

Exercise



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EXERCISE GUIDELINE

WHY IS EXERCISE NECESSARY?

Regular exercise stimulates your body's maintenance and repair system. Bones, joints and muscles – especially the heart – need exercise in order to stay strong and healthy, and will last longer if they are kept busy.

RISKS OF PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

If you do not exercise, you may develop many health complications especially later in life.

A person who does not exercise on a regular basis may suffer from:

- Coronary heart disease
- Strokes
- High blood pressure
- Breathlessness
- Flabby body
- Stiff joints
- Lack of energy
- Osteoporosis
- Poor posture
- Overweight/obesity



BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY BODY

The benefits of developing a body that is fit and healthy are numerous:

- You will be less likely to suffer from a stroke, heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers.
- You will have improved joint stability.
- Increased and improved range of movement.
- Improved flexibility as you age.
- Your skeletal system will maintain its bone mass and thereby have a reduced risk of osteoporosis and fractures.
- Improved mood, and less likelihood of suffering from anxiety and depression.
- Enhanced self-esteem.
- Improved sex life.
- Reduced risk of impotence.
- Improved sleeping pattern.
- Improved brain function and memory in your old age.
- Improved immune system and less vulnerability to colds and flu.
- Reduced stress.
- Regular exercise promotes healthy pregnancy.
- If you are an asthma sufferer, your asthma attacks will be less severe.

BALANCING YOUR BODY

Physical fitness is divided into three components: strength, stamina and suppleness. In order for you to have a healthy, efficient body, you need to focus on all three components and try to spend equal amounts of time developing your body in each area.

Strength:

Strength training tones and develops your muscles, which enables you to perform physical activities and reduces the risk of sustaining an injury when being physically active.

Stamina:

Having stamina means that your heart beats at a slower and more powerful rate, and this helps you cope with heavy/prolonged exercise. It improves blood circulation to the heart and lungs, giving you the ability to perform physical activities without gasping for breath.

Suppleness:

Good mobility in your neck, spine and joints will prevent you from spraining ligaments and pulling muscles and tendons. Suppleness also reduces your risk of experiencing aches and pains from stiff joints.

WAYS TO START EXERCISING

- Identify a time that you can set aside for doing exercise.
- Do not do too much too soon. Start slowly and stop immediately if you experience any dizziness, nausea, pain and extreme tiredness.
- Build up gradually – try to exercise more often and for longer periods of time.
- Aim toward 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five days a week. ‘Moderate’ means that you should get slightly out of breath and break into a sweat.

This table shows which physical activities assist in developing your body’s stamina, strength and suppleness:

Activity	Stamina	Strength	Suppleness
Climbing stairs	♥♥♥	♥♥	♥
Cycling	♥♥♥♥	♥♥♥	♥♥
Dancing – ballroom	♥	♥	♥♥♥
Dancing – disco	♥♥♥	♥	♥♥♥♥
Digging	♥♥♥	♥♥♥♥	♥♥
Football	♥♥♥	♥♥♥♥	♥♥♥
Gymnastics	♥	♥♥♥	♥♥♥♥
Housework	♥	♥	♥♥
Jogging	♥♥♥♥	♥♥	♥♥♥
Swimming	♥♥♥♥	♥♥♥♥	♥♥♥♥
Walking briskly	♥♥	♥	♥
Walking uphill	♥♥♥	♥♥	♥

♥ no real effect ♥♥ beneficial effect
 ♥♥♥ very good effect ♥♥♥♥ excellent effect

Visit www.gems.gov.za for more information
or call us on **0860 00 4367**

If you would like more information about exercise please do not hesitate to
call us on the **GEMS MEMBER CARE LINE 0860 109 900**.

Always discuss all health and treatment issues with your **doctor**.

Please note that this information provided by our Registered Healthcare
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