



How to Become Active and Improve Your Fitness

Are you doing enough Physical Activity?

Government and fitness experts generally recommend we do 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as brisk walking) on at least five days a week which can be in one session or broken down into three 10 minute blocks throughout the day.

Currently only 37% of men and 25% of women are managing this.

Benefits of being Active	Type of Activity														
<p>Staying physically active helps you to feel more confident and involved in life; you are also likely to stay independent longer as you get older. Evidence shows the benefits of being active include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A greater sense of well-being and a powerful tool to reducing stress ▪ Improves sleep quality ▪ Enhances energy levels ▪ Greatly reduces the risks of getting type 2 diabetes ▪ Reduces your risk of developing coronary heart disease ▪ Reduces high blood pressure ▪ Promotes bone density to protect against osteoporosis ▪ Reduces your overall risk of cancer ▪ Helps to maintain a healthy weight in combination with a balanced diet ▪ Reduces your risk of depression and can help to treat it 	<p>The signs that you're doing moderate intensity activity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an increase in your breathing rate ▪ an increase in your heart rate to a point where you can feel your pulse ▪ feeling warm <p>The best type of activity is one that makes you feel slightly warmer, breathe a bit heavier, and gets your heart and pulse pumping faster than usual. You should still be able to talk without panting in between your words.</p> <p>Below are some activity suggestions but there are plenty of others to choose from</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>▪ Housework</td> <td>▪ Bowls</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Washing the car</td> <td>▪ Keep fit classes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Gardening</td> <td>▪ Swimming</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Walking the dog</td> <td>▪ Golf</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Cycling</td> <td>▪ Football</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Dancing</td> <td>▪ Gym-based activity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▪ Yoga/Pilates/T'ai Chi</td> <td>▪ Tennis/racquet sports</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	▪ Housework	▪ Bowls	▪ Washing the car	▪ Keep fit classes	▪ Gardening	▪ Swimming	▪ Walking the dog	▪ Golf	▪ Cycling	▪ Football	▪ Dancing	▪ Gym-based activity	▪ Yoga/Pilates/T'ai Chi	▪ Tennis/racquet sports
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Getting Started

- If you are exercising for the first time, then start gently and build up gradually. If you are unsure about trying a particular activity, seek professional advice or talk to your GP first.
- If you have a medical condition and are unsure about starting to exercise again, check with your GP first.
- An easy way to start is with a short five-minute brisk walk, gradually increasing over the next few weeks to a full 30 minutes of activity.
- Join a team, club or community centre where you could meet new friends and find activities that you can do as a family or with others, this can also help to keep you motivated.

However unfit you feel, it's never too late to start becoming active and you don't need to join a gym

Top Tips to Help You Become Active

These Top Tips are designed to be used together with **How to Become Active**

- **Set yourself some short and long-term goals**, the success will give you a sense of satisfaction and further motivation to keep up the new lifestyle
- **Picture yourself achieving your goal**, not being out of breath playing with the kids, completing a local charity fun run, or fitting into smaller jeans/clothes and then imagine what it will feel like
- **Keep reminding yourself why you started exercising in the first place**, look for a photo of yourself when you were more active and put it in a prominent place
- **Try out different sports or activities until you find something you like**, such as a dance or an aerobics class, join a local team and make new friends with a common interest
- **Make plans for the weekend to include an activity**; this can be a good time to socialise with friends and family and be active without the same time pressures
- **Exercise improves your mood** and helps you think more clearly, reduces anxiety, stress and depression by releasing the body's own natural feel good hormones. Just remind yourself how good you'll feel afterwards
- **Exercise at home.** Work out to one of the computer fitness games or try a fitness DVD. Get a different one out from the library each week for variety
- **Work with a personal trainer**, if you have any existing injury or fitness concern, a fully qualified trainer could help design a specific plan for you
- **For people in their 60s and over the key activity needs are for mobility and flexibility**, so a mix of activities is important for men and women alike to keep up their suppleness, strength and stamina
- **School age children need an hour or more physical activity every day** to help develop strength, endurance and flexibility
- **Get yourself a Pedometer:** This small device clips onto your waistband and counts your steps. A great motivator to help increase your daily activity

If you need advice to become more active and to find out what is appropriate for you, start by talking to your GP

The difference between try and triumph is just a little umph! – Marvin Phillips