



Physical Activity

What is Physical Activity?

Physical Activity can be anything that involves moving your body and using energy at an intensity that makes you warm and breathe a bit harder than usual. Physical activity doesn't have to be playing a sport or going to the gym, activities such as walking, washing the car, climbing the stairs, and doing the garden can all help to improve our health.

Why is Physical Activity important?

By incorporating Physical Activity into your lifestyle you are less likely to develop coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis and type II diabetes. In addition, participating in physical activity can improve your mood, sleep and alleviate stress and anxiety. Combining physical activity with a balanced diet can help you to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. In older adults, physical activity can enhance mobility, independence, general quality of life and ability to carry out daily tasks.

How much Physical Activity is enough?

Adults should accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week. This is equivalent to walking briskly. It's possible to achieve your 30 minute target by making simple changes to your everyday routine-walking instead of driving for short journeys, fit physical activity into your lunchtime or find activities you can do as a family or with friends. You don't have to do all 30 minutes of physical activity in one go. Many people find short bursts of activity throughout the day are easier to achieve than 30 minutes continuously.

Children and young people (5-18 years) should do 60 minutes of activity. This should include weight bearing activities that put a bit more stress on the bones and joints. Choosing activities that you enjoy will make you more motivated and in turn more likely to stick at them.

How do I start?

Consider how you can fit physical activity into your lifestyle. Walking requires no special equipment or expense so is an ideal way for many people to get started. Consider active commuting. Many employers now promote schemes to reduce car use and promote active lifestyles. By introducing small changes you can gain huge benefits to your health and wellbeing.

Physical activity releases chemicals in the brain that have an effect on your mood so when you don't feel like being physically active try to remind yourself how good you'll feel afterwards.

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