healthier lives through increased physical activity.

Use the resources from Move Your Way® to learn more about how to communicate with your audiences about physical activity — whether that means distributing materials to community members, hosting a local event, or sharing information with patients at your practice.



View an overview of the program from [this webinar recording](#).

**MUEVETE**  
A TU MANERA\*

**Los adultos necesitan una combinación de actividades físicas para mantenerse sanos.**

**Actividades aeróbicas moderadas\***

Todo lo que haga que el corazón lata más rápido cuenta.

por lo menos  
**150**  
minutos  
por semana

**Actividades para fortalecer los músculos**

Haz actividades que hagan que los músculos trabajen más que de costumbre.

por lo menos  
**2**  
días  
por semana

\*Si prefieres actividades aeróbicas intensas (como correr), dedícalas por lo menos **75 minutos por semana**. Si eso es más de lo que puedes hacer en este momento, **haz lo que puedas**. Incluso 5 minutos de actividad física producen beneficios reales para la salud.

Camina. Corre. Baila. Juega. **¿Cómo te mueves tú?**

**MOVE YOUR WAY**

**Adults need a mix of physical activity to stay healthy.**

**Moderate-intensity aerobic activity\***

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least  
**150**  
minutes  
a week

**Muscle-strengthening activity**

Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.

at least  
**2**  
days  
a week

\* If you prefer vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (like running), aim for at least **75 minutes a week**.

If that's more than you can do right now, **do what you can**. Even 5 minutes of physical activity has real health benefits.

Walk. Run. Dance. Play. **What's your move?**

Want to learn more? Check out the [Move Your Way® Fact Sheet for Adults](#).

Move Your Way® also has an [interactive tool](#) to build your weekly activity plan and set goals. The interactive tool is also available in Spanish.

## Physical Activity Patient Education Resources in Spanish

Spanish language [physical activity](#) patient resources for every stage of life. If you need print orders of any patient education resources to support physical activity, reduction of

cardiovascular disease, or promotion of WISEWOMAN Program, Quality Insights can order and ship these supplies to you.

## Referrals to Healthy Lifestyle Programs

### Walk With Ease

- The Walk With Ease program is a six-week walking course. It can assist patients in incorporating more physical activity into their daily routine. Walk with Ease has group-based classes as well as self-guided programs. To refer patients, contact the Arthritis Foundation Helpline at 1-800-283-7800 or via email at [helpline@arthritis.org](mailto:helpline@arthritis.org).

### National Diabetes Prevention Program

- The National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) focuses on preventing patients at risk for diabetes from developing the disease. This program helps participants adopt healthy lifestyle changes and add more physical activity to their daily routines. There are several requirements to participate. To find out more about how providers can refer their patients, visit the [CDC's website](https://www.cdc.gov/dpp/).



### Need More Information?

If you'd like additional information, contact Sarah Toborowski at [stoborowski@qualityinsights.org](mailto:stoborowski@qualityinsights.org) or call 302-290-9049.

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