

Guidelines on Minimum Levels of Physical Activity to Minimise Health Risks by Chief Medical Officers

Early years (under 5's) not yet walking:

Minimise amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping). Encourage floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments.

Early years (under 5's) capable of walking:

Children of pre-school age capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day. All under 5's to minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for external periods (except time spent sleeping).

Children and Young People (5 – 18 years):

Moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes and up to several hours every day. Vigorous activities, including those that strengthen muscle and bone should be incorporated at least 3 days a week.

Adults (19 – 64 years):

Aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10mins or more. Comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week or combinations of moderate and vigorous intensity activity. Muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days per week. Minimise amount of time spent being sedentary for extended periods.

Older adults (65+ years):

Aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10mins or more. For those already regularly active at moderate intensity, comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity. Older adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least 2 days a week.

Published July 2011. Factsheets giving full details for each age group are available to download from the BHF website: <http://www.bhfactive.org.uk/guidelines/index.html>