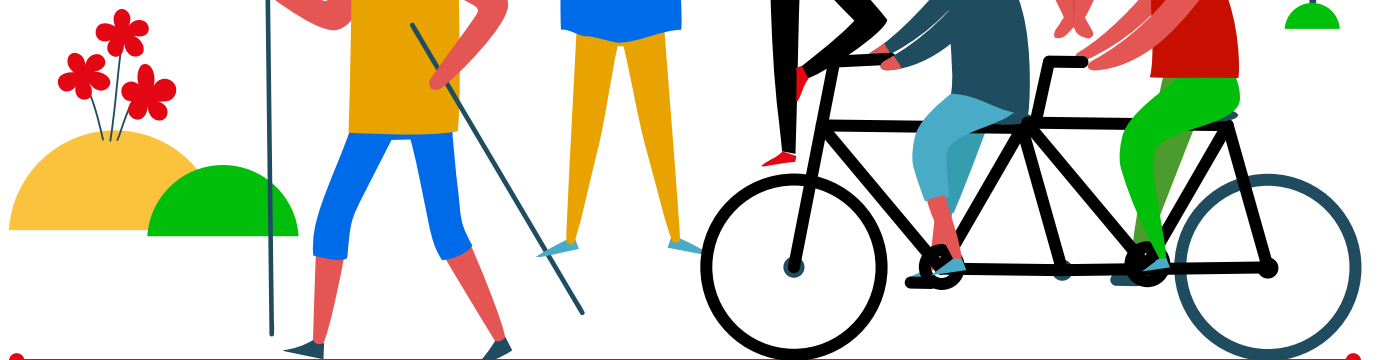


You should aim to be active daily, in short bouts of at least 10 minutes at a time, with a goal to accumulate at least 150 minutes per week. Physical activity is often enjoyable in groups with the social interaction being good for motivation, enjoyment, fun, and meeting new people. Group exercise classes also offer support and guidance, reducing the fear of exercising and injuring yourself. Even chair-based classes can be beneficial.

Walking, cycling, aqua, Tai Chi, an activity class at the retirement centre or local community or church hall are all excellent ways to get started. Remember, with ageing everything you do to prevent or delay the onset of frailty will also prevent or delay the onset of dementia.

As we mentioned earlier, strength and balance exercises reduce your risk of falls and if you are really concerned, you could start with chair-based exercises and then progress to standing classes. Ask your physical therapist for advice.

Don't worry if you have never done exercise before. It is never too late to start, the benefits can be felt almost immediately and even the smallest increase in daily activity level will reap huge rewards for your health. Just start gently and progress gradually over the first 3 months.



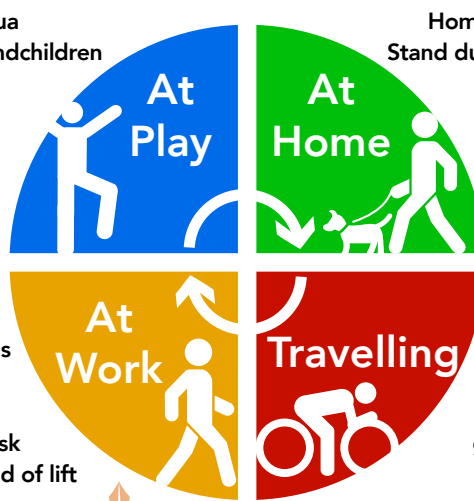
Making everyday life more active

Apart from formal exercise or group activities, you can build activity into your everyday life. Small changes will ultimately make big differences to your quality of life.

Ideas for making everyday life more active include:

- Swimming or aqua
- Playing with grandchildren
- Singing
- Walking club
- Exercise class
- Pilates, yoga, Thai Chi

- Take active breaks
- Walking meetings
- Stand when on the telephone
- Stand at your desk
- Take stairs instead of lift



- Home-based exercises
- Stand during advert break
- Walking
- Singing
- Gardening
- Housework
- Walking the dog

- Cycling
- Walk
- Park further away in the car park
- On public transport get off a stop earlier and walk

The Last Word

A good idea before starting an activity is to sit down with your therapist or even a family member or friend and write down what it is you want to achieve. Set goals, easy achievable ones initially. These will help build self-esteem and confidence. Then you can start looking from short-term easier goals (which may be as simple as walking 10 minutes every day, or achieving a walk around the block 3 times a week) to middle- and long-term ones, extending over the coming months and year.

'Action planning' is the next step. Write down what you are going to do each day or as a weekly plan. Keeping these plans, together with a daily diary, will help you stay motivated and see the improvements over time. You can use self-monitoring devices like pedometers, wrist-worn accelerometers or smartphones to keep track of your daily step count. There are also many activity apps that can be downloaded to mobile phones to help you monitor your activity levels, motivate you or

provide you with daily exercise routines. Get help and advice from your physical therapist about what would best suit you and your condition.

Make sure you have support – be it family and friends or a physical therapist, support group or exercise programme. The right support will be invaluable in keeping you motivated and encouraged, particularly on those bad days, and make you accountable for changing your life!