



**Getting fitter is  
easier than you think**

# Growing older doesn't have to mean being less active

Many people think it's natural to slow down and do less, simply because we are not as young as we used to be. But for most of us, this just isn't true. The main reason for slowing down is that we spend more and more of our day being inactive.

**It doesn't have to be that way.**

## Just 30 minutes a day can make a real difference

Many people believe that only intense physical activity, like going to a gym or running in the park, will benefit their health. This is wrong.

The greatest health gains come when you start to do moderately active things that add up to 30 minutes a day. If you can do more, that's great – but it's that 30 minutes a day that will make the real difference.

Brisk walking, dancing (even on your own), gardening and playing with your children or grandchildren are ideal, easy ways to keep active and healthy.

If you are thinking about your weight, then being more physically active will help you lose weight **and** keep it off better than dieting alone.

# A more active lifestyle

There’s an active and an inactive way to do many everyday things. Compare these examples; the energy used up in each is expressed in kilocalories (kcal).

Inactive way	kcal used	Active way	kcal used
Use TV remote	<1	Get up to change channel	3
Phone calls 30 min, reclining	4	Phone calls 30 min, standing	20
Hire home help	0	Iron 30 min, vacuum 30 min	152
Heat up a microwave meal	15	Cook 30 min	25
Buy pre-sliced vegetables	0	Prepare vegetables 15 min	10-13
Use leaf blower 30 min	100	Rake leaves 30 min	150
Hire a gardener	0	Garden or mow lawn 30 min	360
Use car wash	18	Wash and wax car 1 hour	300
Let dog out of back door	2	Walk dog 30 min	125
Drive 40 min, walk 5 min	22	Walk 15 min to bus	60
Email a friend, 4 min	2-3	Walk 1 min, stand and talk 3 min	6
Take lift up three floors	0.3	Climb three flights stairs	15
Park at door of supermarket	0.3	Park and walk 2 min	1.6
Watch TV for 1 hour	30	Walk and shop 1 hour	145

Doing these kinds of things regularly makes a big difference to the amount of energy you use.

<b>Inactive way</b> Uses <b>1,700</b> kcal per month	<b>Active way</b> Uses <b>10,500</b> kcal per month
---	--

The difference of 8,800 kcal per month is the energy equivalent of losing or gaining **2.5 pounds / 1.1 kilos per month or 30 pounds / 13.6 kilos per year.**



# Research shows...

...that people who are less active have much more trouble with simple tasks of daily living. Things like walking up a hill or getting out of a chair without having to lean on something are more difficult.

The good news is that starting to be more active at any age will not only reduce your risk of disease, it will help you cope better with the stresses and strains of everyday life.

Being more physically active is one of the best things you can do for yourself – and it is never too late to feel the benefits.

## We all want to have fun and enjoy life

So get up and get active.

It's never too late to start.

**And it's easier than you think.**



**healthy**living

[www.healthyliving.gov.uk](http://www.healthyliving.gov.uk)



[www.healthscotland.com](http://www.healthscotland.com)