

THE PROBLEM:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS ESSENTIAL, BUT AMERICANS AREN'T ACTIVE ENOUGH!



Since lockdowns began, physical activity levels [declined sharply](#).

12%

In one week, U.S. step count declined 12%
([Source: FitBit](#))

48%

March 1 - April 6, Physical activity declined 48%
([Source: evidation](#))

EXERCISE HELPS IMMUNITY, BETTER COVID-19 OUTCOMES



Regular participation in sports among kids fell during the last economic downturn, from [45% in 2008 to 38% in 2014](#). Experts fear the impact of COVID-19 on sports “could be a lot worse than the Great Recession”

[Tom Farrey, the Aspen Institute](#)

Physical activity strengthens the immune system and may diminish [the risk of contracting some communicable diseases](#), including upper respiratory tract infections common to COVID-19.

OBESITY AND COVID-19

- » Low physical activity levels are alarming, given that obesity-related conditions [seem to increase the risks associated with COVID-19](#).
- » Except for older age, obesity (BMI > 40 kg/m²) had the strongest association with hospitalization for COVID-19, increasing the risk more than sixfold. ([Medscape](#))
- » Obesity is one of the biggest risk factors for severe COVID-19 disease, particularly among younger patients. ([Medscape](#))
- » Those with obesity are young and become very sick, very quickly ([Medscape](#))

LIFESTYLE FACTORS AND COVID-19

- » A combination of lifestyle factors, including physical inactivity, obesity, and smoking, is associated with an increased relative risk of severe COVID-19 (requiring hospitalization). ([NIH](#))
- » The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that people with heart disease and diabetes are at higher risk of COVID-19 complications. ([WorldObesity.org](#))

COVID-19 ASIDE, EXERCISE/PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS ESSENTIAL TO MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

LIFESTYLE DISEASE

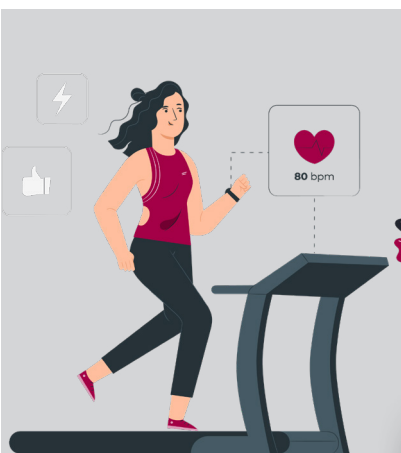
- » Exercise is a key strategy in helping people attain and maintain good metabolic health, lower risk of [diabetes](#), [cardiovascular disease](#), [high blood pressure](#), and certain [cancers](#).

MENTAL HEALTH

- » The impact of sadness and loneliness can be reduced. Exercise can help prevent depression, and be an [effective treatment](#) comparable to pharmacotherapy or psychotherapy.
- » Exercise also has [numerous benefits](#) to people with substance use disorders.

THE PHIT ACT IS PART OF THE SOLUTION

By incentivizing exercise and sport across the board, PHIT will help all those businesses, youth sports leagues, and associated professionals operating in the active lifestyle and sports space survive.



PHIT could play an important role in getting Americans up and active again by lowering the cost of physical activity through tax incentives.



PHIT would allow flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs) to pay for youth sports leagues, health club memberships, fitness equipment, exercise videos, and other ways to be active.



PHIT would give many Americans who have been unable to use their HSA/FSA funds—due to government shutdowns—additional opportunities to tap into these funds for physical activity and youth sports.



PHIT would help Americans facing significant financial hardship caused by the pandemic who can no longer afford to pay for their children's sports fees and equipment, or for exercise at the Y, Park and Rec facility, or health club.

