

There are many ways to increase your exercise

Other ideas to increase your daily physical activity are to be as active as possible by walking or cycling short distances, using the stairs instead of the escalator or lifts, playing golf without a cart or caddy, exercising during lunchtime and coffee breaks or on a treadmill while watching television, and parking your car or getting off public transport further away from your destination then walking the remainder of the way.

To help keep you exercising regularly, do it with your friends, family and co-workers to make it fun! Include it as part of your regular routine with set goals on how long to exercise. Make a realistic activity plan and review your progress. Choose exercise that you enjoy and plan to go to different places—make it interesting and affordable!



Important information

You should first check with your doctor before starting an exercise program if you are over 35 (male) or 45 (female) years old; have a medical condition; have a risk factor for or a history of cardiovascular disease; have not exercised for a while; are overweight, pregnant or smoke.

If exercise causes you pain or discomfort, stop immediately and see a doctor.



Weight and Your Health

Controlling your weight via a combination of healthy eating and regular daily exercise reduces your risk of cardiovascular disease, including having a fatal heart attack or stroke.

We aim to reduce death and disability from cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other health disorders related to obesity through research, clinical care, education and advocacy.

For more information contact Preventative Cardiology:

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The facts

Being overweight or obese increases your chance of developing cardiovascular disease (e.g. a heart attack or stroke) and diabetes. More than half of the Australian population are either overweight or obese! Compared to 20 years ago, Australians are now on average 6 to 7 kg heavier!

It is important to be concerned about how much you weigh – even losing a small amount of weight can make a substantial difference to your health. Being within your healthy weight range and engaging in regular physical exercise is important for the prevention of:

- 🕒 Cardiovascular disease affecting the heart (e.g. heart attack) and brain (e.g. stroke).
- 🕒 High blood pressure.
- 🕒 Type 2 diabetes (a condition that is rapidly increasing as Australians get fatter).
- 🕒 Other conditions such as cancer.
- 🕒 Arthritis.
- 🕒 Osteoporosis.



To assess whether you are overweight, the body mass index (BMI) is an indicator of your weight relative to your height. The waist circumference is a more accurate measure of central (abdominal) obesity.

Indicators of body fatness			
	BMI (kg/m ²)	Waist circumference (cm)	
		Males	Females
Normal	18.5-24.9	Under 94	Under 80
Overweight	25.0-29.9	94.0-101.9	80.0-87.9
Obese	30.0 and above	102 and above	88 and above

*Based on the World Health Organisation (2000) guidelines for the prevention and management of obesity.

How healthy eating helps

Knowing the basics about nutrition helps you to better appreciate the importance of healthy eating.

Tips for a healthy diet

It's important to ensure that you enjoy a wide range of nutritious foods and eat the right balance of food from the five food groups.

- 🕒 Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, wholegrain breads & cereals, legumes, and raw nuts & seeds.
- 🕒 Choose lean red meat and sandwich meats (e.g. turkey breast or chicken) and include oily fish (e.g. salmon) and poultry.
- 🕒 Consume reduced fat dairy products or soy drinks with added calcium.
- 🕒 Select high monounsaturated margarines for spreads and unsaturated oils for cooking.
- 🕒 Limit foods high in saturated fat, salt and added sugar.
- 🕒 Drink plenty of water and limit your alcohol consumption to two or less drinks per day (men) or one per day (women).



Eating well and incorporating more exercise into your life also helps you to look and feel better overall.

The benefits of exercise



In combination with diet, exercise is the most effective approach for losing weight and for keeping it off! Also, regular exercise is an essential part of good health, irrespective of your weight. It has a number of other health benefits by:

- 🕒 Reducing blood pressure, blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- 🕒 Reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer, type 2 diabetes (or controlling it better) and arthritis or osteoporosis.
- 🕒 Strengthening the heart.
- 🕒 Improving breathing, flexibility, balance and sleep.
- 🕒 Increasing energy and fitness levels.
- 🕒 Increasing happiness and feelings of well being and reducing stress, depression and anxiety.

How much exercise is recommended?

- 🕒 At least 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise on all or most days of the week (e.g. brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, gardening).
- 🕒 If you can, vigorous exercise for 30 minutes or more for 3 or 4 days a week.
- 🕒 Include flexibility (e.g. yoga, Pilates) and strength activities (e.g. lifting weights, resistance training).
- 🕒 Remember that the 30 min daily need not be done in one continuous session (i.e. you can do some in the morning and some in the afternoon).