

Exercise - everyday activities

To keep healthy we need to be active every day in as many ways as we can. Regular physical activity isn't just important for our physical health. It benefits our social and emotional health too.

Being active in small ways throughout the day can make a big difference. Short bouts of 10 minutes can be beneficial when they add up to 30 minutes on most days of the week. You can also plan physical activity by doing things such as going to the gym or playing sport.

There are lots of everyday activities that provide an opportunity to be active and provide health benefits.

Make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines. The human body was designed to move but the technology of today has reduced much of the opportunity for human movement.

Exercise instead of driving

Cars reduce how much we walk. Suggestions instead of driving include:

- Walk to the corner shops instead of driving.
- Cycle to work one or two days every week.
- Walk to the bus stop or train station, and catch public transport to work.
- If taking the bus or tram, get off one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Park the car a distance from the entrance of the shops and walk, rather than parking right out the front.
- Wash and vacuum the car yourself instead of taking it to a car wash.

Exercise in the workplace

Suggestions include:

- Take the stairs instead of the lift or escalator.
- Make your next meeting a walking meeting or at least a standing meeting.
- Use at least half of your lunch break for a brisk walk, even if it is only 10–15 minutes.
- Stretch at your desk.
- When you need to talk to a colleague, don't use the phone or internal email – get up from your desk and walk over to them.
- If your job involves sitting at a desk all day, make sure you get up and walk around for a few minutes every hour.

Exercise at home

Suggestions include:

- Listen to your favourite music or the radio and dance around the house.
- Play actively with your children.
- Walk the dog more often, or make your usual walk 10 minutes longer.
- Get stuck into your garden. Mow, rake leaves and get some planting done.
- Incorporate a few more physical activities into your family's leisure time. For example, you could take the children to the park or kick a ball around the backyard.

Where to get help

- Your doctor

Things to remember

- Being active in small ways throughout the day can make a big difference.
- Short bouts of 10 minutes can be beneficial when they add up to 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- There are lots of everyday activities that provide an opportunity to be active and provide health benefits.
- Make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Bluearth Foundation

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