**How does being active reduce the risk of cancer?**

Scientists think that physical activity can reduce the risk of cancer in many different ways:

- By decreasing the amount of time food spends in your bowel. This means your bowel is exposed to cancer-causing chemicals for less time, reducing the risk of bowel cancer.
- By reducing the levels of hormones such as insulin, in your blood. At high levels, these hormones make it more likely for bowel and breast cancer to develop.
- By reducing swelling in the bowel. Swelling in the bowel can increase the risk of bowel cancer. Physical activity reduces swelling in the bowel.

**Further information**

**About physical activity and cancer**
For more about physical activity and the science behind our messages visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org/health](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health)

**About cancer**
For information about living with cancer visit [www.cancerhelp.org.uk](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk)

If you want to talk in confidence about cancer, call our information nurses on freephone 0808 8004040.

**Order more leaflets**
You can order our full range of leaflets free online at [www.cancerresearchuk.org/leaflets](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/leaflets)

**Support Cancer Research UK**
If you would like to support our work please call 020 7121 6699 or visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

**Tips for moving more**

Even small bursts of movement are good for you and can add up over the course of a day. You can move more by making small changes like:

- Standing on the bus or train, instead of sitting – this burns an extra 70 calories for every hour of travelling.
- Getting off a stop earlier if you take public transport.
- Walking to and from work, if you can, or going for a short walk in your lunch break.
- Taking the stairs instead of the lift.
- Breaking up your sitting time and standing up for 10 minutes out of every hour.
- You could try standing up during ad breaks and doing a couple of chores while watching TV.
Being physically active could help prevent thousands of cancers in the UK every year.

Physical activity does not have to cost you money. It can include everyday things like housework, DIY, gardening or walking, as well as sports or going to the gym.

The more active you are, the more you can reduce your cancer risk.

In this leaflet you can find out:
- why being active reduces your cancer risk
- the levels of physical activity you should aim for
- tips for moving more.

Why should I be active?

Many scientific studies have shown that people who are active are less likely than inactive people to develop bowel and breast cancer, two of the most common types of cancer.

Being active also helps you to control your weight. Keeping a healthy weight is an important way to reduce your risk of cancer.

Being active not only reduces your risk of cancer; it can also help prevent other health problems. These include diabetes, osteoporosis, stroke and heart disease.

How active do I need to be?

You do not need to be an athlete to benefit from being active. Doing at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on five or more days a week can help your health.

Moderate physical activity is any movement that makes you feel warm and slightly out of breath. It does not have to cost money or involve complicated exercise programmes.

The more active you are, the more you can reduce your risk of bowel and breast cancer.

If you do more than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on five or more days a week, you can reduce your cancer risk even further.

How can I be more active?

Try being active:
- more often
- for longer
- throughout your life.

It is never too late to become more active. But remember to increase your level of activity gradually and see your doctor for advice if you are very overweight or have other medical problems.

Walking more is a great way to be more active, and it can help you lose weight or keep it off.

You do not need to buy special shoes or join the gym. Walking can easily fit into your daily routine.