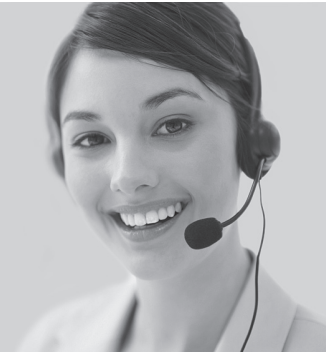


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘Creative Ways to Get Your Family Off the Couch.’ I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your UPMC Health Plan health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”



Is yours a family of diehard couch potatoes? Below are some creative ways to get everyone up and moving — and have fun doing it!

You might want to all wear pedometers and compare steps. It will show you the changes you are making. Plus, a little friendly competition can add to the fun.

- **Make a switch — from inactive to active time together.** Instead of heading out for a movie, go to the zoo. Instead of going to a restaurant, pack a picnic and take a walk in the park. Instead of watching TV, take a family walk or bike ride.
- **Taking your kids to practice? Use the time to move.** While they practice soccer, ballet, or basketball, take a walk or jog. Compare steps afterwards.
- **Learn to dance together.** Take a vote to see what dance you would like to learn. Line dancing? Swing? Hip-hop? Find lessons on a DVD or YouTube. Or enroll in a class together. Many dance centers in the community offer free lessons.
- **Go on a scavenger hunt.** Make a list of items to find and where to hunt for them. For example, you might list items at a park near your home or in the mall or grocery store. For safety, pair younger children with an adult.
- **Enjoy some old-fashioned active games.** You might want to set aside a night each week as “game night” and let your children choose an active game. Examples are hide-and-seek, tag, jumping rope, hula hooping, Simon says, hopscotch, and foursquare.

(continued on next page)



A healthier life is on the line for you!

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Creative Ways to Get Your Family Off the Couch

- **Take an active day away.** Plan a one-day, low-cost vacation, somewhere near your home. For example, go for a hike or a bike ride at a nearby park. Explore the city. Go ice-skating or roller-skating.
- **Go to a playground** — and play. If you do not need to closely watch your child, try the monkey bars yourself. Go ahead and swing on the swings. And do not forget tag — chasing each other around in open spaces gets everyone moving.
- **Get up during homework and move.** Encourage your children to take 10-minute breaks to be active. Do jumping jacks, jump rope, or just get up and walk around. It will help them concentrate — and you too, if you are helping them with their schoolwork.
- **Build a habit of walking and talking with your child.** A walk gets both of you out of the house and away from electronics. Do not force the talking. Let your child take the lead, with you spending most of the time listening. It is a wonderful way to stay in touch, and it works with spouses too!

Think of family time as mostly active time. Make it fun, and the fitness will follow.

Take Action

Choose one idea from this tip sheet or one of your own. Make a plan below to put it into action this week. *Be specific.* For example, “I will wear my sneakers when I take the boys to soccer on Tuesday and Thursday. While they practice, I will walk around the field.”

My Plan: _____



A healthier life is on the line for you!

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