

# Moving more

Regular movement is good for your body and has a powerful effect on mood. Even short bursts of activity can release 'feel-good' chemicals, reduce stress and help you sleep better. Movement is an important tool in protecting and improving your mental health when you're feeling low.

## NHS Recommendations for Adults

- Any increase is good, start small and build up.
- Aim for 150 minutes of moderate activity per week (e.g. brisk walking, cycling, dancing).
- Or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (e.g. running, team sports).
- Spread activity across the week in 10+ minute chunks.
- Do strengthening activities (like yoga or resistance training) twice a week.
- Limit long periods of sitting.

Source: NHS Physical Activity Guidelines

## Suggestions or ideas

- Find small moments: use waiting times (kettle, bus, school pick-up) to stretch or walk.
- Start with short walks, being outdoors provides extra health benefits.
- Take breaks from sitting: stand, stretch, or walk every hour.
- Make it fun: dance, play games, or revisit activities you enjoyed as a child.
- Connect with others: join a class, walk with a friend, or try a team sport.
- Move mindfully: notice your breath, surroundings, and how movement feels.



Make it fun -  
dance or play  
games!

## PAUSE & REFLECT

## THE EVIDENCE

- Being physically active influences dopamine, a brain chemical linked with mood and depressive symptoms (Marques et al., 2021).
- Exercise can improve mood and self-esteem, and structured exercise programmes can reduce depressive symptoms (Park et al., 2014).

MOVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Be active**

at least **150** minutes moderate intensity per week  
increased breathing  
able to talk

OR

at least **75** minutes vigorous intensity per week  
breathing fast  
difficulty talking

OR a combination of both

**Build strength**  
to keep muscles, bones and joints strong  
on at least **2** days a week

**Minimise sedentary time**  
Break up periods of inactivity

**Improve balance**  
For older adults, to reduce the chance of frailty and falls  
2 days a week

Source: UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

WHERE TO START

You could start by filling in 'My plan' or try any of the following:

- For general information and tips on moving more, start with the NHS Better Health videos, advice, apps, groups and discounts: [nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/](https://nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/)
- For local groups you could start with Health Walks [sasp.co.uk/mendip](https://sasp.co.uk/mendip) and Park Run [parkrun.org.uk/](https://parkrun.org.uk/)
- For in-person support, join a healthier lifestyles 6-week programme through Health Connections Mendip: [healthconnectionsmentip.org/healthy-lifestyles-programme/](https://healthconnectionsmentip.org/healthy-lifestyles-programme/)
- For tools to help you become more active, visit Health Connections Mendip: [healthconnectionsmentip.org/directory/exercise/](https://healthconnectionsmentip.org/directory/exercise/)
- For wider groups, services and resources, explore the full Health Connections Mendip directory: [healthconnectionsmentip.org/mendip-directory/](https://healthconnectionsmentip.org/mendip-directory/)



NHS Better Health Videos  
Get Active



Mendip  
Health Walks