

Get Active

If you want to be healthy, it's really important to be active as well as to eat a balanced diet.

But don't worry, it's easy to get a bit fitter without taking up a lot of time and money. In fact, just doing things like taking the stairs instead of the lift at work or washing the car can be a great way of increasing levels of physical activity without it all seeming too much like hard work.

If you haven't done any exercise for a while, walking is a great way to start. It's easy, it's free and it's something nearly all of us can do! Regular, brisk walking can help lower your risk of heart disease. So why not think about walking the kids to school instead of taking the car, or getting off the bus a couple of stops early on the way to work?

And remember, getting fit can be fun too. Choose something really enjoyable that fits into your lifestyle – join the local netball team, go out dancing or borrow a friend's dog! Chances are, the more you enjoy it, the more you'll do it and the more fit you'll become. But do be careful. If you haven't been active for quite some time, don't over-do-it.

Here are a few helpful tips:

- If you have any concerns about your health, always check with a doctor before beginning any physical exercise
- Start off with one or two 30-minute sessions a week (or 15 minutes, if 30 seems too daunting)
- When you feel ready, build this up to five sessions a week
- Moderate exercise means moving about enough to feel warm and slightly out of breath – not being too breathless to talk!
- Always do some simple stretches after any activity to avoid possible injury
- Try to vary your activities. This will help you exercise lots of different muscles
- Drink plenty of fluids (non-alcoholic!) to prevent dehydration.

There are many health and fitness centres and classes around the county. Visit www.reactivatebucks.org to find out more.

Take Action: Try and get some exercise every day.