

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES



*By the end of  
the lesson, you  
will be able to:*

- appreciate the health benefits of regular physical activity and exercise;
- understand why we need to do different kinds of physical activity;
- evaluate your activity level and make a personal activity plan.

### Lesson 10

## Keeping fit and active

### LESSON OVERVIEW



This lesson is about the many ways in which being physically active and fit can help improve health. It explains how regular

physical activity is important for everyone. It discusses some of the important health benefits of being active and fit, such as keeping a healthy body weight and lowering the risk of heart disease, diabetes and joint and bone diseases. The lesson also presents the health advantages of including a combination of different types of physical activity – aerobic, strengthening and stretching – into daily life. Examples are provided of light, moderate and vigorous activities for people to choose from. The lesson concludes by encouraging the development of personal physical activity plans.



## Part 1

# Being fit and active



### READING

Physical activity improves our health and can actually lower the risk of many serious diseases. One of the major benefits of regular physical activity is in controlling weight, which reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and joint and bone diseases. Regular physical activity is important for everyone, not just for controlling weight, but also for improving heart, lung and muscle functions. It contributes to healthy bones, muscles and joints, increases flexibility and improves movement, helps to relieve the pain of arthritis, and is associated with fewer hospitalizations and physician visits. It improves self-esteem and mental well-being, reduces stress and anxiety and improves sleep.

Physical activity includes any and all movements that expend energy. Many of the health benefits from being active can be achieved without having to do overly demanding or vigorous exercise. We should try to include in our daily lives the everyday activities which keep us moving around: walking, climbing stairs, physical labour, carrying things, household jobs. Great improvements in physical fitness can be made by changing from a sedentary to a moderately active lifestyle. The best way to keep active is to include as much movement as possible into our daily routine.

Different types and intensities of physical activity will improve different elements of health and fitness. All exercise should be built up gradually and carried out regularly, avoiding irregular, overly strenuous activities. People who do physically demanding work or practise strenuous sports regularly need to make sure they get enough food to meet their energy needs and rest and relax to allow their bodies to recover. The accumulation of small but regular periods of movement during work, school or leisure can make a significant difference in energy balance and weight control over time. For example, a daily 20-minute brisk walk can make a difference of up to 5 kgs per year, and for most people there will be improvements in cardiovascular fitness and potential for other physical and mental health benefits. To provide maximum benefits for all areas of the body, a range of specific strengthening and stretching exercises are also needed. This is particularly important for older people.

- Aerobic activities: such as brisk walking, jogging and swimming. These speed heart rate and breathing and improve heart and lung fitness.

#### TO THINK ABOUT WHILE READING



How important is  
physical activity?

Why do people  
need to do  
different kinds of  
physical activity?








Are you active  
enough every day?



- Resistance, strength and weight-bearing activities: such as carrying a child, lifting weights and walking. These help build and maintain bones and muscles by working them against gravity.
- Balance and stretching activities: such as gentle stretching, dancing, yoga, martial arts. These enhance physical stability and flexibility, which reduces risk of injuries.





### MATERIALS

-  Ask yourself work sheet *Health benefits of physical activity*
-  Answer work sheet *Health benefits of physical activity*
-  Ask yourself work sheet *Understanding activity levels*
-  Ask yourself work sheet *Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities*
-  Example work sheet *Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities*
-  Ask yourself work sheet *My physical activity*
-  Fact sheet *Intensity levels of physical activity*




### ACTIVITIES

#### Health benefits of physical activity

-  Discuss or think about what being fit and physically active means to you. What are the health benefits of physical activity? Use the Ask yourself work sheet *Health benefits of physical activity* to list as many benefits as you can think of. Compare your ideas to the Answer work sheet *Health benefits of physical activity*.
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#### Light, moderate and vigorous activities

Discuss how various activities use (burn) different levels of calories. Some activities burn few calories, some activities burn a moderate level of calories and some activities burn a great deal of calories. We can call these light, moderate and vigorous activities.

-  Use the Ask yourself work sheet *Understanding activity levels* or copy it on a board or in a notebook. Suggest types of activities that are good examples of each of the three activity levels and write them in the appropriate columns.



## Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities



Go to the Ask yourself work sheet *Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities* and fill in as many examples as you can think of for each type of activity. Compare your examples to the Example work sheet *Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities*.



## Are you active enough?



As an individual activity, keep track of all the activities you do each day for one week and record them on the Ask yourself work sheet *My physical activity*. Review and evaluate your activities by answering the questions on the work sheet and make a plan to improve your physical activity.

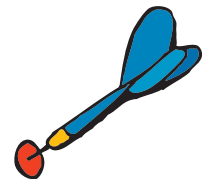


### KEY POINTS

**Review these three key points** to remember about keeping fit and active for good health. Reflect on your own physical activity and try to include more movement in your daily life.

## Keeping physically active and fit

- Regular physical activity is good for our health and well-being. It can decrease the risk of serious diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, joint and bone problems, insomnia.
- Being physically active means including movements that expend energy into our daily routine. These small changes over time will improve our health and weight.
- A combination of different types of physical activities – aerobic, strengthening and stretching – provides maximum benefit to all parts of our body.



# Health benefits of physical activity

**Do you know how physical activity can improve your health?  
List all the health benefits you know of.**

Physical activity includes any and all movements that expend energy.

**Some ways in which physical activity can improve our health:**

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- .....



**★ You can compare your ideas with**  
*Answer work sheet* **Health benefits of physical activity**





# Health benefits of physical activity

*Physical activity improves health in many ways and when carried out regularly can help lower the risk of some serious diseases.*

Physical activity can:

- help in **weight** loss and weight control
- help to reduce body **fat**
- rebuild or preserve **muscle mass**
- help **lower the risk** of cardiovascular diseases and diabetes
- **improve** heart, lung and muscle functions
- **contribute** to healthy bones
- improve the **strength and movement** of joints
- increase **flexibility** and improve the range of body movement
- improve self-esteem and **mental well-being**
- **reduce** stress and anxiety.



Use this answer sheet to check your answers on the Ask yourself work sheet **Health benefits of physical activity**



# Understanding activity levels

Suggest types of activities that are good examples for each of the three activity levels and write them in the appropriate column.

Every movement and activity has a *different level* of intensity.

Some activities require more energy than others. The best way to keep active is to include as much movement and as many different kinds of movement as possible in our daily routine.

Light activities	Moderate activities	Vigorous activities
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★ You can find more information on activity levels on *Fact sheet Intensity levels of physical activity*

★ Here are some examples for you:

Light activities	Moderate activities	Vigorous activities
reading	dancing	running
sitting	walking fast	swimming
office work	riding a bike	rowing
cooking	heavy housework	cycling
light gardening	digging	football



# Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities

**How much do you know about aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities? Add as many examples as you can think of for each type of activity.**

*Different types and intensities of physical activities will improve different aspects of health and fitness.*

**Aerobic activities** are activities of relative low intensity and long duration. As the body requires more oxygen, heart rate increases and lung capacity improves.

- swimming
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Resistance, strength and weight-bearing activities** are essential for building and maintaining healthy bones. During weight-bearing exercises, bones adapt to the impact of weight by building more bone cells. Consequently bone becomes stronger and more dense.

- carrying a child
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Balance and stretching activities** help improve physical stability, flexibility and help reduce injuries to muscle and bone.

- dancing
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....



**You can compare your ideas with Example work sheet Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities.**



# Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities

**Some activities provide specific benefits for specific areas of the body.**

**Other activities are more complete, providing multiple benefits.**

Swimming is an example of an activity that is more complete; it increases lung capacity and endurance, uses all major muscle groups and improves overall body flexibility. Moderate to fast walking and cycling strengthen the cardiovascular system, use leg and thigh muscles and improve bone density. Carrying or lifting weights improve overall body strength and use arms and upper body muscles.

There are many activities that can be done on our own, in groups or in organized team sports, and many simple everyday activities that will improve different aspects of fitness. We need to include a variety of different types of activities in our daily lives in order to get the maximum benefits to all areas of the body and to overall health.

## Here are just a few examples for each type of activity:

**Aerobic activities** are activities of relatively low intensity and long duration. As the body requires more oxygen, heart rate increases and lung capacity improves.

- swimming
- fast walking
- jogging
- rowing
- ice-skating
- cycling

**Resistance strength and weight-bearing activities** are essential for building and maintaining healthy bones. During weight-bearing exercises, bones adapt to the impact of weight by building more bone cells. Consequently, bones become stronger and increase in density.

- carrying a child
- climbing stairs
- lifting weights
- tennis
- skiing
- step-up aerobics

**Balance and stretching activities** help improve physical stability and flexibility, thus helping reduce injuries to muscle and bone.

- dancing
- yoga
- quadriceps (leg) stretch
- biceps (arm) stretch
- hamstring (leg) stretch
- pectoral (chest) muscle stretch



**This example work sheet will help you to complete Ask yourself work sheet Aerobic, strengthening and stretching activities**

# My physical activity

**How active are you?**  
**Keep track** of your activities for one week and **record** them on this table.  
**Review** your activities and make a plan.  
 See how you can **improve** your physical activity every day.

Day of the week	Activities	Length of time
Monday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Tuesday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Wednesday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Thursday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Friday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Saturday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....
Sunday	• ..... • ..... • .....	• ..... • ..... • .....

1. Do you think you are active enough? Too much? Too little? The right amount?
2. How much time every day were you active?
3. How much time did you spend sitting?
4. Do you think that you had the right amount of moderate and vigorous activities?
5. In what ways can you include more movement into your daily routine?
6. Make an activity plan for yourself, based on your current level of activity, your health, body weight and any special medical conditions. Be realistic and try to follow it.



# Intensity levels of physical activity



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sleeping</li> <li>• lying down</li> </ul>  |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sitting</li> <li>• reading</li> <li>• writing</li> <li>• note-taking</li> <li>• studying</li> <li>• watching t.v.</li> <li>• knitting</li> <li>• playing cards</li> </ul>            |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dressing</li> <li>• grooming</li> <li>• dusting</li> <li>• washing dishes</li> <li>• driving</li> <li>• cooking</li> <li>• ironing</li> <li>• light gardening</li> </ul>             |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• walking</li> <li>• playing with a child</li> <li>• gardening</li> <li>• washing windows</li> <li>• walking steady</li> <li>• making beds</li> <li>• playing an instrument</li> </ul> |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dancing</li> <li>• walking fast</li> <li>• walking uphill</li> <li>• skating</li> <li>• horse riding</li> <li>• gymnastics</li> <li>• diving</li> <li>• basketball</li> </ul>        |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• running</li> <li>• swimming</li> <li>• tennis</li> <li>• football</li> <li>• cycling fast</li> <li>• pushing furniture</li> <li>• digging</li> <li>• rowing</li> </ul>               |

★  
 You can use these examples  
 of activity intensity levels  
 to help you complete  
 Work sheet **My physical activity**



