



Health & Wellbeing Bulletin

Getting Active

The benefits of being active for physical and mental health are huge. Being active helps release chemicals in your brain (endorphins), which have a positive effect on your mood, not to mention the benefits to your heart, lungs, muscles and bones. Getting out and being active is also a great way to manage stress.

According to the Health Service Executive, regular physical activity can help you reduce the risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and cancer. For children and young people being active helps reduce their risk of developing these diseases in later life too. Increased levels of physical activity will help reduce body fat and maintain a healthy weight.

Being physically active does not mean working out for hours everyday but can be as simple as walking a little more and as part of your daily routine.

The World Health Organisation recommend that we do 30-40 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity at least 5 days of the week or 20-60 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity 3-5 times per week to help reduce your risk of cancer.

Moderate activity

Moderate activity is anything that makes you breath as hard as you do during a brisk walk.

During moderate activities, you'll notice a slight increase in heart rate and breathing, but you may not break a sweat.

Vigorous Activity

Vigorous Activities generally engage large muscle groups and cause a noticeable increase in heart rate, breathing depth and frequency, and sweating.

Ways to Increase Activity

- Increase activities such as walking to work/shops, gardening, taking the stairs instead of the lift, walking the dog every day.
- Engage in 30-40 minutes of moderate aerobic activity 5-7 times per week or 20-60 mins of vigorous aerobic activity 3-5 times per week.
- Strength and Flexibility activities should be included 2-3 times per week.
- Other leisure activities such as golf or ball games should be included 1-2 times per week.
- Cut down on watching television or sitting for long periods of time and computer game use.

Being active is fun for all the family. Research shows that children whose parents are active are more than 5 times as likely to be active than those whose parents are not. Getting active does not have to be expensive and most of the ideas on this Bulletin are low cost or completely free.

Staying Motivated

There can be days when it is hard to find the motivation to get active. Setting goals is a practical tip to help keep up enthusiasm:

Setting long and short term goals can provide you with a sense of satisfaction and further motivation to keep up your new lifestyle.

Keep your goals SMART

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-based

For example, rather than saying you will get fit by the summer, start by setting a more specific goal of an hour long fitness class every week or keeping a note of time spent on an activity looking over it and seeing how much you have improved as time goes on.

Exercising releases chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin, that have a strong effect on your mood, helping reduce anxiety, stress and depression as well as the physical effects such as boosting the immune system and helping prevent diseases such as cancer and diabetes

It's a small change to your lifestyle that can make big changes to your life.

So get started today and have fun.

Issued by QUINN-healthcare Health@Work Department. Call us on 1890 907 088 or e-mail och@quinn-healthcare.com

Simple changes to your daily activities

- Use the stairs rather than the lift
- Walk or cycle to work or school or your local shop
- Exercise with your workmates during your lunch break
- Take the dog for a brisk walk
- Walk to your colleagues desk instead of sending an email
- Join a sports team or start your own club at work such as walking
- Take your kids for a walk, creating some family time while exercising.