

10 WAYS TO GET ACTIVE

Most people find that, as they get older, they become less active than when they were kids. Think about all those games that little kids play. Without those, you're probably not as active as you could be. And school, university and work pressures tend to get harder, leaving even less time to get out and do things. Inactivity really kicks in for a lot of us once we hit early adulthood, but it doesn't have to.

The answer, of course, is to build some activity into every day. It doesn't have to be strenuous. A brisk walk is enough to make a difference. And the benefits of moderate activity are huge.

It helps you to relax and sleep better by relieving stress and tension. It builds up stamina and improves your concentration. And socially, it's the perfect way to make new friends or keep in touch with old ones.

Here are a few ways to get more staying power into your day.

1. **Take it outside.** Ride a bike, go skating, fly a kite, throw a frisbee, kick a ball around with friends or walk the dog. Whatever works for you.
2. **Just think.** Walking 1 kilometre burns up the same number of calories as running 1 kilometre, swimming 15 lengths of a 25m pool, or playing squash non-stop for 8 minutes.
3. **Build up your activity over time.** Try to include some vigorous huff and puff stuff a few times a week and make it last for 15 minutes or more each time.



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4. **Cut down screen time.** Count how many hours you spend in front of the TV and try to cut down. The same goes for the computer. Surfing the net and sending e-mails can be totally absorbing, but limit the time you spend staring at the screen.
5. **Exercise your social skills.** Swap screen time and long phone chats for a power walk with friends and catch up face to face.
6. **Get involved locally.** Join sports clubs or take part in community events.
7. **Ditch the car.** Take public transit one way and walk back. Find different ways of getting places, like rollerblading, skateboarding or riding your bike.
8. **Challenge yourself.** Try something different. Take up fencing, rock-climbing archery, or anything new that interests you.
9. **Work out a plan.** What's the best use you can make of the time available before or after work or school or during breaks? You'll be surprised what you can squeeze in, and it helps if you draw up a plan.
10. **Prevent injuries.** You can't afford to miss work or study time because of your activity program. Make sure you always wear the right protective gear for the activities you choose such as helmets, kneepads and mouth guards.

This information was adapted from the ActNow BC Health Living website
<http://www.actnowbc.ca/>

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