

# WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

Below is a summary of the official advice on physical activity issued by the Chief Medical Officers of Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For the full guidance visit the Scottish Physical Activity and Health Alliance website PAHA Website.

**Under 5s who are not yet walking** should be encouraged to be active through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments.

**Under 5s who are capable of walking on their own** should be active for at least three hours a day, spread throughout the day, including through everyday walking. Most UK pre-school children are currently active for 2-2½ hours daily, so this means adding 30-60 minutes per day.

**Children and young people 5-18 years** should spend at least an hour and up to three hours a day in moderate to vigorous physical activity, including walking rather than riding in a bus or car. Vigorous activities and those that strengthen muscles or bones should be included at least three days a week.

**Adults 19-64 years** should aim to be active daily, with at least 2½ hours (150 minutes) of moderate intensity activity like brisk walking over a week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One way of achieving this is by walking for at least 30 minutes a day on at least 5 days a week. Alternatively adults can do 75 minutes of more vigorous activity spread throughout the week or mix moderate and vigorous activity. Activities to strengthen muscles should be included on at least 2 days a week.



**Older adults 65+ years** should follow the adult guidelines, but those that are at risks of falls should include activities to improve balance and coordination on at least two days a week.

**Everyone** should reduce the time they spend being sedentary (sitting) for extended periods, for example cutting down time spent watching TV, using computers, or in the case of infants, spending time in carriers, seats and equipment like baby bouncers that restrict free movement.

## Types of physical activity

**Moderate activity** makes you breathe harder and your heart beat faster, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation. Examples include brisk walking, cycling, gardening or heavy housework.



**Vigorous activity** makes you breathe much harder, warms you up and makes your heart beat much faster, so it is more difficult to carry on a conversation. Examples include running, swimming and sports like football.

**Activities that strengthen muscles** include exercising with weights or carrying or moving heavy loads such as groceries.

**Activities to improve balance and coordination** could include tai chi and yoga.

**Most of us should be aiming to be more physically active than we are at the moment. Around two thirds of people in Scotland don't do enough to meet the guidelines. For most people, walking is the easiest way to get most of the physical activity you need to stay healthy.**



## DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE 12 WEEK WALK PLAN

The aim of the plan is to get you walking briskly for at least half an hour on at least five days of the week.