



Be more active to reduce your cancer risk

About physical activity

Building regular physical activity into your day is good for your mind and body and can reduce your cancer risk.

Physical activity is any bodily movement that uses energy. This can include sports and leisure activities such as swimming, jogging, cycling, bushwalking. It can also include every day movement such as lifting boxes at work, walking to the bus stop, and doing household chores.

Key facts

Physical inactivity is one of the four biggest causes of cancer in Australia. Regular exercise is good for your mind, body, and mood; and can reduce your risk of certain cancers. The Cancer Institute NSW recommends:

- 1 hour of moderate activity or
- 30 minutes of vigorous activity every day

How does regular physical activity prevent cancer?

- Can protect you from being overweight or obese, which are risk factors for cancer.
- Reduces your risk of colon, endometrial and breast cancers.
- May reduce your risk of oesophageal, lung and liver cancers.
- Muscle strengthening activities, like weights, squats or digging in the garden, can also reduce the risk of early death from cancer.

Being inactive and cancer




Being inactive for long periods of time can increase your risk of weight gain, overweight and obesity, and some cancers, including colorectal, endometrial and lung cancers.

What is being sedentary?

Being sedentary describes times where we use low levels of energy, including long periods of sitting or lying down. For example, watching tv, reading a book or sitting at a computer.

Keep in mind, it is possible to be physically active, but still spend too much time being sedentary. For example, you could go for a long walk, but sit at the computer for the rest of the afternoon. Try to reduce your sedentary time by moving regularly.

What are the types of physical activity?

		
Moderate Intensity	Vigorous Intensity	Muscle strengthening exercises or activity
<p>Takes some effort, where you can still hold a conversation, but not sing</p>	<p>Takes a large amount of effort, where you work up into a 'huff and puff'</p>	<p>Exercises that use resistance such as body weight, dumbbells or barbells.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisk walking • Dancing • Social tennis • Recreational swimming • Climbing stairs • Gardening • Cleaning windows • Mowing the lawn • Pushing a stroller • Cycling to/from work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jogging • Aerobics • Fast cycling • Boxing • Competitive or team sports like football or netball • Lifting and carrying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight training or lifting heavy objects as you go about your day. • Squatting exercises and movements where you are using the weight of your whole body • Heavier gardening like digging or shovelling • Running • Swimming • Cycling

How can I reduce my cancer risk?

Aim for:

Daily

1 hr of moderate intensity
OR 30 mins of vigorous intensity
OR a combination



On two of these days per week

Include muscle strengthening activities



Limit times when you are inactive i.e. minimise and break up long periods of sitting