Clocking up activity time

The amount of physical activity we need to do each day depends on our age.

0 - 12 months

Aim to be active several times a day, including at least 30 minutes of tummy time over the day while awake, moving their arms and legs.

Examples of activity

- Floor-based play
- Reaching and grasping for objects
- Crawling
- Pulling up to standing
- Walking or attempting to

1 - 5 years

Aim for 3 hours of activity, every day achieved through play. 3 - 5 years should also include at least 1 hour of energetic play.

Imaginative play involves pretend and make-believe games.

- Dress ups
- Story telling
- Teddy bear picnics
- Treasure hunts

Creative play involves using hands and minds to build and create.

- Colouring
- Playing with blocks
- Painting
- Making music with pots and pans

Energetic play involves whole body movements.

- Running
- Playing ball games kicking, throwing and jumping
- Dancing
- Skipping

5 - 17 years

Aim for 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity activity every day. Include muscle and bone strengthening activity 3 days a week.

Examples of activity

- Running
- Climbing
- Swinging on monkey bars
- Push-ups
- Sit-ups
- Lifting weights
- Yoga or Pilates

18 - 64 years

2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity – such as a brisk walk, golf, mowing the lawn or swimming **Or**

1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous intensity physical activity – such as jogging, aerobics, fast cycling, soccer or netball **Or**

an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous activities.

Include muscle and bone strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.

- Push-ups
- Pull-ups
- Squats or lunges
- Lifting weights
- Household tasks that involve lifting, carrying or digging

65+ years

Aim for 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days.

Moderate intensity activities

- Brisk walking
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Yard and garden work

Strength activities

- Lifting and carrying (for example, groceries or small children)
- Climbing stairs

Flexibility activities

- Tai chi
- Stretching exercises
- Yoga

Balancing activities

- Side leg raises
- Half squats
- Heel raises

People living with a disability

If you are living with a disability or chronic medical conditions, how you stay active may depend on your ability. Try to meet the physical activity recommendations for your age group and do activity that is appropriate for you.

Speak with your doctor before starting anything new, then start slow, and build up over a few weeks. Stop any activity and speak with your doctor if you experience any pain, discomfort, nausea, chest pain or shortness of breath.

Pregnancy

If you and your baby are healthy, you should aim to meet the physical activity guidelines for adults.

Safety precautions

As your pregnancy progresses and your body changes, you might have to modify your physical activity. Avoid any activity that:

- Has a high risk of falling or collision.
- Requires heavy lifting.
- Has significant changes in pressure (such as sky diving or scuba diving).
- Gives you pain or discomfort.

Returning to pre-pregnancy activity

The timing of resuming physical activity after childbirth is different for everyone. A gradual return to recommended levels of activity is generally safe after your six-week postnatal health check, but this might vary depending on your individual circumstances.

How do your current activity levels compare to the recommendations? Write your thoughts in the box below.