

## The benefits of exercise

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Being active and moving more is the key to having a healthy heart.



Your heart is a muscle and needs exercise to help keep it fit to pump blood efficiently around your body. Without regular physical activity, the body slowly loses its strength, stamina and ability to function well.

Lifelong physical activity, such as a brisk walk for as little as 30 minutes a day, is important for:

- Preventing heart disease
- Lowering your risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and stroke
- Helping to fight the battle to quit smoking
- Aiding cardiac rehabilitation
- Establishing good heart healthy habits in children
- Building stronger immunity
- Reducing blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure
- Helping to reduce stress, tension, depression and anxiety
- Helping to control weight
- Improving overall health and wellbeing, prolonging your optimal health. Whatever type of activity you choose to do, the more you move the better, for example:
  - Walking is a great option. Nearly everyone can do it, and all you need is a pair of shoes.
  - Swimming or dancing.
  - Take exercise classes or play a sport.
  - Exercising with weights or resistance bands.
  - Everyday things like gardening, climbing stairs, carrying shopping.

Many health problems can be helped by regular physical activity, but if you do have a health problem, you should check the amount and type of activity that is suitable for you with your GP. It's never too late to start. Everyone can benefit from moving more – whatever your age, size or physical condition.

Be active in as many ways as possible every day. Every 10 minutes counts.