No time to exercise? Move your body instead

Exercise is great for your health. But sometimes it's hard to fit it into a busy schedule. Don't worry — you can do movement instead.

If there are days when you don't have time for exercise, you can still move. Adding movement into your day is a way to improve your health without investing as much time. There's no gym or special equipment involved.

WHY SHOULD I MOVE MORE?

Studies show that people who move their bodies every day live longer than those who don't. It's also good for the environment. If you walk or bike to your destination, you save gas and carbon emissions. If you take the stairs instead of the elevator, you save electricity.

MOVEMENT IDEAS

Not sure how to get started with movement? You can find things that work for your life. Think about ways you can move instead of sit. Here are some ideas:

Avoid the elevator and take the stairs if you can. You can burn calories two to three times faster climbing stairs than walking briskly on flat ground. Can't take it the whole way? Take the stairs halfway and the elevator the rest of the way. Try to take stairs instead of escalators, too.

Park farther away from the front door and walk a little more whenever possible. Many studies have shown that people who live in cities walk more and weigh less than people who live in areas where they drive more.

Whenever possible, bike or walk instead of driving. People who commute to work by biking or walking tend to weigh less than people who always drive.

If you live far from where you are going, consider driving part of the way and walking the rest of the way. Even a half-mile walk is good movement.

Choose hobbies you enjoy that are active, but don't feel like exercise. This may include gardening, dancing or walking while listening to music or an audiobook.

Walk in place or lift weights while watching your favorite TV show. Stretch or walk in place while talking on the phone at home or work.

Sources: American Heart Association, Veterans Health Administration