



How to get active
8 ways to a healthier, happier life



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for more ideas and information on how to get the most out of life

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We may be hosting the Olympics in the UK but we're becoming a nation of couch potatoes. The average person in the UK spends 4 hours a day watching TV. A recent report suggests that inactivity is now killing as many people as smoking across the world - around 5.3 million people a year. This needs to change - not only for the sake of our physical health but also for our mental health and enjoyment of life, as exercise can be great fun and make us feel better generally.

The poster on the other side of this leaflet gives 8 ways you can bring more activity into your life. Check out the Life² website for more ideas and links to organisations that can help you to live a happier, wiser and more meaningful life -

www.lifesquared.org.uk

How can we get more active?

1. Turn off the TV

Watching TV can make us feel lethargic and less inclined to get up and do something - whether it's exercise or any other constructive activity! So, ration yourself to an hour of TV a day or, if you want to go all the way, try unplugging your TV and turning it to face the wall for a couple of weeks. Then see all the other things - including exercise - that you'll be able to do with your time instead!

2. Start gently

If you haven't exercised for a while, don't overdo it when you start back. Start with some light activity like walking and build up your level of exercise over time. If in doubt, ask your doctor what is a sensible amount of exercise for you to begin with.

3. Have fun

Exercise doesn't have to be an onerous and painful task - it should be fun and make you feel good. Choose an activity you'll actually enjoy and that won't feel like a chore.

4. Do it with other people

If you'd find it more enjoyable to socialise while you exercise, get a friend involved or seek out a sport that you can play with other people - it's a great way to meet new friends. Check out www.meetup.com to find lots of activity groups in your area - or to set up one yourself.

5. Book time in for it

We lead busy lives and it can be difficult to find time for everything - but exercise is an important part of your life, so prioritise it and book time for it at least 3 times a week in your diary.

6. Make a habit of it

Better still, make activity part of your everyday life. Assume you'll go for a walk or run before work every day as part of your routine. Build activity into your daily activities - like cycling to work rather than driving or walking up the stairs rather than taking the lift.

7. Remember how good it feels

At the times when you can't be bothered to do it, remember how good exercising makes you feel. This should motivate you to get back into it!

8. Try it

Even if it seems like a dreadful prospect to be getting up and exercising - just push yourself and try it - you'll be amazed at how good you feel - especially after a couple of weeks of doing it.