

Many of us don't take enough exercise but can be put off by the thought of it. It doesn't have to mean joining a gym or running every day. There are ways to have a more active lifestyle without changing your life.

How much?

Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day. It doesn't have to be done all at once - you'll be surprised how easy it is to fit in a few 10 minute sessions.

Work

Tips to make your journey more active:

- Get off the bus a stop earlier every now and then and walk the last part.
- Try parking further away than normal - even a small walk is better than none!
- Walk up escalators or take the stairs instead of using the lift - start off just one flight below.
- Cycle to work - it'll save you money too! Plan a route avoiding busy roads and try it out first with a friend at the weekend.
- Go for a walk around the block at lunchtime - make it a regular activity with some colleagues.
- If you work sitting at a desk, break the time up with more active jobs (even if it's only filling the kettle), stretch your legs and move about.
- Instead of emailing, go and speak to a colleague.
- Join a local gym (you may be entitled to a corporate discount) or find out about lunchtime activity classes nearby.

Home

There are many ways to fit exercise into your spare time - try some of the following ideas to get you started:

- Walk to the cinema or to the shops instead of taking the car.
- Avoid the jams - park in the furthest parking bay at the supermarket.
- Go out and play with the kids - they'll love you for it!
- Get on your bike and check out the local cycle paths.
- Find a friend who also wants to get active - go for a walk or swim together.
- When you're watching TV, get up during the ad breaks and do something else - only watch what you really want to watch.
- If you have a garden, mow the lawn so you can get you and your garden in shape for summer!
- Housework counts! Hoovering, dusting and cleaning - try doing it to music and get moving - dancing is very good exercise and will make you feel fab.

Getting active will soon make you feel better, have more energy and be healthier. Once you've started, why not try something new - footie with your mates, tennis in the park or cycle rides with the family. It's the quality as well as the quantity that counts - remember that exercise should be enjoyable otherwise you won't do it anymore so find something that you like and stick to it. You'll soon notice the difference and so will everyone else!

Did you know?

70% of children aged 7-16 years said they would be more likely to eat healthy and get active if their parents were doing it & 68% of parents said the same.

Source: DPP / NOP World surveyed 1013 children aged 7-16 and 756 parents of children aged 0-15 between 6-22 August 2004 in Great Britain.

Did you know?

Housework & DIY can be good for you. Average calories burned for 30 mins of activity:

Cooking - 75
Housework - 200
Painting - 160
Sanding Floor - 135
Gardening - 150
Washing the car - 145
Ironing - 71



Did you know?

Your GP might be able to 'prescribe' exercise for you if they think your health would be significantly improved by it. This could mean discounts on classes at your local leisure centre or even free swimming at your local pool.