



Get up, stand up!

Every day activities really do count as exercise

Welcome to PhysioBiz, with healthcare advice and information you can trust and rely on, brought to you by the South African Society of Physiotherapy!

Yes, it's the New Year. The children are back at school, you're back at work, and chances are good that you're already battling to stick to your New Year's resolutions – 60 percent of us are no longer sticking to our resolutions by mid-year, according to two academics writing in *The Conversation*.

Among the most common New Year's resolutions is some variant of "I will exercise more this year". In the heat of the moment, the idea of getting up an hour earlier to go the gym or the swimming pool sounds inspiring; when it comes to actually doing it, it may not be so easy.

Cheer up! We have some great news for you: almost exactly two years ago, a study was published that showed you can enjoy greater wellbeing by simply doing a little more every day.

"The study shows that there are considerable health benefits to be gained not only from moderate or intense physical activity but also from low-intensity (everyday) activity. Replacing half an hour's sedentariness a day with such low-level activity can reduce the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease by an estimated 24 percent.

"Replacing sedentariness with physical activity of at least moderate level equivalent to a brisk walk, or higher intensity training, had, as expected, an even greater effect on cardiovascular-related mortality. Ten minutes of moderate to intense activity a day reduced the risk of death due to

cardiovascular disease by 38 per cent, 30 minutes a day by a full 77 per cent, according to their calculations.”

Here’s a thought: you could replace a half-hour of sitting thumbing through FOMO stuff on your phone or tablet with mopping floors, sweeping, raking the lawn, digging or any of a number of household and outdoor chores that have to be done – and you’d definitely be doing at least low-intensity activity, in many cases moderate intensity.

Or you could choose to do something fun, like dancing or playing with the children.

Five ordinary activities that count as exercise are:

- Walking. Yes, it’s great for overall fitness. Walking to the nearest shop to pick up milk is exercise; so is walking your dog, walking to the taxi rank or walking the children to school.
- Gardening. Anyone who has access to a piece of land the size of a front door can contribute significantly to the household groceries – and the digging, weeding and harvesting are great exercise.
- Playing. Get outside with either your children or your dog, and spend just twenty minutes having fun with balls, running around and getting in some pretty intense exercise!
- Cleaning house or decluttering. It makes you feel like you’ve really achieved something, and you will certainly break a sweat!
- Dancing. Pop in the earplugs and dance in your bedroom or go out and party the evening away – either way, you’ll be getting some solid exercise.

“Exercise does not have to be a grind – it should be enjoyable,” says South African Society of Physiotherapy President Rogier van Bever Donker. “If you are concerned about undertaking any physical activity, or feel pain during activities of daily life, please consult your physiotherapist.”

To find a physiotherapist, go to www.saphysio.co.za.