



WHY IS EXERCISE IMPORTANT?

The message is simple. Exercise is the best, cheapest, and most accessible medicine available. To improve chronic disease mortality rates, we all need to move more.

The reality is that Australians aren't moving enough, with less than half us meeting the recommended exercise guidelines.

Physical inactivity can be deadly. It is the second greatest contributor to the cancer burden in Australia, causing an estimated 21–25% of breast and colon cancers. Inactivity is also responsible for approximately 27% of diabetes and 30% of ischaemic heart disease burden.

The good news? A small change can make a big difference! If we all did an extra 30 minutes of brisk walking 5 days a week, it could cut Australia's disease burden due to insufficient physical activity by about 26%.

SO, WHAT CAN EXERCISE DO FOR YOU?

Exercise can help to prevent, treat and manage a range of health conditions.

The benefits of exercise are significant and well-documented. Research has shown that being physically active can:

- » Increase cancer survival rates after diagnosis by 50–60%
- » Reduce the incidence of type 2 diabetes by almost 60% in people at risk
- » Maintain and/or improve your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels
- » Reduce the risk of developing dementia
- » Improve your mental health
- » Build strong muscles and bones
- » Reduce the risk of falls and injury
- » Improve your general health and well-being

To find out if you're doing enough exercise to stay healthy, chat to your GP or an accredited exercise professional, like an Accredited Exercise Physiologist (AEP). To find an AEP near you, visit www.essa.org.au.

