

Exercise

Benefits of exercise

People who exercise regularly have a lower risk of developing many long-term (chronic) conditions, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and some cancers.

It's free, easy to take, has an immediate effect and you don't need a GP to get some.

Research shows that physical activity can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing your risk of stress, depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Health benefits

Given the overwhelming evidence, it seems obvious that we should all be physically active. It's essential if you want to live a healthy and fulfilling life into old age.

It's medically proven that people who do regular physical activity have:

- up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- up to a 50% lower risk of colon cancer
- up to a 20% lower risk of breast cancer
- a 30% lower risk of early death
- up to an 83% lower risk of osteoarthritis
- up to a 68% lower risk of hip fracture
- a 30% lower risk of falls (among older adults)
- up to a 30% lower risk of depression
- up to a 30% lower risk of dementia

To stay healthy or improve health, adults need to do 2 types of physical activity each week: aerobic and strength exercises. How much physical activity you need to do each week depends on your age.

Guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64

To stay healthy, adults aged 19 to 64 should try to be active daily and should do:

- At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity such as cycling or brisk walking every week **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

Or

- 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity such as running or a game of singles tennis every week **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

Or

- A mix of moderate and vigorous aerobic activity every week – for example, 2 x 30-minute runs plus 30 minutes of brisk walking equates to 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

A good rule is that 1 minute of vigorous activity provides the same health benefits as 2 minutes of moderate activity.

One way to do your recommended 150 minutes of weekly physical activity is to do 30 minutes on 5 days every week.

All adults should also break up long periods of sitting with light activity.



Action Plan

What do I want to work on?

Which aspects of my lifestyle affect this?

Which will I tackle first?

How will I do this?

What might stop me?

How may I overcome this?

How confident am I that I can do this?

parkrun

Are you interested in:

- improving your health and wellbeing through physical activity, including volunteering?
- opportunities to socialise, make friends and be part of a welcoming, supportive community?
- activities that are free, outdoors and accessible to all?

If so, parkrun could be the answer

- Free, weekly 5k events for all ages from 4+, every Saturday morning at 9am (8.45am for the briefing) at Blickling Park
- Organised by local volunteer teams
- Not a race: walk, run, jog, volunteer or spectate
- parkrun is open to all, including those who are inactive or have a health condition or disability
- Taking part is easy: register once on the parkrun website (www.parkrun.org.uk/register), print off your personal barcode and head down to Blickling or one of the other parkruns across the county

www.parkrun.org.uk/blickling

Guidelines for older adults aged 65 and over

Adults aged 65 or older who are generally fit and have no health conditions that limit their mobility should try to be active daily.

You should do:

- At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity such as cycling or walking every week **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

Or

- 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity such as running or a game of singles tennis every week **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

Or

- A mix of moderate and vigorous aerobic activity every week (for example, two 30-minute runs plus 30 minutes of brisk walking equates to 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity) **and**
- Strength exercises on 2 or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms)

A general rule of thumb is that 1 minute of vigorous activity provides the same health benefits as 2 minutes of moderate activity.

You should also try to break up long periods of sitting with light activity, as sedentary behaviour is now considered an independent risk factor for ill health, no matter how much exercise you do.



Guidelines for 5 to 18 year olds

To maintain a basic level of health, children and young people aged 5 to 18 need to do:

- At least 60 minutes of physical activity every day – this should range from moderate activity, such as cycling and playground activities, to vigorous activity, such as running and tennis
- On 3 days a week, these activities should involve exercises for strong muscles and bones, such as swinging on playground equipment, hopping and skipping, and sports such as gymnastics or tennis

Children and young people should also reduce the time they spend sitting for extended periods of time, including watching TV, playing computer games and travelling by car when they could walk or cycle.

Being active for at least 60 minutes a day is linked to better general health, stronger bones and muscles, and higher levels of self-esteem.

What counts as light activity for children?

Light activity for children includes a range of activities, such as:

- Standing up, moving around, walking, less energetic play

What counts as energetic activity for children?

Examples of energetic activities suitable for most children who can walk on their own include:

- Active play (such as hide and seek and stuck in the mud), running around, jumping on a trampoline, riding a bike, dancing, swimming, climbing, skipping rope, gymnastics

Energetic activity for children will make kids "huff and puff" and can include organised activities, such as dance and gymnastics. Any sort of active play will usually include bursts of energetic activity.

What activities are there in and around Aylsham?

Go to the Active Norfolk website to find a range of activities for all abilities in the local area:

Website: www.activenorfolk.org

Tel: 01603 732333



What activities strengthen muscles?

Muscle strength is necessary for:

- all daily movement
- to build and maintain strong bones
- to regulate blood sugar and blood pressure
- to help maintain a healthy weight

Muscle-strengthening exercises are counted in repetitions and sets. A repetition is 1 complete movement of an activity, like a biceps curl or a sit-up. A set is a group of repetitions.

For each strength exercise, try to do:

- at least 1 set
- 8 to 12 repetitions in each set

To get health benefits from strength exercises, you should do them to the point where you struggle to complete another repetition.

There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether it's at home or in the gym.

Examples of muscle-strengthening activities for most people include:

- lifting weights
- working with resistance bands
- doing exercises that use your own body weight, such as push-ups and sit-ups
- heavy gardening, such as digging and shovelling
- yoga
- pilates

You can do activities that strengthen your muscles on the same day or on different days as your aerobic activity – whatever's best for you.

Muscle-strengthening exercises are not an aerobic activity, so you'll need to do them in addition to your 150 minutes of aerobic activity.

Guidelines for children under 5 years old

Babies

Babies should be encouraged to be active throughout the day, every day. Before your baby begins to crawl, encourage them to be physically active by reaching and grasping, pulling and pushing, moving their head, body and limbs during daily routines, and during supervised floor play, including tummy time.

Once babies can move around, encourage them to be as active as possible in a safe, supervised and nurturing play environment.

Toddlers

Children who can walk on their own should be physically active every day for at least 180 minutes (3 hours). This should be spread throughout the day, indoors or outside.

The 180 minutes can include light activity such as standing up, moving around, rolling and playing, as well as more energetic activity like skipping, hopping, running and jumping.

Active play, such as using a climbing frame, riding a bike, playing in water, chasing games and ball games, is the best way for this age group to get moving.

All children aged under 5

Children under 5 should not be inactive for long periods, except when they're asleep. Watching TV, travelling by car, bus or train, or being strapped into a buggy for long periods are not good for a child's health and development. There's growing evidence that such behaviour can increase their risk of poor health.

All children under 5 who are overweight can improve their health by meeting the activity guidelines, even if their weight doesn't change. To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, they may need to do additional activity and make dietary changes.

What counts as moderate aerobic activity?

Examples of activities that require moderate effort for most people include:

- brisk walking
- water aerobics
- riding a bike on level ground or with few hills
- doubles tennis
- pushing a lawn mower
- hiking
- skateboarding
- rollerblading
- volleyball
- basketball

Moderate activity will raise your heart rate, and make you breathe faster and feel warmer.

One way to tell if you're working at a moderate level is if you can still talk, but you can't sing the words to a song.

Try using an App to get you started:

Active 10 tracks your walking and shows you when to increase your pace to benefit your health. The app is designed to quickly and simply help you do more brisk walking in burst of 10 minutes. It tracks all your walking and rewards your progress.



What counts as vigorous activity?

There's good evidence that vigorous activity can bring health benefits over and above that of moderate activity.

Examples of activities that require vigorous effort for most people include:

- jogging or running
- swimming fast
- riding a bike fast or on hills
- singles tennis
- football
- rugby
- skipping rope
- hockey
- aerobics
- gymnastics
- martial arts

Vigorous activity makes you breathe hard and fast. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath.

In general, 75 minutes of vigorous activity can give similar health benefits to 150 minutes of moderate activity.

Try using an App to get you started:

For a moderate to vigorous workout, try Couch to 5K, a 9-week running plan for beginners.

