Help your patients start a physical activity program by writing an exercise prescription! In patients with obesity, increased physical activity may help with weight loss, and it is especially important for weight maintenance. Other benefits of physical activity include: improved body composition, metabolic health, musculoskeletal health, cardiovascular health, and mental health, among others.

**CONDUCT A MEDICAL EVALUATION**

Before prescribing a new exercise program, conduct a medical evaluation. This will allow you to develop a program that is safe and attainable for each individual patient.

- Check current physical activity levels
- Assess readiness
- Set attainable goals
- Conduct medical tests (cardiac stress test, pulmonary function test, musculoskeletal assessment, etc.)
- Assess mobility
- Identify potential equipment needs or modifications
- Adjust medications before start of program
- Monitor medications during implementation of program

**DEVELOP A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM**

Based on the medical evaluation, develop a physical activity program that is individualized to the patient. The program should focus on increasing energy expenditure and decreasing sedentary time, and should include aerobic activities, strength training, and non-exercise activities.

To prevent weight gain and promote other health benefits:

- 150 minutes/week moderate physical activity
- OR
- 75 minutes/week vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise

To promote weight loss and prevent weight regain:

- 300 minutes/week moderate physical activity
- OR
- 150 minutes/week vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:**

- **AEROBIC ACTIVITY**
  - Walk
  - Jog/Run
  - Elliptical
  - Swim
  - Bike
  - Dance
  - Play sports

- **STRENGTH TRAINING**
  - Free weights
  - Machines
  - Resistance bands
  - Body weight exercises
  - Water resistance exercises

- **NEAT (Non-exercise Activity Time)**
  - Take stairs
  - Park farther from entrances
  - Stand instead of sitting
  - Avoid moving walkways
  - Carry luggage
  - Garden

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PRESCRIPTION (FITTE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TRACK ACTIVITY AND PROGRESS**

When developing a physical activity prescription, make sure to set clear, attainable goals. Have the patient track their activity in relation to these goals so you can monitor their progress.

- Daily activity logs
- Pedometers, accelerometers, or other health trackers
- Dynamic training metrics (miles, laps, etc.)
- Resistance training metrics (reps, sets, etc.)
- Percent body fat measurements
- Muscle circumference measurements