



Australian Government
Department of Health

9 in 10 Australian young
people don't move enough



Make your move – Sit less
Be active for life!





What's it all about?

As you move through school, start work and become more independent, being physically active and limiting sedentary behaviour every day is not always easy, but it is possible and it is important.

This brochure presents Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for all young people aged 13–17 years, irrespective of cultural background, gender or ability. It also provides you with information about physical activity, sedentary behaviour (sitting) and 'screen time', including tips and ideas about how to be more active every day.

More information about healthy living, including references to other Australian Government guidelines concerning healthy weight and healthy eating, can be found at www.health.gov.au

What is....

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY? – any activity that gets your body moving, makes your breathing become quicker, and your heart beat faster. You can be physically active in many different ways, at any time of day.

SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR? – sitting or lying down (except for when you are sleeping). It is common to spend large amounts of time being sedentary when at school or work, when travelling or during leisure time.

Move more, sit less, every day!



What are the benefits?

Being physically active and limiting sedentary behaviour every day is important – it can help you to be fit and healthy and to feel good.

Did you know that being physically active helps you do better at school?

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SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Creates opportunities for fun with friends.
- Reduces anti-social behaviour, including aggressive and disruptive actions.
- Develops cooperation and teamwork skills.



EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL BENEFITS

- Improves self-esteem and confidence.
- Helps you manage anxiety and stress.
- Improves concentration.



HEALTH BENEFITS

- Promotes healthy growth and development.
- Builds strong muscles and bones.
- Improves physical fitness, including coordination and movement skills.
- Reduces your risk of disease and unhealthy weight gain.

Move more...

Be more active, more often

You don't have to do organised or competitive physical activity to benefit. Social physical activity with family and friends, or being active by yourself, can also be lots of fun and is good for you too.

While all physical activity is helpful, doing a variety of moderate to vigorous intensity activities for **60 minutes every day** is good for you...



... and greater amounts of activity each day, up to 3 hours, will benefit you even more.

You can do it! Remember, you don't have to do all of your 60 minutes in one go. You can accumulate your **activity throughout the day.**



Hmmm... so, 20 minutes riding my bike to school, 30 minutes in PE class and 10 minutes of exercise at home = **60 minutes.**

Or...30 minutes walking to and from the bus stop or train station and 30 minutes of a dance class, sport, or kicking a footy with friends = **60 minutes.**



MODERATE INTENSITY ACTIVITIES take some effort, but you are still able to talk while doing them.

E.g. recreational swimming, social tennis, fast walking, dancing or bike riding.

VIGOROUS INTENSITY ACTIVITIES require more effort, and make you breathe harder and faster ('huff and puff').

E.g. jogging, aerobics, fast cycling, circuit training, or organised sports like basketball, soccer or netball.



I could meet my friends for a walk instead of a movie.



I could ride my bike to meet up with friends on the weekend.



I could join a local group or team.



Choose activities you enjoy doing, and you will be more likely to continue doing them.

...and sit less!

Stand up for yourself

Even if you are very physically active, you will still benefit from limiting the amount of time that you spend sitting or lying down (except when sleeping) in as many ways as possible.

You're right – there are some activities, like reading and doing school work, that may need to be done while you are sitting. The key is to find a healthy balance and limit time spent in front of a screen for entertainment.

Does your 'free time' mean 'screen time'?



Time spent using electronic media (such as television, seated electronic games, portable electronic devices or computers) for entertainment, is referred to as 'screen time'.

While screen time activities may be popular, they usually involve either sitting or lying down for long periods.

Minimise the time you spend being sedentary every day by:

- limiting your use of electronic media for entertainment to less than 2 hours per day; and
- breaking up long periods of sitting whenever possible.

I could turn off the TV during the day and head outside.



I could make my bedroom a computer and TV free zone.



I could set an alarm on my computer to remind me to stand up often.



Get real! Why not try meeting up with friends in person instead of online?

What will you do





Stronger bones, stronger muscles

On at least 3 days each week (as part of your 60 minutes of daily physical activity) include activities that strengthen bones and muscles.



Body weight exercises, like **sit-ups**, **push-ups**, **lunges** and **squats** will also help to improve your strength and can easily be done at home.



I could learn to dance.

I could join a martial arts or aerobics class.

I could take the stairs, instead of the lift or escalator.

Doing activities to strengthen bones and muscles is an important part of healthy growth and development.

What will
you do



Why not try these ideas?

There are lots of ways for you to be more physically active and less sedentary every day.



ACTIVE AND FUN

Instead of watching TV or using other electronic media:

- Try social outdoor activities like kicking a footy or throwing a frisbee with friends or family.
- Catch up with friends to walk and talk, instead of sitting down to chat.
- Swap social media for social activity.



ACTIVE TRAVEL

- For short trips, instead of travelling by car, walk, ride or skateboard safely.
- Use public transport and walk or ride to and from the bus stop or train station.
- Get off the bus one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way.
- When out shopping, use the stairs instead of the lift or escalator.



ACTIVE AT HOME

- Plan specific, limited time periods for watching TV and using electronic media.
- Sleep time is important – avoid using electronic media just before going to sleep.
- Do a DVD-based exercise or dance class.



ACTIVE AND SAFE

- Start slowly and build up the amount and intensity of physical activity you do.
- Protect yourself from the sun – you should wear sun-protective clothing, including a hat, and apply sunscreen regularly.
- If you have a medical condition, speak with your doctor or other health professional about the most suitable activities for you.

Be active every day in as many ways as you can!

Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Young People (13–17 Years)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- For health benefits, young people aged 13–17 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity every day.
- Young people's physical activity should include a variety of aerobic activities, including some vigorous intensity activity.
- On at least three days per week, young people should engage in activities that strengthen muscle and bone.
- To achieve additional health benefits, young people should engage in more activity – up to several hours per day.

SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR

- To reduce health risks, young people aged 13–17 years should minimise the time they spend being sedentary every day. To achieve this:
 - Limit use of electronic media for entertainment (e.g. television, seated electronic games and computer use) to no more than two hours a day – lower levels are associated with reduced health risks.
 - Break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.

Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

- Move and Play Every Day – National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years.
- Make *your* move – Sit less – Be active for life!
 - Children (5-12 years)
 - Young People (13-17 years)
 - Adults (18-64 years)
 - Families
- Choose Health: Be Active – A physical activity guide for older Australians.

To order these resources
FREE OF CHARGE,
phone **1800 020 103**

OTHER HEALTHY LIVING RESOURCES:

- Healthy Weight Guide – www.healthyweight.health.gov.au
- Eat for Health – www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Overweight and Obesity in Adults, Adolescents and Children in Australia – www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n57
- Get Up & Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood (for centre based care, family day care and pre-schools) – www.health.gov.au

To find out more, go to
www.health.gov.au