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# **EXERCISE!**

## **IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!**

**THIRD EDITION**

Running Time: 10 minutes

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

#### **Intended Audience and Uses**

Recent research has shown that American youngsters have become increasingly sedentary, watching hours of television every day, and sitting in front of computers playing digital games. The consequences have been dire. Childhood obesity is on the upswing, as are diseases heretofore associated with only overweight adults – Type 2 diabetes and heart complications. The short-term results are bad enough with a growing number of youngsters having to deal with cruel comments from peers and illnesses normally associated with adults; and the long-term results are also grim. Health care costs are expected to skyrocket as ever-increasing numbers of adults with serious health problems require long-term medical assistance.

***Exercise! It's Good for You!*** is based on the National Health Education Standards of the American Association for Health Education and has been produced for children at

the K-2 levels. It has been designed to be used in the health curriculum, but also may be used in physical education and science curricula. The program shows children how they can adopt healthful routines to avoid the onset of disease often associated with sedentary life styles.

## Program Synopsis

The video begins by showing Lucy and Larry Lethargic sitting – lethargically – in front of their TV. The narrator explains the youngsters do little more than watch television, munch nacho chips and eat popcorn. They have no interest in being healthy. If they did, the narrator continues, they would be more active. The program then explains how a very important muscle, the heart, pumps tiny food particles (nutrients) and oxygen to all parts of our body. We need those things to live. So we need to keep our heart healthy. We keep our heart healthy by doing things such as riding our bike, playing soccer and swimming. Those activities – and others – help keep the other muscles in our body healthy. We also need to keep our bones healthy so they won't easily break. Besides keeping our muscles and bones healthy, exercise lifts our mood because, when we exercise, our brain releases chemicals that make us feel happier. Exercise also helps us do better in school because it helps release brain chemicals that improve our memory.

The second part of the program begins as Larry and Lucy's parents decide that the children's TV viewing habits – and unhealthy diet – have resulted in their poor schoolwork. From now on, they state, things will be different in the Lethargic household. The rest of the program centers on the family's newly found life style – eating a balanced diet based on the government's "My Plate" guidelines, doing physical chores around the house, cutting down the amount of time watching TV and playing electronic games.

Now the children play active games outdoors and doing a lot more walking. Safety, hygiene and sleep considerations are also covered in the second part of the program.

## VIEWER OBJECTIVES

After viewing this video and participating in the suggested activities, viewers should be able to do the following:

1. Tell why keeping active is important to one's health.
2. Explain why keeping active can improve one's mental health and memory.
3. Discuss the elements of a healthful diet and why tell why eating healthful foods is an important part of exercise.
4. Name at least five physical activities that promote good health.
5. Explain why good hygiene and adequate sleep are important components of exercise.

*The producers encourage you to make adaptations and changes to the following lesson plan whenever you feel it will enhance your students' learning experiences. Only by tailoring the material to your unique classroom situation will you be able to maximize the educational experience afforded by these materials.*

## SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

### Introduce the Program

Well in advance, pass out the *Letter to Parents*, which explains the focus of the program and solicits parental help in increasing awareness of – and embracing – a more active life style. Begin a discussion by asking, “How much television do you watch every day? How much time do

you spend playing video games?” Discuss the different programs the children watch and the video games they play. Then tally their weekly time totals on the chalkboard. Ask the children to take their totals home to discuss them with their parents or guardians. Ask them to find out if they watch too much television and/or spend too much time playing computer or hand-held electronic games.

### Pre-Viewing Activities

At the next class session, ask the children for their parents’ reactions to the amount of time they spend in sedentary activities. Now tell the students that they will now see a program on exercise – and why it’s so important. Tell them that you will want everyone to pay close attention to the many reasons why it’s important. Then, mention that the program has two children who spent a lot of time watching television. But they decided to lead more active lives. Tell the class everyone will be expected to know why they changed.

### View the Video

Total viewing time is approximately 10 minutes.

### Post-Viewing Activities

Ask why Lucy and Larry became more active. (Their parents were disappointed in their schoolwork). Then ask about the different things Larry and Lucy did to get more exercise. Does anyone in class exercise like the Lucy and Larry? What does the class think about parking the family car far from the store? What about using stairs, instead of escalators and elevators? After the discussion, hand out *How Much Do I Exercise?* Ask the students to take it home to fill out with their parents’ help. Discuss the filled-in worksheets the next class session. What would constitute an adequate amount of exercise?

Did anyone's parents decide the family would participate in more exercise activities after seeing how little everyone exercises? Next, pass out ***What I Eat***. Have the children complete the handout as an individual or small-group activity, or have the children take it home and complete it with the help of their parents. Discuss the results and emphasize the necessity of following the My Plate guidelines in order to exercise on a regular basis. Review the guidelines. Reproduce and hand out ***My Favorite Sport***. Have the class complete the exercise and then give oral presentations about their favorite sporting activity. They also may bring in sport items, such as a catcher's mitt, for show-and-tell.

### Description of Blackline Masters

***LETTER TO PARENTS*** -- Informs parents and guardians about the unit, and asks for their assistance. Provides some at-home guidelines for a healthful lifestyle.

***HOW MUCH DO I EXERCISE?*** -- Gives children an opportunity to analyze their own exercise patterns.

***WHAT I EAT*** -- Helps youngsters determine whether they are eating correctly.

***MY FAVORITE SPORT*** -- Encourages children to participate in sport activities.

### TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

Almost every day, you'll find Lucy and Larry Lethargic sitting very still, like statues, in front of their TV.

Oh, sure, they move every once in awhile - to munch popcorn, to nibble on nacho chips - or to blink.

But you won't see them do much more than that.

You see, Lucy and Larry think that sitting in front of their TV for hours on end is wonderful.

And it is - if you have no interest in being healthy, that is.

However, if you want to keep your body in tip-top shape - well, that's quite another story, because all of us need to move our bodies in order to stay in shape and to feel good.

To understand why, think of a toy football (or another toy) that you've left outside for a long time. You probably know that it will become weathered and cracked -- or perhaps brittle and crumbly.

But if you take care of a toy properly, it will stay almost like new for a very long time and you can use it again and again.

In some ways, at least, everyone's body is similar to that toy. That is, if you don't take care of your body – if, for instance, you lie around playing with hand-held electronic games all the time – your body will become weaker and weaker.

Its different parts won't work at their best - parts such as the heart. This very special muscle works hard when we run, climb, ride our bikes, or move actively in any other way.

Our heart works to pump blood throughout our body.

And the more we move, the faster – and the more – our heart beats. And, generally speaking, the more our heart beats, the stronger it becomes.

Strong hearts help us move our other muscles and then they become stronger!

So if "you-know-who" don't turn off that TV and get some exercise soon, they'll have a hard time keeping up with their more active friends.

Now, besides your heart and the other muscles in your body, exercise is good for your bones, too.

That's important, because strong bones help you move the way you want. And if you happen to trip, or have another accident, those healthy bones will be less likely to break.

Broken bones are no fun, at all! People aren't happy when they break a finger, a leg, or an arm. It hurts!

Speaking of being unhappy, did you know that if you exercise -- if you keep active -- you'll probably feel happier?

Well, you will!

Scientists have discovered that when people exercise, their brain makes certain kinds of chemicals that help them feel happier.

On the other hand, if you - like Lucy and Larry - don't stay active, fewer of those chemicals will be made. So you may not feel so happy.

It's no wonder, then, that Larry often feels droopy and forlorn.

Lucy, too!

And when Larry gets into an argument, he stays angry for a long time. But his friend Brad knows how to get rid of those unpleasant, angry feelings.

Brad punches a pillow (that's a kind of exercise), throws a ball hard against the ground or an outside wall, climbs on the playground equipment, or simply runs around.

All help more pleasant feelings chase away Brad's anger.

Now, in addition to helping you feel happier and helping your body stay healthy, exercise helps your mind work at its very best.

Scientists have found that people who exercise regularly do better when performing tasks that require thought. So if you keep active, you'll probably do better in school!

Unlike Lucy and Larry.

In fact, their parents are concerned about their schoolwork so concerned that they've decided to make some big changes in the Lethargic household.

The first order of business? Turn off that TV. From now on, says Mrs. Lethargic, the children will have to cut down on their TV viewing time.

And according to Mr. Lethargic, there'll be much less junk food from now on, too!

Sure, it may seem unfair. But less TV viewing just gives you more time to do the things that are really good for you.

And with less junk food, you'll probably eat the things that are really good for you!

A well-balanced diet helps you stay healthy and gives you the kind of food you need to exercise properly day in and day out.

To have a well-balanced diet every day, you need to eat foods made from grains – breads, crackers, pasta, rice and cereal. Whole grains are best.

You also should have fruits and vegetables every day.

Next come fish, meat and poultry – examples of poultry are chicken and turkey – and dry beans, eggs and nuts. Any of these foods should be eaten daily, too, as should milk, yogurt and cheese.

Finally, there are sweets and fats. They should be eaten less often than other foods.

You can find out exactly how much of the different kinds of foods you need each day by going to a website, [www.chosemyplate.gov](http://www.chosemyplate.gov). If you click "Get a Personalized Plan" in the upper right box, a place will appear where you can type in your age.

There's also a place where you can select whether you're a boy (male) or a girl (female), and another place where you can choose how much exercise you get each day.

When you submit that information, the website will give you and your parents a healthful eating plan that tells exactly what kind of foods – and how much of them – you need to eat each day.

Now that Larry and Lucy have started up the road to become healthy and fit, they've changed other things in their lives, too.

They've decided to pitch in on household chores, taking dishes to the sink after meals, carrying out the trash, and helping out in the flower garden and in the yard.

Instead of playing video games, which exercise only your thumbs, after all - or lying around watching TV, which exercises nothing - they and their family do things that exercise many parts of their body.

As part of being more active around their home and neighborhood, the family has decided to use their legs and feet more – by jogging, walking to and from the store, and hiking in the country.

Hiking, walking and jogging are very good exercises, and they're easy to do.

And, of course, the family follows all the important safety rules when exercising.

They drink plenty of water, even before they get thirsty, to be certain that they get enough liquids.

And when special safety equipment is called for, they always use it.

Now, getting back to using legs and feet, whenever the family needs to drive somewhere, they park the car at the far end of the parking lot so they can get an additional bit of exercise by walking that extra distance to the store.

Every little bit helps!

They even walk up and down escalators (carefully, of course) instead of merely standing on them. They also take elevators only when necessary and use stairways whenever possible.

Oh, yes, and one more thing: cleanliness. Larry and Lucy now are much more careful to brush and shower or bathe every day.

And they get plenty of sleep each night.

In other words, the entire family has changed the way they live - and, by doing so, has become much more healthy, fit and happy.

They've made exercise a habit - something they do all the time.

They limit their television watching.

And they stay active to keep their heart and other muscles fit.

They do things every day to keep their bones strong and healthy.

They keep active to be happy.

They eat right, keep all parts of their body clean, and get enough sleep every night so they can do all those things that make their lives pleasant and enjoyable.

When you get right down to it, then, exercise really is one of the very best things you can do for yourself!

## **WEB RESOURCES**

### **Exercise, Balanced Diet Best Way to Fight Childhood Obesity**

<http://www.kidsource.com/health/fight.child.obesity.html>

More detailed information on this crucial subject based on research conducted by Georgetown University Center for Food and Nutrition Policy

### **Health Benefits of Physical Activity During Childhood and Adolescence**

<http://www.fitness.gov/childhood.html>

An excellent review of the many ways physical activity benefits children of all ages

### **Physical Fitness & Activity in Schools**

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/exerciseforchildren.html>

The National Institutes of Health resource for information regarding exercise and children

Dear Parent or Guardian:

In a short time, we will begin a unit on the importance of exercise.

As you may know, recent studies have shown an alarming growth in the incidence of childhood obesity in the United States. This, in turn, has led to an increased frequency of diabetes, heart disease, and other serious health problems among children.

We believe it is extremely important for all of us to work together to reverse this dangerous trend, one that can undermine our children's health for the rest of their lives.

We encourage you be an active participant in this unit which will show your child how to lead a healthful lifestyle. You can help make this unit successful by doing the following:

- Discuss the information contained in the classroom handout material given to your child.
- Curtail the time your child spends in front of the TV and computer, and limit any other sedentary activities.
- Encourage your child to participate in outdoor activities that entail running, climbing, walking, peddling, stretching, bending, and reaching.
- Frequently play or practice any active sport with your child.
- Limit the amount of foods you serve that contain high amounts of animal fat. Your child needs foods with fat content, but the best fats are those found in nuts and seeds (such as sunflower seeds) and legumes (such as peanuts). Serve whole grain breads and plenty of vegetables and fruits.
- Limit foods with high sugar content and high salt content.
- Make certain your child gets plenty of sleep.
- Be sure your child practices good hygiene, including good oral hygiene.

Together, we can play a major role in assuring that your child will be as healthy as possible.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

## How Much Do I Exercise?



These girls exercise every day. Do you? In the box, tell how you exercise each day. Tell how long you exercise. Is it enough?

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

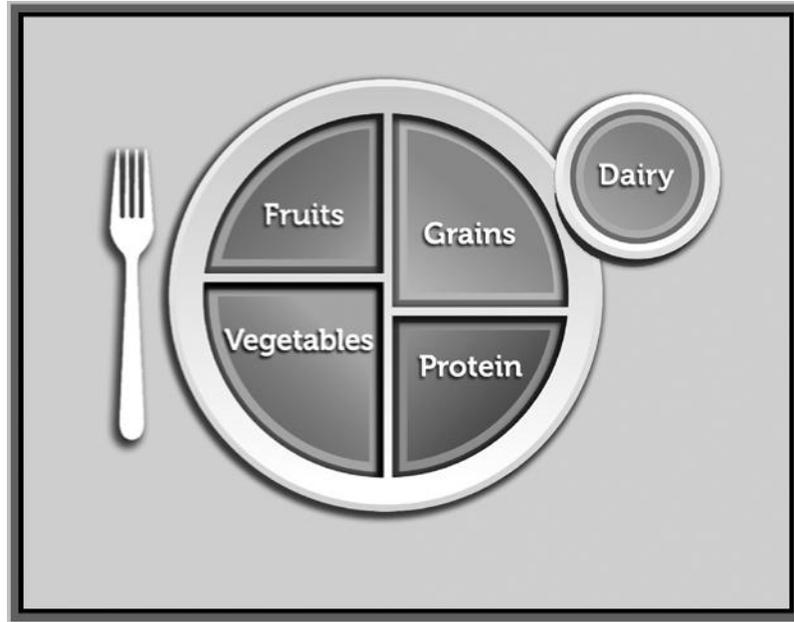
Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

## What I Eat



This is the My Plate guideline. Do you eat any of the foods in the picture? In the box, name the foods you commonly eat. Tell how many times you eat those foods each day.

Grains I eat:

Vegetables I eat:

Fruits I eat:

Dairy products I drink and eat:

Protein (meat, eggs and beans) I eat:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## My Favorite Sport



David likes to climb. What is your favorite sport? Draw a picture of yourself playing the sport in the box. Color the picture.