

Exercise

Making your daily routine more active

Being physically active is a fun and practical way of improving and maintaining your health.

Every step is a step in the right direction, with even small increases in physical activity leading to reductions in weight, blood pressure and stress.



There is no doubt that doing more and sitting less is good for your health. All you have to do to enjoy a healthier life is build some activity into your daily schedule:

- At work
- With the family
- Generally

Move more at work

Busy working lives can limit opportunities to move more at work. Research has found that some employees spend between 5-8 hours per day sitting at desks and this in itself has been recognised as an independent risk factor for chronic disease. Reducing sitting and increasing walking at work can moderate these risk factors as well as improve energy levels, work satisfaction and social networking.

Tips for moving more at work

- Walk at lunchtime
- Walk more when commuting – park further away, walk to work etc
- Use the stairs
- Walk and talk meetings
- Get out of your chair every 60 minutes to move and stretch

Move more with the family

Children spend an average of five hours and 20 minutes in front of screens each day, a shock report has revealed. The report from the market research agency Childwise showed that boys spend 2.7 hours a day watching TV and 1.9 hours on-line. Girls spend 2.6 hours watching TV but more time on the Internet - 2.1 hours a day. Adults aren't always much better!

Tips for moving more with the family

- Limit TV/computer time
- Be active as a family
- Involve children in school, community sports and active pastimes
- Schedule activity into diaries
- Play sport and games with your children

Move more – general tips

Choose the right type of activity:

- The one that is right for your body - if it hurts stop
- One that you will enjoy - you are more likely to keep it up
- Activities that take no more than 15 minutes to travel to – keep it as convenient as you can

Set your minimum daily targets:

- 30 minutes per day
- At an intensity which makes you feel slightly out of breath and warm but where you can still talk comfortably while exercising
- Plan your sessions in your diary as appointments. Make sure you try to keep these appointments with yourself.
- Always apply the 80 / 20 rule – always try to achieve 80% of your goals or targets

Exercise

Making your daily routine more active contd.

Building more physical activity into your daily life:

- Washing and waxing the car for 45-60 minutes by hand instead of going to the car wash.
- Gardening for 30-45 minutes.
- Walking 1.75 miles in 35 minutes (20 min/1 mile).
- Cycling 5 miles in 30 minutes.
- Pushing a pram 1.5 miles in 30 minutes.
- Raking leaves for 30 minutes.
- Using stairs instead of the lift or escalator.
- When at home, climb the stairs as often as possible - for variety take the stairs two at a time, or step up the pace.
- Walk or cycle more; drive less.
- Park an extra block from your destination or park as far away as possible in the car park.
- Permanently lose the TV remote control and get up from your chair more.
- Mow the lawn with a manual mower.
- View chores like lawn mowing, dusting and hovering as opportunities to exercise.
- Turn off the TV and play with the children.
- Learn a new sport.
- Do exercises or pedal a stationary bike while watching TV.
- Take a brisk 10-minute walk in the morning, at lunch or after dinner.

Take action now!

Make this week the time you decide to become more active - it will help you to manage stress, feel better, become fitter and it will also help you to shed a few pounds.

30 minutes a day is not much to ask - make the time:

- Set yourself a daily target - e.g. 30 minutes
- Plan your activity into your weekly diary
- Fit activity into your day - healthy commuting, lunchtime walks, evening walks after dinner
- Fit activity into work - have walk and talk meetings, take the stairs etc
- Choose an activity you enjoy - gym/class/walking/cycling/swimming/sport
- Find an exercise buddy and involve the family in activity

