

## Wellness

### Tip sheet

# Exercise for a healthier body and mind

We often think of the physical health benefits of exercising. But did you know that exercise also releases endorphins and increases serotonin levels, both of which keep your mood elevated?

#### Exercise:

- improves weight management by controlling energy expenditure: calories in versus calories out
- improves metabolism, ensuring you make more efficient use of food for energy
- promotes heart health
- optimises mood and feelings of wellbeing
- promotes joint health - important as we get older
- supports the immune system.

#### Making exercise fit into your lifestyle

If organised exercise classes or gyms are not your style this tip sheet suggests some incidental ways to increase your exercise and some tips for staying active.

- adhere to the philosophy that every step counts; don't be worried about doing 20 or 50 minutes sustained exercise at a time, just move
- make it a habit to always take the stairs where possible



Healthy Behaviours

"We do not stop exercising because we grow old - we grow old because we stop exercising."

**Dr. Kenneth Cooper**

- walk to the shops rather than drive (listen to music or phone a friend for a chat if you find you are too impatient to walk)
- park in the general vicinity of the venue you are attending rather than trying to get the closest park possible. Adjust your mindset: it's normal to walk
- take public transport rather than your car where possible
- buy a dog (or borrow a friend or neighbour's dog) that needs walking and make it part of your routine. Use the time to catch up with your kids or partner - even a 15 minute walk each night will benefit your physical and mental health

- when planning leisure activities include a walk around the park with your friend before lunch or a kick of the soccer ball rather than making eating or drinking the focus
- when waiting for a friend to turn up, rather than watch the clock, walk briskly up and down the street
- if you have kids who play sport, take the time to walk around the oval a few times rather than be an idle spectator
- hurry through some of your household chores. Lifting, sweeping and vacuuming are great exercises
- when holidaying, walk on the beach or in the bush each morning as a healthy routine.
- go dancing with friends. You won't even notice you are exercising
- when you do find yourself walking to the train or between buildings at work, pick up the pace. Walk a little faster than you
- would normally so you can feel your heart beating
- buy a simple pedometer. It's fun to try to gradually increase the amount of steps you take per day.

## Benefits of teaming up

We often think of gym when we think exercise. But there are plenty of fun, organised sports and fitness or yoga classes we can also incorporate into our lifestyle.

These present unique opportunities for working people to increase exercise as they provide us with a focused period of time to lift our heart rate in a supportive environment, where we are more likely to push ourselves than we would at home or solo. It also helps us improve our social connections and relationships, an important factor in wellbeing.

## Further information

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