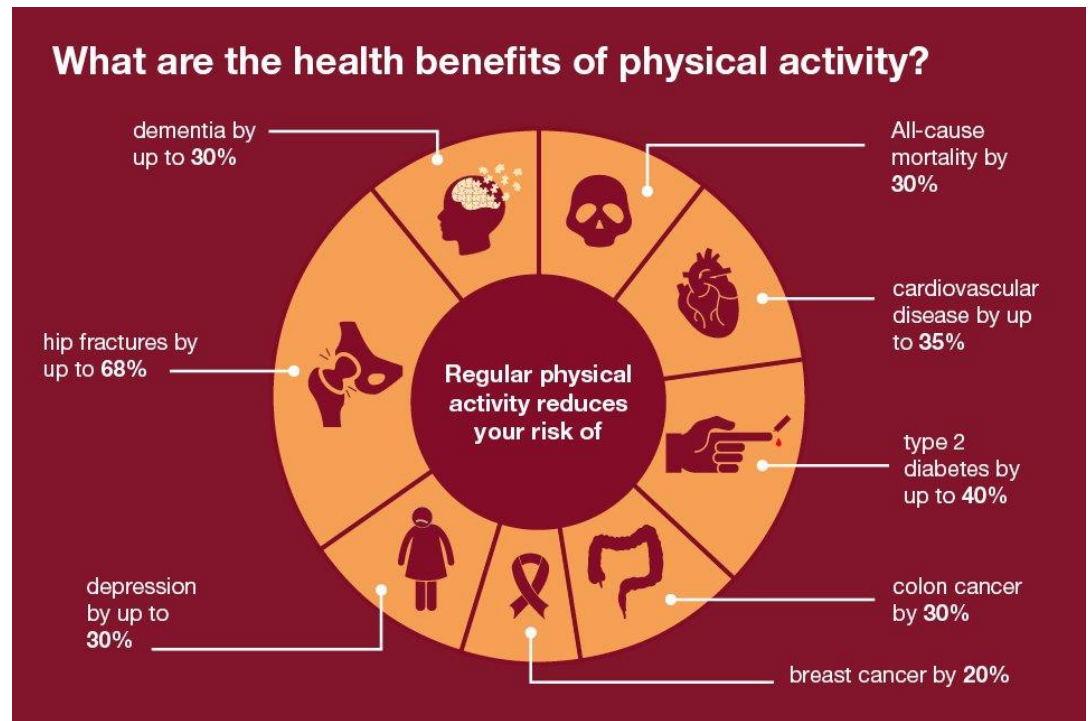


Benefits of physical activity

Regular physical activity can prevent and manage over 20 chronic health conditions, as well as improving our mental health and wellbeing.



(Public Health England, 2016)

Dangers of sitting too much



Prolonged sitting can result in an increase in obesity, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

As a society, we have become more inactive and we know from various Health Surveys that over half of people in Northern Ireland, fail to meet the recommended physical activity guidelines for health.

Move more and sit less!

How to be more active

For many people starting to participate in physical activity can be daunting. It's important to realise that it's not about dressing in lycra, and going to the gym (if that's not your thing).

You can be more physically active anywhere.

There are many ways to increase physical activity and **one of the easiest ways is to walk!**

Walking is:

- **Free!**
- Doesn't require equipment
- Less pressure and strain on joints
- Can be incorporated into everyday life



Do what you enjoy

The most important thing is to find something you enjoy doing! Remember start out slowly, and gradually build up.

- Find out what sessions are provided in local community centres
- Check out your Council Leisure Centre for swimming, yoga or Pilates
- Try golf, cycling or competitive sports



It all counts!

You can also add in household chores such as brushing, mopping or cutting the grass.

Any activity counts, so it doesn't matter how little you do, it all adds up!

Small changes make a big difference!

Walking

Walk slowly at first, and gradually build up to 30 minutes or try 10 minute bouts spread throughout the day.

Tips to increase walking:

- Leave the car at home for short trips – walk to shops or visiting friends
- Walk to school or work
- Park the car further away from shops or office
- If traveling by bus, get off 2 stops early and walk
- Have a walking meeting or stand for phone calls
- Avoid lifts and take the stairs
- Go for a walk at lunch time or after work
- Sign up to a walking group