MECC Factsheet: Physical Activity

Key messages

* Being active every day helps us to stay healthy. It’s easy to move more and doing something is better than nothing. Start small and build up gradually. Every 10 minutes counts!
* It’s recommended that adults do at least 150 minutes of moderate activity every week. This can be broken down to five sessions of 30 minutes of aerobic activity like cycling or fast walking.

Other important messages to consider

* Moderate activity is when:
  + It noticeably increases your heart and breathing rates, but you are still able to carry on a conversation.
  + You may sweat.
  + You can talk, but you can’t sing.
* There are lots of ways that you and your family can get more active. It doesn’t have to be expensive or involve sport or going to the gym.
* Being active is good for your body, mind and health. It decreases your risk of getting heart disease and some types of cancer, as well as preventing depression, anxiety and dementia and helping you to sleep better.
* Take up an activity that you can easily fit into your daily routine, like a brisk walk on your lunch break.
* You should minimise the amount of time you spend sitting down for long periods.
* Once you have found the activity that’s right for you, try doing it at the same time and on the same days each week so it becomes part of your lifestyle.
* Buddy up with friends so you can motivate each other and make it a social activity.
* Older adults at risk of falls should incorporate physical activity to improve balance and co-ordination on at least two days a week.

Why is it important?

* 33% of adults in Camden and 27% in Islington are not meeting the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week, meaning they are missing out on the associated health benefits.
* Regular physical activity can improve your physical health and your emotional wellbeing.
* Evidence shows that being active can reduce your risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers by up to 50%.
* Being active can help with musculoskeletal disorders (like back pain).
* Being active can help you manage your weight.
* Being active can help to improve mood, reduce anxiety and depression, and help with sleeping.

Signposting to local services and online support

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| NHS Choices - presents a range of useful health and fitness advice, guidance and links   * ***Fitness*** [www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness/](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness/) |
| One You – the current national healthy living campaign providing tools, support and encouragement to be healthier. One You websites for Camden and Islington to launch in July   * ***Moving*** [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/moving](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/moving) * [www.oneyouislington.org/topic/move-more/](http://www.oneyouislington.org/topic/move-more/) * [www.oneyoucamden.org/topic/walk-more/](http://www.oneyoucamden.org/topic/walk-more/) |
| Get Active London – a one-stop shop for sports and physical activities in London helping people find clubs, venues or sports activity in the capital.   * <http://www.getactivelondon.com> |
| Physical Activity  Camden  The council website provides information on physical activity in Camden   * <https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/leisure/sport-and-physical-activity/> * <http://oneyoucamden.org/topic/walk-more/>   **Islington**  The council website provides information on physical activity in Islington   * <https://www.islington.gov.uk/sports-parks-and-trees/sports> * <http://oneyouislington.org/topic/move-more/> |