



*Make Every. Move Count.*

## **ACTION PLAN**

*Get active and kick off healthy habits in your organization, community or family. Start here with our step-by-step action plan, then follow the specific tips and ideas for your setting.*

### **STEP 1: GET LEADERSHIP APPROVAL**

If you need approval for an event, use the email templates provided. It has useful information you can share with your leadership about why this health-focused initiative is good for the organization and community.

### **STEP 2: CHOOSE YOUR DATE**

Choose a day in the month of April that will work the best for your event. The important thing is to kick off a month-long focus on being more physically active! Once you choose a day, get it on people's calendars right away, and use one of our communication templates to help build awareness.

### **STEP 3: PLAN YOUR CELEBRATION**

Get creative to come up with your own special touches that will make it meaningful for your organization or community. Basic event components may include: Rally or kick off, 30-minute fun walk, Healthy snacks, Prizes or giveaways, or educational opportunity (wellness fair, health assessment, presentation, etc.)

### **STEP 4: SPREAD THE WORD**

Start sending daily tips to get everyone moving. Promote your event by using the emails, social media posts and articles/handouts we've provided. Invite others to get involved. Display posters in common areas to build awareness. Your toolkit includes free promotional materials.

### **STEP 5: CELEBRATE**

Take a breath, and start moving! This is an opportunity for millions of Americans to take steps toward a longer, stronger and healthier life, but it's also about having fun and creating community. Don't forget to enjoy the day!

### **WAYS TO MAKE IT MORE FUN**

Make the Four-Week [Activity Challenge](#) a competition among departments or teams, friends or family, and offer prizes as incentives for achieving your goals.



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## **IDEAS FOR PARTICIPATION**

### **PROMOTE AND BUILD EXCITEMENT**

Building excitement is important for a successful event. There are many ways to do this, including using social media to increase awareness and engagement, having your CEO or senior leader send organization-wide voicemails and/or emails.

You can use our communication templates or create your own.

Use giveaways and incentives. Visit [shopheart.org](https://shopheart.org) for some options.

A week or two before the event, hold a one-day walking competition among teams or departments. Ask everyone to track their total time or steps on a specific day, using a device, smartphone or paper tracker. The winning department could receive some sort of reward — jeans day, lunch or time off.

Setting a goal or making a pledge are often great ways for people to kick off a healthy lifestyle.

Ask each employee to write down one goal or pledge to start living healthy and to post it at their work-space. Incorporate it into the Four-Week Activity Challenge.

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### **DAY OF EVENT**

Make it a “casual day.” Wearing sneakers or comfortable shoes will make it easier for everyone to participate. Encourage them to wear red shoelaces as a symbol of their support of the event. Host a walk. Set a time for your senior leaders to lead employees/members on a 30-minute walk. This could be indoors or outdoors. Map a route in advance to avoid surprises. Kick off the day with a rally. Ask your CEO or senior leader to address employees/members using the information in this guide or the provided presentation.

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### **WAYS TO MAKE IT MORE FUN**

Make the Four-Week Activity Challenge a competition among departments or teams, and offer prizes. Hold another rally or a picnic to celebrate your success at the end of the four weeks. Keep the momentum going by participating in the Heart Walk. Have fun and raise funds to save lives from two of our leading killers — heart disease and stroke. Find details for your local event at [HeartWalk.org](https://HeartWalk.org). Encourage your employees/members to form ongoing walking clubs using our tips and resources at [Heart.org/WalkingClubs](https://Heart.org/WalkingClubs).



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## COMMUNICATION TEMPLATE

*Use these templates to communicate about and promote your event. Customize them to fit your needs. Add a personal touch when possible for greater appeal to your audience.*

### **SAMPLE EMAIL TO MANAGER FOR APPROVAL**

Hello <LEADERSHIP NAME>,

I would like your approval to kick off a healthier way of living for our employees by getting Healthy For Good with the American Heart Association. The Healthy For Good movement is designed to inspire all Americans to live healthier lives and create lasting change. It focuses on the simple idea that making small, simple changes today can create a difference for generations to come. During the month of April, the American Heart Association is encouraging Americans to move more and commit to being physically active.

We can have our event any day in April and promote being active throughout the month. We'll get free resources to help our employees get on a healthier path. Health care is one of the most significant cost pressures facing companies today. Consider these sobering facts:

- The costs of cardiovascular diseases and stroke, including health care expenditures and lost productivity, total more than \$316 billion.
- About 69 percent of American adults (more than 159 million) are overweight or obese — and this number continues to grow. At the same time, about 30 percent report participating in no leisure time physical activity.
- One in three American adults (about 92.1 million) are living with some form of cardiovascular disease or the after-effects of stroke. And for African-Americans, that number is nearly one in two.
- About 580,000 people in the U.S. have a first-time heart attack each year, and about 210,000 have recurrent heart attacks.
- Each year, about 795,000 people have a stroke, the number one preventable cause of disability.

*Source: American Heart Association, 2017 Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics Update.*

By participating, <ORGANIZATION NAME> can play an important role in getting our employees and our nation healthier while providing a fun activity that fosters morale, team-building, and lets our employees know that we care about their health and support their efforts to improve it!

Healthiest of Wishes,

<YOUR NAME>



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## **COMMUNICATION TEMPLATE (CONT.)**

### **BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT**

Hello <STAFF/DEPARTMENT NAME> -

Step by step, day after day, you walk to make progress. Every day we take thousands of steps to get where we need to go. Now we can take steps toward a healthier lifestyle and support the American Heart Association.

On <EVENT DATE>, <ORGANIZATION NAME> will join the American Heart Association in getting Healthy for Good! During the month of April, the American Heart Association is encouraging Americans to move more and commit to being physically active. We'll have some fun events on this day including:  
<BULLET INSERT EVENTS – RALLY, KICK OFF, WALK, ETC.>

Please put it on your calendar now. More details will be coming soon!

Healthiest of Wishes,

<YOUR NAME>

### **DETAILED ANNOUNCEMENT**

Hello <STAFF/DEPARTMENT NAME> -

On <EVENT DATE>, we'll join the American Heart Association to get Healthy For Good! Physical inactivity is a huge national problem. About 70 percent of American adults are overweight, and more than 80 percent don't get enough physical activity.

The American Heart Association recommends at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week for adults and 60 minutes per day for children and adolescents. Most of us right here at <ORGANIZATION NAME> don't meet that standard. And it means we're at greater risk for heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases. But we're not going to take it sitting down.

We'll join millions of Americans as they pledge to live a healthier lifestyle and get physically active. Here's what you can do to join in the celebration:

- Show your support and wear your sneakers with red shoelaces on <EVENT DATE>.
- Join our rally and 30-minute fun walk at <TIME> at <LOCATION>.
- Pledge to live a healthier lifestyle and start a habit of daily walking at <WORK, SCHOOL, HOME>. Follow our designated Walking Path or another route, and invite others to join you.
- Visit [Heart.org/MoveMore](https://www.heart.org/MoveMore) and use the American Heart Association's free tips and tools to stay motivated on your walking program.

Please join us for this fun group celebration that can help us all live longer, stronger, healthier lives.

Wishing you a day full of health,

<YOUR NAME>



Healthy For Good™