

Physical Activity

To reduce your risk of cancer





How do I get started?

It's easy!

Find an activity or a sport that you **enjoy**, is convenient and affordable. If you have children, try taking up an activity that you can enjoy as a family or change your routine and walk to school instead of driving.

Get friends to join you as they will provide company and motivation. If you plan to meet a friend it is more likely you will go ahead with the activity.

Incorporate as much incidental activity into your day as you can. For example, park the car further away than usual from work to get some extra walking in.

Week by week, **set goals** and challenge yourself to build up your physical activity levels.

Having a pedometer (a small device that measures the number of steps taken) will help you keep track of how many steps you've taken and how far you have walked.



Tips to increase the activity in your day

- Take the dog for regular walks
- Consider different activities such as playing golf, badminton or tai-chi
- Do gardening or vigorous housework
- While watching television, do stretching exercises
- Get off the bus one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way
- Start a walking group with work colleagues during your lunch break
- Go and talk to your colleagues instead of calling or sending an email
- Aim to get at least 10,000 steps or more a day if you have a pedometer
- Try different walking locations to keep it interesting
- Train for an event, such as the City to Surf. This is great for motivation!





Do I need to see my doctor before starting an exercise program?

- If you are well and do not have any medical concerns or questions and plan to be physically active at moderate-intensity for 30 minutes, you do not need to consult with your doctor before beginning.
- If you have any cardiovascular symptoms (e.g. chest pain) or a history of cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, diabetes, other active chronic disease, any medical concern or you are pregnant, you should consult your doctor before increasing the intensity or duration of your activity.
- If you have any doubts or concerns at all about starting or increasing your activity levels you should consult your doctor.

Does physical activity reduce my risk of cancer?

At least half of all cancers can be prevented with a healthy lifestyle. Along with other lifestyle behaviours, physical activity is a vital factor in the fight against cancer. Regular physical activity is likely to protect against cancer of the bowel, breast (postmenopausal) and endometrium (lining of the womb) and has also been linked to a reduced risk of cancer of the lung, pancreas and breast (premenopausal).



Studies have shown that the most active people are 40% less likely to get bowel cancer than people who are the least active.

Being physically active also helps to prevent overweight and obesity which are risk factors for oesophageal, pancreatic, bowel, breast (postmenopausal), endometrial and kidney cancers.

Regular physical activity also:

Reduces your risk of:	Promotes:
Cardiovascular disease	Balance
Constipation	Bone strength
Falls and disability	Coordination
High blood pressure	Energy
High cholesterol	Flexibility
Osteoarthritis	General well-being
Osteoporosis	Muscle strength and function
Stress	
Type 2 diabetes	

Physical activity can also have a positive effect on the environment as walking or cycling instead of driving a car creates less greenhouse gases, pollution and traffic congestion. Active transport also helps to save on fuel costs and being physically active can make you feel great!



How much physical activity do I need to do?

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Adults

1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.
2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.
3. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days.
4. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous activity for extra health and fitness.

For **cancer prevention** the more physically active you are the better. Therefore as fitness improves aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 30 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity every day.

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children (5-18 years):

1. Children and young people should participate in at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.
2. Children and young people should not spend more than 2 hours a day using electronic media for entertainment (e.g. computer games, internet, TV), particularly during daylight hours.

How do I know what type or combination of physical activity suits me?

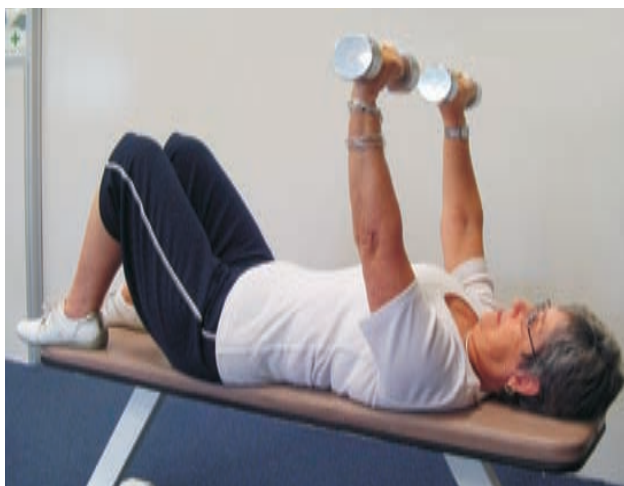
For the greatest benefit enjoy a variety of different types of activities, including:

Aerobic activity (cardiovascular) uses large muscle groups and results in an increased heart rate and improves heart and lung function. To get the most benefit from aerobic activity, it needs to be intense, frequent and of adequate duration. Follow the recommendation of at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every day, aiming for 60 minutes of moderate-intensity or 30 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity every day.





Resistance activity (weights) increases muscle strength, function, endurance and bone strength. Resistance exercises should be performed 3-4 times a week, on non-consecutive days. Complete 1-4 sets of 8-10 different exercises each session. Choose exercises that target the major muscles of the arms, legs and body. Each set should include 8-12 repetitions of the movement. It is important to perform the correct technique to avoid injury and rest for 60-90 seconds between sets.



Flexibility (stretches) lengthens muscles and tendons and improves flexibility and strength of joints and muscles. Include stretches before and after activity and/or on their own 3-4 times a week. It is important to stretch the major muscles of the arms, legs and body. Hold stretches for 15-30 seconds.



How do I know the intensity of the activity I am doing?

Use the **Talk Test**. While performing **light-intensity** activity you should be able to sing. During **moderate-intensity** activity you should be able to carry on a conversation comfortably and during **vigorous-intensity** exercise you should be too out of breath to carry on a conversation.

Types of physical activity

Active transport: using physical activity as transport (e.g. by foot or bicycle) to get from one destination to another. Use of public transport is also included if it involves walking or cycling to pick-up and drop-off points.

Incidental activity: when physical activity is done as part of your daily routine. It is usually spontaneous and convenient (e.g. taking the stairs instead of the lift).

Planned activity: when you set out to be active such as meeting a friend for a walk, going for a swim at the local pool or cycling around the river.

Organised sport: by enrolling in sports such as tennis, football, netball or swimming you make a commitment to attend. As well as the physical benefits, organised sport is a great way to meet new friends and helps to develop teamwork skills.



Remember to be **SunSmart** and protect yourself in five ways when being physically active outdoors:



Slip on sun protective clothing

Cover up as much of the skin as possible.



Slop on SPF 30+ sunscreen

Make sure it is broad spectrum and water-resistant.



Slap on a hat

Wear a brimmed hat that covers your face, head, neck and ears.



Seek shade

Make use of natural or built shade - or bring your own.



Slide on some sunglasses

Close fitting wrap-around styles offer the best protection.

And remember to take extra care between **10am** and **3pm** when UV radiation is most intense.





Is physical activity beneficial while I am on cancer treatment?

Research suggests that physical activity has a beneficial role for most patients during and after cancer treatment.

Cancer patients often experience side effects during cancer treatment. Physical activity can help combat many of the side effects, including:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Anaemia
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle wasting
- Depression and anxiety

Regular physical activity should complement your cancer treatment. After your treatment has finished, being physically active may help prevent the cancer coming back, and can help boost your energy levels and general quality of life.

For more information talk to your doctor and contact the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20 for our 'Exercise for people living with cancer' booklet.

What I can do to reduce my risk of cancer:

- Stop smoking
- Move your body
- Stay in shape
- Eat for health
- Be SunSmart
- Avoid alcohol
- Talk to your doctor about cancer

For further information contact:



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*Cancer Council WA is a non-government,
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