

PH3 I

THE BENEFITS OF DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Reduces your risk of serious health problems (e.g. heart disease and stroke).

Helps you to **maintain a healthy body weight**.

Helps you maintain the ability to perform every day tasks with ease and will **assist you in passing your annual fitness test**.

Improves self-esteem and reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Physical activity guidelines for adults (aged 19 – 64 years)

Adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more (i.e. 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on at least 5 days a week).

Comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity every week, or combinations of moderate and vigorous intensity activity.

Adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week that work all the major muscle groups.

Refer to DNAS factsheet PH12 'Physical Activity' for more information.

TOO MUCH SITTING

- > Research suggests that **too much sitting during** the day is **bad for your health**.
- > Individuals who spend long periods of time sitting have been found to have an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and premature death.
- > Sitting for long periods is also associated with poor mental health (e.g. depression).
- > **Sedentary behaviour (sitting) is increasingly common**, where the majority of adults do desk jobs, travel in motor vehicles and are sedentary in their leisure time.
- > Even individuals who meet the current physical activity guidelines might engage in high levels of sedentary behaviour.
- > On average adults in the UK spend about **9.5 hours per day being sedentary**, and this typically increases with age to over 10 hours per day.

SITTING LESS AND MOVING MORE

- > It is recommended that in addition to getting your 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity a day, you **should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (sitting) for extended periods**.
- > Create your own 'get active action plan' to help you get moving more, focussing on:
 - Activities that fit seamlessly with your activities at work and your daily life;
 - Activities which do not require you to change into your PT rig;
 - Activities that you can do with your family.

SITTING LESS AND MOVING MORE: AT WORK

- > Use the following ideas as inspiration to reduce your sitting time at work:
 - Take the stairs instead of the lift, and walk up escalators instead of standing still. Take a walk break every time you take a water/toilet break.
 - Walk to a colleague's desk instead of emailing or calling them.
 - Alternate working while seated and standing.
 - Do not use the nearest toilets; use ones that you have to walk further to.

SITTING LESS AND MOVING MORE: AT HOME / IN YOUR LEISURE TIME

- > Use the following ideas as inspiration to reduce your sitting time whilst at home:

Set time limits on sedentary behaviour.

Plan in some active time when you are usually sedentary (e.g. go for a walk in the evenings, join an exercise class or cook a healthy meal from scratch).

Swap some TV time for more active tasks or hobbies.

During advertisement breaks get active... do some heel kicks, squats or leg extensions for the duration of the break.

When at home cooking do squats whilst stood at the cooker or press ups against the work surface or a wall.

You do not have to be outside to be active... do some housework or DIY.

Get the rest of your family involved... play games with the children, go on family walks, go on a bike ride or get them involved in cleaning the house.

Stand instead of sitting whenever you can.

At the supermarket carry your shopping rather than using a trolley.

Tend to your garden – digging, weeding and mowing are a great way to be active.

SITTING LESS AND MOVING MORE: TRAVEL TIME

- > Use the following ideas as inspiration to reduce your sitting time whilst travelling:

Cycle, run or walk part, if not all, of your journey to work.

Walk instead of drive, whenever you can. If you need to drive, park your car in a car park that is further away from your place of work and walk the rest of the way.

If you catch the bus to work, alight one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way.

Stand on the train or bus.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- > British Heart Foundation: <https://www.bhf.org.uk>
- > Defence Nutrition Advisory Service (DNAS): NAVYINM-EMSDNAS@mod.gov.uk