



Physical Activity Vital Sign



Question 1: For an average week in the last 30 days, how many days per week did you engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity (like walking fast, running, jogging, dancing, swimming, biking, or other activities that cause a light or heavy sweat)?

_____ days

Question 2: On those days that you engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity, how many minutes, on average, do you exercise?

_____ minutes

Total minutes per week of physical activity (multiply #1 by #2)

_____ minutes per week

Optional Question (particularly important for older adults):

Question 3: During the past month, how many times per week did you do physical activities or exercises to strengthen your muscles?

_____ days

Incorporate the Physical Activity Vital Sign (PAVS) into your electronic health record and patient intake forms. Calculations may be programmed and the sedentary patient flagged for referral or counseling.

Using the Physical Activity Vital Sign

National guidelines recommend 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity physical activity. That's just:

- 2 1/2 hours out of 168 hours in a week! In place of moderate intensity activity, you can complete 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous intensity physical activity. 1 minute of vigorous activity is equal to 2 minutes of moderate activity.
- You can perform activity in multiple “bouts” of any length throughout the day to add up to the recommended 150 minutes/week.

Although light intensity physical activity (such as a casual walk) is not assessed by the PAVS, it positively impacts health. Wherever they are on their physical activity journey, encourage patients to become and remain active. Promote active living throughout the day to reduce sedentary time (less screen time!).



What's Moderate Intensity?

- You can talk, but not sing, while performing the activity.
- Examples: brisk walking, slow biking, doubles tennis, various forms of dance, active home chores and gardening, etc.



What's Vigorous Intensity?

- Vigorous intensity: You can no longer talk easily during the activity and are somewhat out of breath.
- Examples: jogging, fast bicycling, singles tennis, aerobic exercise class, swimming laps, etc.