



# The Catholic Women's League of Canada

## MEMO

**DATE:** May 31, 2025  
**FROM:** Joline Belliveau, National Chairperson of Service  
**TO:** Provincial Presidents and Secretaries  
**CC:** National Officers  
National Life Member Liaison

---

Please forward this message to chairpersons of service  
according to your provincial communications protocol.

---

### **Taking Care of Ourselves as We Age**

As people age, their bodies slow down, lose muscle mass, become less flexible and less coordinated, and experience a loss of balance. Exercising has many benefits.

Many people lead a relatively sedentary lifestyle. Even though they are more efficient and faster, present-day conveniences have also contributed to an unhealthy way of living—food preparation has been replaced by fast food or foods with too much fat, starch, sugar and salt. Many members of society do minimal exercise or movement. The result is a society with a considerable number of overweight people. Obesity can cause diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, problems with knees and hips, anxiety and depression.

### ***How to get active:***

1. Find an activity you like, such as swimming or cycling.
2. Increase your activity level 10 minutes at a time—start with baby steps.
3. Exercise with a group, family or friends—commit with someone to meet for a walk or join a gym together.
4. Walk whenever you can and take the stairs, not the elevator.
5. Carry your groceries home.

***Recommended exercises:***

- Aerobic activities: walking, swimming, cycling or dancing for at least 2.5 hours per week
- Strength training: lifting weights, using resistance bands or bodyweight exercises like squats and push-ups
- Balance and flexibility: yoga, tai chi or simple balance exercises like standing on one leg
- Low-impact movements: chair exercises, gentle stretching and water aerobics for those with mobility concerns

Every step counts! Any amount of movement can make a difference in overall health.

***The health benefits of being active include:***

- Improved balance
- Reduced falls and injuries
- Ability to stay independent longer
- Prevention of heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and premature death
- Reduced anxiety
- Reduced blood pressure
- Improved quality of sleep
- Reduced risk of weight gain
- Brain health/reduced risk of dementia

***What is moderate and vigorous aerobic activity?***

Moderate aerobic activity causes you to breathe harder and increases your heart rate, allowing you talk but not sing. Activities include walking quickly or cycling.

Vigorous aerobic activity increases your heart rate enough that you are unable to say more than a few words without needing to catch your breath. Activities include those such as running or cross-country skiing.

More physical activity provides greater health benefits. Please consult a health professional before beginning an exercise or nutrition program.