

## 9 Physical Activity

Time Taken:  
20 Minutes



### Objectives

This section will introduce participants to the topic of Physical Activity.





**Step 1**

## Benefits of Physical Activity

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Inform participants that today's topic to be covered is physical activity.

*Does anyone know what physical activity is?*

Physical activity is any movement that your body makes e.g. kicking, walking, dancing etc.

You can become a better athlete by enjoying physical activity outside of your sports practice. There are many ways to be physically active. Certain exercises can help you improve the skills needed for your sport.



## Benefits of Physical Activity

- Improved health:
  - Reduce risk of heart disease and stroke.
  - Reduce risk of some cancers.
  - Reduce risk of type 2 diabetes.
- Stronger muscles and improved mobility.
- More energy.
- Sleep better.
- Lose weight.
- Live longer.
- Better concentration.
- Social benefits (e.g. getting out and meeting your friends at your Special Olympics Club).

## Step 2

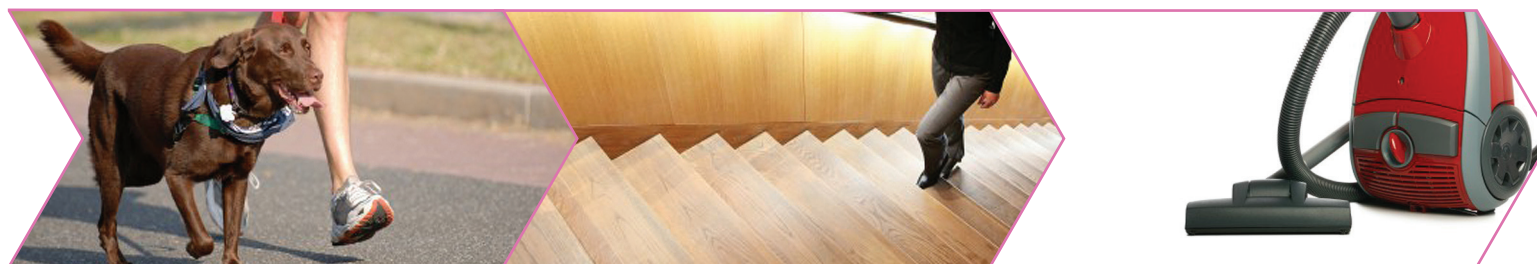
### Physical Activity Pyramid

- Introduce the participants to the physical activity pyramid.
- Use the poster of the physical activity pyramid as an aid - stick it on the wall or put it somewhere visible to all.
- The physical activity pyramid shows us the different types of activities we should be participating in and what we should cut down on.
- Work through the pyramid from bottom to the top.





The bottom shelf consists of everyday activities such as walking to the shops, taking the stairs, cleaning the house etc.

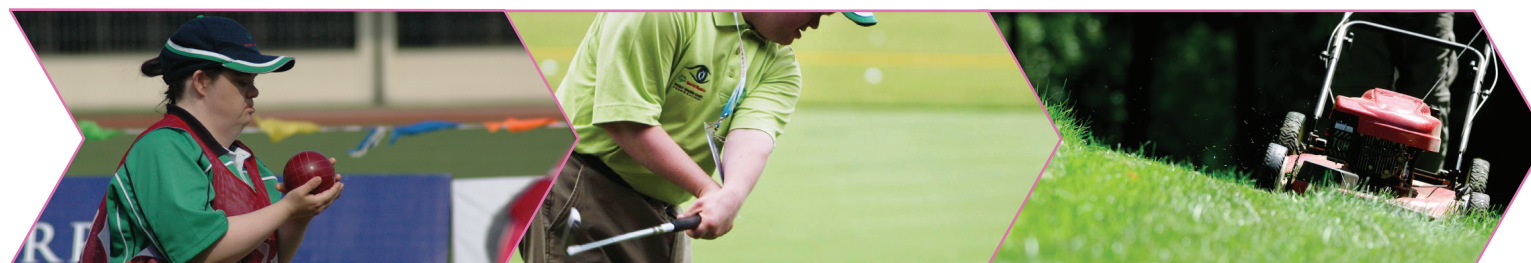


The second shelf are activities which should be done 3-5 times a week. These would include sports such as football, basketball, tennis and other aerobic and recreational activities.





The third shelf includes strength and flexibility exercises including golf, bowling and gardening. We should do these 2-3 times per week.



The top shelf represents activities that we should cut down on. These include activities such as watching television, playing computer games and browsing the Internet.



**Step 3**

## Quantity/Types of Physical Activity

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- Adults should do 30 minutes moderate intensity exercise 5 days per week.
- Children should do at least 60 minutes every day.

Moderate intensity exercise means you will feel some effort, your heart rate will increase and you will feel warmer all over, just like a brisk walk. You will be breathing faster but not out of breath. You should be able to talk but not sing!

### Demonstration:

Ask participants to get up and walk around the room chatting to each other. Ask everyone to move a little faster for a couple of minutes. Ask them to try singing. If they find it difficult then they are at moderate intensity exercise, otherwise speed up!





You can make up your 30 minutes in 2 x 15 minute session or 3 x 10 minute sessions.

Remember if you are trying to lose weight you will need to do 45-60 minutes of activity every day.



**FITT Formula** – Once you have started being physically active you may want to get fitter, for this we can use the FITT formula:

**F**requency - be active more often, aim for 7 days per week.

**I**ntensity - increase your pace to a vigorous intensity.

**T**ime - spend a little longer at your activity, e.g. go from 20 to 40 minutes.

**T**ype - have a look at the physical activity pyramid and ensure you are doing some of each type of exercise.

## Step 4

### Adapting your Lifestyle

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Here we will learn about different people who don't take much physical activity. Together we will think of ways they can become more active.

#### Scenario 1

John works in the office Monday - Friday from 9-5. He lives too far away to walk to work and gets the bus every morning. He lives on his own with his dog. John wants to get more physically active but is not sure how.

*What do you think John could do to be more active?*

## Answers to look for:

- Get off the bus a few stops too early and walk the rest of the way.
- Bring the dog for a walk in the evenings.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Join a local sports club/team.

## Scenario 2

Joan is looking for household chores that her daughter can do while being physically active.

*What things could she do to help around the house that involve physical activity?*



## Answers to look for:

- Gardening: Digging up weeds, mowing the lawn, raking the leaves, planting seeds.
- Washing the windows.
- Hoovering/sweeping the floor.
- Loading and emptying the dishwasher.
- Clearing and setting the table.

**Step 5**

## Barriers to Physical Activity

We all face different barriers to participating in physical activity. We are going to look at some of these barriers and find ways around them so we can all be more physically active.

### Barrier 1: Time

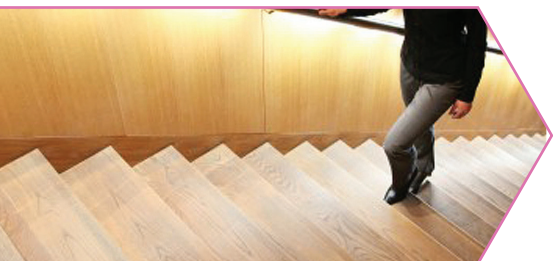
**Solution:** If you don't have a 30 minute block of free time available, break up your routine into three 10 minute block segments. During the day, try and fit in physical activity by taking the stairs instead of the lift etc. Use your physical activity diary to track the amount of exercise you do daily.





**Barrier 2:** Physical activity is boring

**Solution:** Think of a physical activity that you enjoy, swimming, dancing and sport can all be included. Also by getting involved with a friend it can be even more fun!



**Barrier 3:** I'm just not sporty!

**Solution:** You don't have to be sporty to be active. Choose activities that do not require new skills such as walking, jogging or climbing stairs. Join a club or class to develop new skills.



#### Barrier 4: Bad weather

**Solution:** Develop a list of different activities that can be done during any weather conditions. Activities such as swimming, dancing, walking around the shops, stair climbing are a few ideas. Try braving the rain – sometimes there’s nothing nicer than going for a walk in the rain.



#### Barrier 5: Lack of facilities/resources

Many people feel they can’t do physical activity because they do not have a swimming pool or a walking track nearby.

**Solution:** Select activities that require minimal or no equipment or facilities such as walking, jogging or jump rope.

## Step 6

### Games and Activities:

Choose one or more of the games to use with participants.

Games include:

- Activity Dice.
- Physical Activity Diary.
- Story Board Game.

