Swimming
Walking the dog
Taking the stairs
Sex
Washing the car
Mowing the lawn

30 MINS A DAY ANY WAY
THE FIT FOR LIFE PLAN

British Heart Foundation

BEATING HEART DISEASE TOGETHER
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is this for me?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So how active am I?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is physical activity important for me?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much should I be doing?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What sort of things should I be doing?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's stopping you?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting started... and keeping going</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making it safe and enjoyable</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How am I doing so far?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What if I have...?</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy eating</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For more information</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you can help us</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting started – making an action plan</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly activity diary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull out section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In April 2007, the BHF launched its 30 a Day campaign to encourage people over 50 to invest in their health and well-being by getting active. Just 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five times a week can halve the risk of heart disease. Gardening, housework, DIY, playing with children and grandchildren and brisk walking can all contribute to this 30 minutes, helping you to live a longer and more fulfilling life.

For more information, visit [bhf.org.uk/30aday](http://bhf.org.uk/30aday)
IS THIS FOR ME?

If you're aged about 50 or over, this booklet is for you. It aims to help you get more active now... and stay active as you get older.

The booklet will be especially helpful for you if you're not very active at the moment - and not doing the recommended amount of physical activity - 30 minutes of moderate activity on at least five days a week - and if you're looking for ways of doing more.

As you get older, it's especially important to stay active.

Whether you're still working or retired, whether you're in good health or have a health condition such as heart disease or arthritis, this booklet has lots of useful information to help you get started... and keep going. Maybe you're not yet convinced of the benefits of physical activity. Or maybe you've been meaning to do more activity but something always seems to get in the way. Or perhaps you're already doing some activity but think you should be doing more.

Being active doesn't mean having to join a gym or an exercise class or play a sport, but it could include fitting some activity into your daily routine - even simple things like doing more walking.

You'll be surprised how a small change in your level of physical activity can make a big difference to your health and well-being. So go on - make a start today!

What about sex?

For many people a satisfying sex life is an essential part of their life. It helps maintain their relationship with their partner and it adds to their overall quality of life. For others sex is not that important and choosing to be sexually inactive doesn't have any negative effect on your health.

if you are physically active you will find it easier to enjoy a satisfying sex life. Regular physical activity helps to increase your energy levels which means you are more likely to enjoy many aspects of your social and personal life, including sex.

If you are of South Asian origin

Compared with the rest of the UK population, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women are less likely to be as active as they should be. If you are of South Asian origin, your risk of developing coronary heart disease is significantly higher than that of the rest of the UK population. Regular physical activity is an effective way of lowering that risk.
SO HOW ACTIVE AM I?

Answer the questions below to help you find out how active you are.

1. Walking

During the last week, did you walk briskly enough to make you feel warm and slightly out of breath for more than 15 minutes at a time?

For example, it might be walking to the shops or to work, or going out for a walk with family or friends. In the box below, write down how much time you spent walking in this way.

2. Other activity

During the last week, have you done any activity other than walking, for more than 15 minutes at a time, that made you feel warm and slightly out of breath?

For example, heavy housework, gardening, swimming, dancing, cycling, aerobic classes or squash.

In the box below, write down how much time you spent doing these sorts of activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Walking</th>
<th>Other activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of minutes</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL for the week =
So how did you do?

What was your total for the week?

Less than 150 minutes.
You are an inactive person. We suggest you make a start on page 6.

150 minutes or more, but you are active on less than five days a week.
You need to increase your level of activity. We suggest you start at page 10.

150 minutes or more, and you are active on more than five days a week.
That’s good, but you need to keep it up. To help you keep up your level of activity see pages 10 and 16.

Did you know that...

If the average woman over 50 spent 30 minutes walking the dog she would use up the same amount of calories as she would if she spent 11 minutes doing step aerobics.
WHY IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT FOR ME?

Being active will make a difference to the quality of your life. Once you start you’ll soon experience the benefits.

The benefits of physical activity include:

- looking better
- better body shape and appearance
- feeling better
- more energy
- sleeping better
- helping to reduce stress and anxiety
- helping you to relax more easily
- more self-confidence
- better concentration
- reducing isolation and helping you to stay in touch with other people
- meeting people and making friends
- achievement – learning something new and being successful
- enjoyment – activity can be great fun and something you can do with other people.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TACKLES HEALTH PROBLEMS...

It helps to manage and control:

- heart disease, including angina
- weight (and body fat)
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol levels
- type 2 diabetes
- joint and bone problems, such as arthritis.

And helps prevent illness by reducing the risk of:

- heart disease and stroke
- some cancers (such as colon cancer)
- dementia
- falls and injuries.

And it also:

- helps you stay independent and mobile in later life
- makes it easier to carry out your everyday activities
- maintains stronger bones and muscles
- improves balance, posture and co-ordination
- maintains joint mobility and suppleness.

As you get older, regular physical activity also helps you to stay in touch with friends and neighbours, and to get out and about – for example, going to the shops or visiting family or friends.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

If the average woman over 50 spent 30 minutes doing fast ballroom dancing, she would use up the same amount of calories as she would if she spent 13 minutes cycling.
HOW MUCH SHOULD I BE DOING?

For general health benefit, adults of all ages should achieve a total of at least 30 minutes moderate activity a day on five or more days of the week.

'Moderate' activity means any activity that leaves you feeling warm and breathing more heavily than usual. But you don’t have to be completely out of breath or work up a sweat.

Also, specific activities that help improve strength, co-ordination and balance are particularly beneficial for us as we get older.

Why 30 minutes?

Any increase in activity will benefit your health, but research shows that 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on five or more days of the week is the amount needed to keep the lungs, heart, muscles and bones in good working order.

You can split the 30 minutes up into two bouts of 15 minutes, or three bouts of 10 minutes.

If 30 minutes a day sounds a lot to you

If 30 minutes a day seems a lot, start with five minutes at least three times a day and build up gradually to the 30 minute target.

If you can’t manage 30 minutes a day – for example, because you’re limited by a health condition such as arthritis – don’t worry. Any amount of additional activity will make a difference.

"I DECIDED I HAD TO DO SOMETHING."

"I still feel young, but I can see the signs of ageing – thickening waist, saggy skin. I looked at myself in the mirror one day and decided I had to do something. I’m not one for the gym, so I started walking more. I walk whenever I can now, and I feel much better for it." Rose, 53