



JUST MOVE

Physical activity is a general term used to describe movement of the body that uses energy. It can be as simple as walking. Some people think about getting active as getting fit and assume that it means vigorous physical activity. It doesn't.

There are many types of physical activity: exercise, sport, play, dance and active living such as walking, housework and gardening.

What are the recommendations about increasing physical activity?

It is recommended that we aim to be moderately physically active for at least 30 minutes per day. However this does not have to be in one go. It can be divided into three ten minute sections or two fifteen minute sections.

Many medical conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart failure, angina, or after a heart attack all benefit from regular physical activity.

If you feel unwell, sick, dizzy, very tired or experience any pain STOP!
If your symptoms don't settle or come back later see your doctor.

How should you feel?

These are the normal symptoms you should experience when you are being moderately active:

- you should feel your heart beating a bit faster
- you should be breathing more rapidly and deeply but be able to carry on a conversation
- you should feel warmer
- you should begin to feel sweaty

Some of the benefits of regular physical activity

- helps lower cholesterol
- helps lower high blood pressure
- helps control diabetes
- helps to keep weight down
- strengthens muscles
- strengthens bones
- reduces effects of aging and keeps you independent longer
- gives you sense of well being
- reduces stress and depression
- improves balance and lessens risk of injury
- improves reflex time
- keeps joints supple
- helps you sleep better



What are the barriers to being more physically active?

Research has shown that there are a wide range of personal, social and environmental barriers and that these differ depending on our age and stage of life. Fortunately, many of these barriers can be tackled. Finding confidence in your ability, deciding to change and finding support will overcome most barriers.

Common barriers	Suggested solutions
Preferring to do other things	Its all in your attitude don't let it be a big deal and it won't be.
Feeling too fat or overweight	Start slowly. Remember increasing your activity will help you to lose a bit of weight as well.
Do not enjoy exercise	Don't think of it as exercise, think of it as having some fun and getting moving at the same time.
Being too old	It's never too late to be more active. Improved general health and longer independence can be great motivation.
Lack of time due to other commitments	Build activity into your normal day and you won't have to put aside special time.
Ill health, injury or disability	Many medical conditions benefit from regular physical activity. Speak to your doctor before you begin. If you ever need an inhaler or a GTN spray you should keep one with you at all times.
Lack of suitable local facilities	Being physically active does not have to mean doing a sport. Think of other activities you would enjoy.
Lack of money	You can be more active at work and at home. Walking and dancing are free.
Lack of transport	Some local councils have 'Swim buses' or free transport. If you join a club a fellow member might be able to take you.
Nobody to go with	Look for a club or group that meets regularly and you will always have company
Put off by traffic, road safety or the environment	Choose from a variety of activities that can be done inside.
Put off by the weather	Choose an activity with an all weather option or alternative inside venue
Don't have the skills or confidence to do it	Being more active does not involve high skills. Pick something you enjoy.

[Barriers identified by Health Education Population Survey 1997, Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS)]





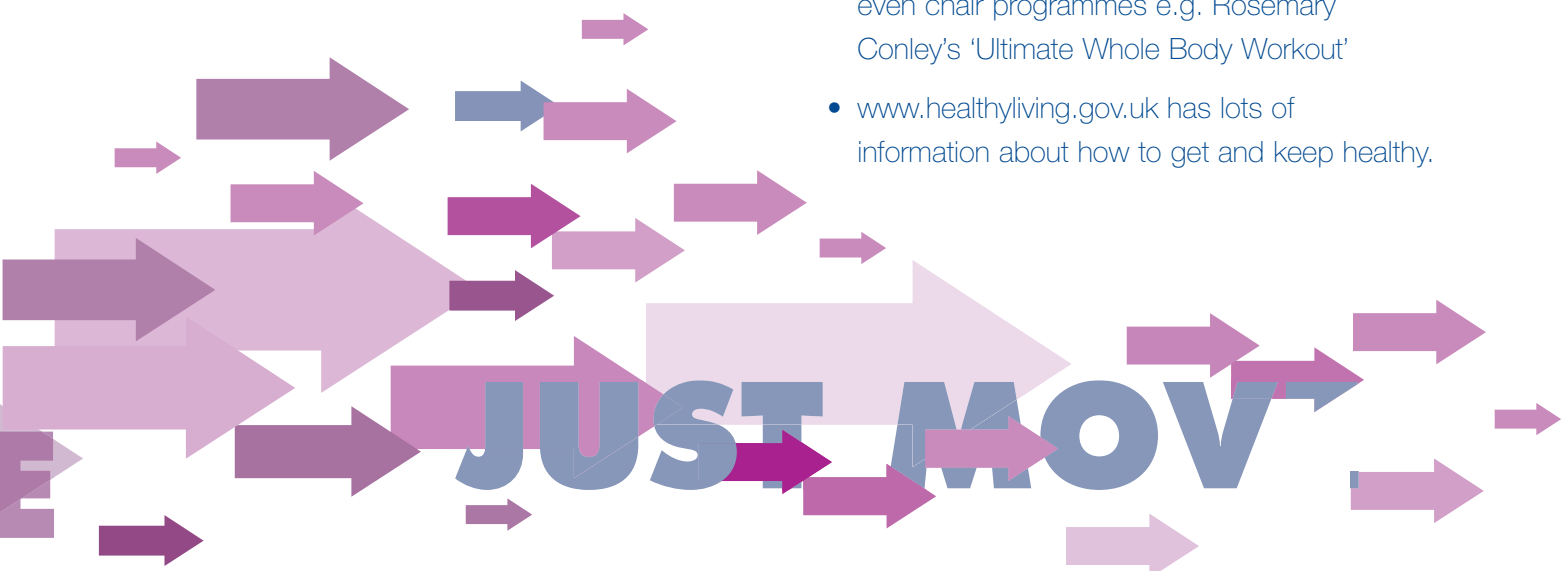
Ways to do more

Walking, swimming, stair climbing, cycling and dancing are good examples of the kind of activity that people can do. However if you are not able to do these kinds of things it does not mean that you can not benefit from increasing your physical activity. Anything that gets you moving is a good thing.

- Tap toes heels and fingers while seated watching television or listening to music.
- Move around during adverts.
- Walk short distances instead of taking the car.
- Put on some music and have a bit of a dance.
- Hang up some washing, do gentle housework.
- Weed the garden or rake the lawn.
- Walk a dog.
- Play with children.
- Take the stairs (within reason).
- Do simple exercises from your chair.

Where to get help

- Many people feel that individualised exercise programmes taught by appropriate professionals are best. Once competent these exercises can be carried on alone. So if you are not sure what to do seek the help of someone who knows.
- Many local councils and community groups run activity programmes for all ages. These can benefit your health as well as help you to meet other people and to have a good time too. Look under leisure and recreation/ community services in the phone book.
- Many local councils organise Health Walks, where the benefits of walking are combined with the company of other people, using risk assessed routes which ensure safety and easy access. 'Paths to Health' provides local contacts and other walking projects in each area. This information can be found on the 'Paths for All' website www.pathsforall.org.uk
- There is a range of exercise videos available, some of which include all levels of ability and even chair programmes e.g. Rosemary Conley's 'Ultimate Whole Body Workout'
- www.healthyliving.gov.uk has lots of information about how to get and keep healthy.





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If you have been inactive for some time but think you would like to get moving here is some advice about how to get started.

- Choose an activity that you will enjoy and that has all weather options
- Dress comfortably
- Wear appropriate footwear
- Consider the weather before you begin if it is an outside activity
- Proceed with caution
- Don't overdo it – if in pain stop
- Begin slowly and gradually increase
- Begin with warm up
- Stretch muscles slowly to avoid injury
- Warm up should be about 15 minutes – slowly raising your body temperature with low impact exercises. At the beginning this is all you need to do
- Aim to be active at a moderate intensity of activity for 30 minutes
- Don't overexert yourself
- If you do your chosen activity regularly you will soon be able to lengthen the time and increase the intensity
- Cool down slowly let your body slow itself back down to rest.



Scottish Charity No. SCO18761

Phone the Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland Advice Line for more information about increasing physical activity
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