



Making The Most Of Your Health

Zest

HOME FITNESS

www.ZestHomeFitness.com

...making exercise easy!

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1. Making The Most Of Your Health

Congratulations on the purchase of your new Mini Exercise Bike, the easy way to keep fit every day in the comfort of your own home. By purchasing a Mini Exercise Bike it shows that you are taking responsibility for your health.

Health experts are clear that physically activity significantly helps reduce our risk of heart disease, obesity, stroke, cancer, diabetes and many other long-term diseases. However our increasingly busy and sedentary lifestyles and fast-food culture conspire to make fitting exercise into our lives difficult to do.

Whether you are a busy parent, a sedentary worker with insufficient time and energy to devote to a regular fitness regime, an older person who needs a convenient way to maintain your fitness at home or a young person who shies away from going to the gym, your Mini Exercise Bike will give you years of convenient fitness-use in the comfort of your own home, even while you are busy doing other things such as watching TV, listening to music, reading a book or even surfing the internet.

Developing a consistent exercise habit

To improve your health you need to make being physical active a **regular** part of your weekly activities. Start off gently and gradually build up the time you spend using your Mini Exercise Bike. To help you keep track of your efforts, print off copies of our free Activity Diary - go to www.ZestHomeFitness.com, click on the Health Information tab and scroll down to the Activity Diary page where you can print off as many copies as you want.

On the tab below the Activity Diary, you will find the Health Booklet page where you can access a digital version of this booklet which has direct links to other websites and web pages with lots more relevant information.

We genuinely hope that your mini exercise bikes will enable you to build regular physical activity into your life and help you enjoy many years of good health.

With best wishes

George Pirintzi

Zest Home Fitness Limited

2. The Benefits of Regular Light Exercise

Keeping active and doing some regular physical exercise like cycling on your Mini Exercise Bike will help you manage excess weight, diabetes, cholesterol levels and high blood pressure. It can also:

- * Reduce your risk of coronary heart disease, such as angina
- * Improve muscle and bone strength
- * Relieve stress and anxiety and improve feelings of general wellbeing
- * Reduce the risk of certain types of cancer
- * Improve cognitive function
- * Reduce your risk of developing dementia
- * Help you recuperate after surgery

A little bit of effort to exercise on a regular basis is worth the many benefits enabling you to enjoy good health well into old age.

Medical experts recommend that adults do a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity, 5 times a week.

‘Moderate intensity activity’ means any activity that makes you breathe slightly harder and feel warmer than usual, but still allows you to talk. This may include cycling e.g. using your mini exercise bike, brisk walking, swimming, as well as activities such as gardening or doing the housework.

If 30 minutes a day seems a lot, you could break this up into two bouts of 15 minutes or three bouts of 10 minutes.

Please note that if you want to lose weight, you will need to exercise longer or more intensely.

N.B. If you have coronary heart disease, or have recently had a heart attack, surgery or a heart procedure, you should consult your doctor before starting any physical activity. If you feel unwell, dizzy, sick or feel any pain during exercise, stop immediately and consult your doctor.

3. Keeping Your Heart Healthy

There are several risk factors for coronary heart disease - the more you have the greater your chance of developing, or if you already have it - exacerbating, a dangerous heart condition.

Some risk factors are fixed and there is nothing you can do about them, but most factors are **acquired** and their impact can be **reduced** by making changes to your lifestyle.

The Risk Factors

Fixed Risks

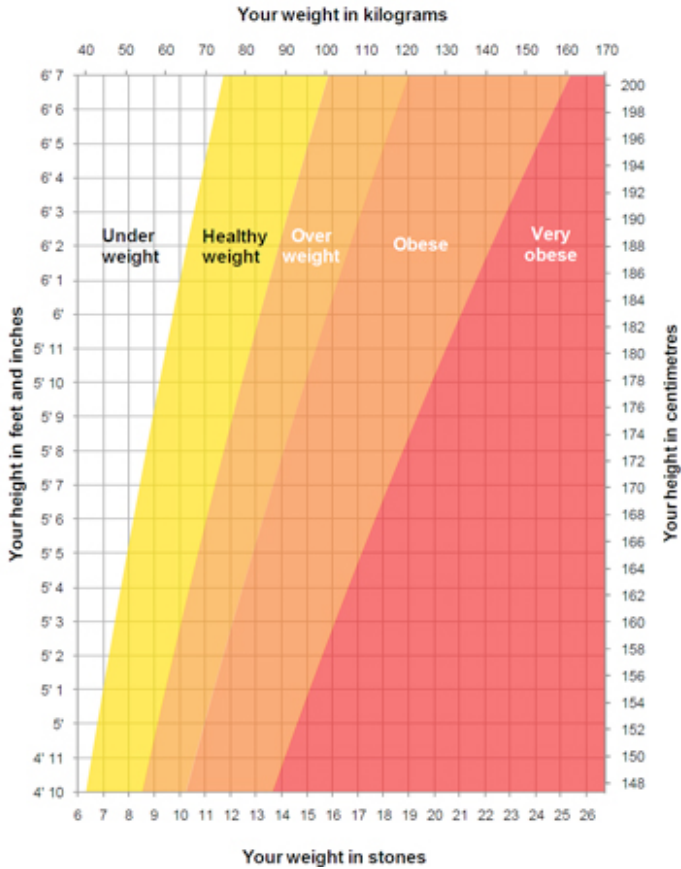
- * Age - The older you are, the greater your risk of heart disease.
- * Family history of heart disease - Your own risk of developing some types of cardiovascular disease increases if your father or brother was diagnosed with it under the age of 55 or your mother or sister was diagnosed under 65.
- * Ethnic background:
 - Afro-Caribbean have an above average risk of developing high blood pressure while
 - People of South Asian descent in the UK have a particular higher risk than the rest of the British population of dying of coronary heart disease before the age of 75.

Modifiable Risks

- (i) Being Overweight
- (ii) Physical Inactivity
- (iii) Smoking
- (iv) High Cholesterol
- (v) High Blood Pressure
- (vi) Diabetes

(i) Being Overweight

Maintaining a healthy weight and body shape will help you control your cholesterol levels and blood pressure. It will also reduce your risk of developing diabetes, or if you already have it, help keep under control.



Weigh yourself naked and measure your height without shoes and then use the Height/Weight chart above to find out if you are an ideal weight for your height. Trace vertically from your weight and horizontally across from your height to where the lines converge to see in which category you fall. If you are in the Overweight, Obese or Very Obese categories, your health will be at risk.

(N.B. This chart is not suitable for people under 18. To check the weights of children and adolescents and to get more accurate readings and exercise and dietary advice for adults go to <http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Healthyweightcalculator.aspx>

Body Shape

People who carry **too much weight around their middle** have a greater risk of developing coronary heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

People of Asian descent have a higher proportion of body fat to muscle than the general UK population and they also tend to carry it around their middle. This means that **they have a greater risk** of developing certain illnesses at a lower waist size than the general UK population.

As a rough guide:

	Your health is AT RISK if your waist size is over:	Your health is AT HIGH RISK if your waist size is over:
Women	80cm (c.31.5 inches)	88cm (c.34.5 inches)
Men	94cm (c.37 inches)	102cm (c.40 inches)
Asian Women		80cm (c.31.5 inches)
Asian Men		90cm (c.35.5 inches)

Losing Weight

If you are overweight, or if your body shape means that you are at risk or high risk, it is important for your heart health to:

- * Eat regular balanced, meals to give you all the nutrients you need.
- * Reduce the amount of calories you eat and drink by:
 - Reducing your portion sizes
 - Cutting down the amount of fat and sugar you consume
 - Cutting down on snacks and soft drinks
 - Increase the amount of fruit and vegetables you consume
 - Increase your daily physical activity

(ii) Physical Inactivity

Lack of physical activity and our sedentary lifestyles (working at a desk or sitting watching TV or surfing the internet) pose very serious risks to your long-term health.

Physical inactivity can lead to high blood pressure, raised cholesterol levels, diabetes and coronary heart disease.

Your heart is a muscle and needs exercise to help it keep fit so that it can pump blood efficiently around your body. **To stay fit and healthy, adults should do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity 5 days a week - (Children should do at least 60 minutes).**

‘Moderate intensity activity’ means any activity that makes you breathe slightly harder and feel slightly warmer than usual, but still allows you to talk. This may include cycling (indoors or outdoors), brisk walking or swimming, as well as daily activities like housework and gardening. You can reap the benefits of being more active from all sorts of physical activity - any increase will be good for your health.

If 30 minutes a day seems a lot, you could break this down into 3 sessions of 10 minutes or 2 sessions of 15 minutes. If necessary, start very gently and gradually build up to 30 minutes. (Note: If you want to lose weight, you may have to do quite a bit more.)

You should also do activities that help **strengthen** muscles **at least twice a week**. This could be exercising with weights, working with resistance bands, heavy gardening or carrying shopping.

Being active provides long term benefits for your heart health and general health. And if you are inactive, you are more likely to have a heart attack than someone who is active.

Staying or getting active helps control your weight, reduce blood pressure and cholesterol and improve your mental health – helping you to look and feel great. It's never too late to start. Being physically active in middle age can increase your life expectancy by two years, the same benefit as giving up smoking.

Many health problems can be helped by regular physical activity. But if you do have a health problem, or have a condition that you're taking prescribed medication for, you should check the amount and type of activity that is suitable with your GP.

For more information visit: www.nhs.uk/Change4Life

(iii) Smoking

Smoking is a leading cause of cardiovascular disease, and smokers are almost twice as likely to have a heart attack compared with people who have never smoked.

Stopping smoking has huge benefits and it's never too late to give up.

Stopping smoking is the **single best thing** you can do for your heart health, and the good news is that the risk to your heart health decreases significantly soon after you stop.

By quitting you'll be improving your own health by dramatically reducing your risk of **coronary heart disease**, **stroke** and a variety of cancers. You'll feel better, and have more money to spend on other things that you enjoy.

Smoking increases the risk of developing **cardiovascular diseases**, which includes **coronary heart disease** and **stroke**.

- Smoking damages the lining of your arteries, leading to a build up of fatty material (**atheroma**) which narrows the artery. This can cause **angina**, a **heart attack** or a **stroke**.
- The **carbon monoxide** in tobacco smoke reduces the amount of oxygen in your blood. This means your heart has to pump harder to supply the body with the oxygen it needs.

- The **nicotine** in cigarettes stimulates your body to produce adrenaline, which makes your heart beat faster and raises your **blood pressure**, making your heart work harder.
- Your blood is more likely to **clot**, which increases your risk of having a **heart attack** or **stroke**. Take a look at our **cardiovascular disease** page to find out more about blood clots and the damage they can do to your body.

When non-smokers breathe in second-hand smoke - also known as passive smoking - it can be harmful. Research shows that exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke is a cause of heart disease in non-smokers.

Practical Tips To Help You Stop Smoking

1. **Make a date to give up** - and stick to it. Throw away **all** your tobacco, lighters and ashtrays.
2. **Draw up an action plan** - Think about what would best support you to quit smoking e.g. nicotine-replacement patches, nasal spray, counselling, and have them ready and in place before the date you plan to quit.
3. **Keep busy** - to distract yourself from your craving for cigarettes. Change your routine, e.g. avoid the shop where you usually buy your cigarettes.
4. **Get support** - ask your GP or nurse for ways to stop smoking. Tell your friends that you are stopping and ask them to help you avoid temptation. Speak to people who have managed to quit for their advice.
5. **Treat yourself** - use the money you are saving to buy something special.

For more information visit: www.wequit.co.uk

(iv) High Blood Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance which is mainly made by your liver from the saturated fats in the food you eat. It plays a vital role in enabling your body to function properly, however you should aim to keep your cholesterol level as low as possible because too much cholesterol in your blood can increase your risk of developing coronary heart disease.

Coronary heart disease is caused when the blood vessels to the heart (the coronary arteries) become narrowed by a gradual build-up of fatty material on their walls which **prevent proper circulation of your blood to your heart**. The fatty substance is called 'atheroma' and the condition is called 'atherosclerosis'.

Your GP's surgery can easily arrange to measure your cholesterol level - you should be aiming for **a level below 4.5 (millimols per litre of blood)**.

You can lower your cholesterol level and protect your heart by:

- * Increasing your physical activity
- * Eating a healthy, balanced diet or
- * Taking medication.

Physical activity helps regulate the balance between the good cholesterol (HDL) and bad cholesterol (LDL). People who are obese are more likely to have higher cholesterol levels. As part of a healthy diet, it is important to reduce the amount of fat you eat and to eat unsaturated fats, instead of saturated fats.

For more information visit: <http://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/conditions/high-cholesterol.aspx>

(v) High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the pressure of the blood in your arteries. High blood pressure (also known as hypertension) increases your risk of getting coronary heart disease and having a heart attack or stroke.

You are **unlikely** to have any outward symptoms of it unless your blood pressure is very high.

The only way of knowing for sure is to have it measured. This can be done easily by your doctor, nurse or in some cases by your local pharmacist.

The target for the general population is to have **blood pressure below 140/85**, however if you have had a heart attack, a stroke, coronary heart disease or diabetes this should be below 130/80.

To reduce or manage your blood pressure, you should:

- * Do more physical activity
- * Keep to a healthy weight
- * Cut down on alcohol
- * Cut down on salt
- * Eat more fruit and vegetables, and
- * Stop smoking.

For more information visit:

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/conditions/high-blood-pressure.aspx

(vi) Diabetes

Diabetes is a group of metabolic diseases in which a person has high blood sugar, either **because the pancreas does not produce enough insulin**, or **because cells do not respond to the insulin that is produced**. This high blood sugar produces the classical symptoms of polyuria (frequent urination), polydipsia (increased thirst) and polyphagia (increased hunger).

Diabetes significantly increases the risk of getting coronary heart disease and can cause other serious problems such as stroke, heart attack, blindness, poor blood circulation to the hands and legs (possibly leading to amputation) and erectile dysfunction.

The principal ways to reduce your risk of developing diabetes or managing it if you already have it is by:

- * Doing more more physical exercise
- * Maintaining a healthy body weight
- * Eating a healthy, balanced diet.

For more information visit: www.diabetes.org.uk

Eating healthily

Eating healthily can help maintain healthy cholesterol and blood pressure levels which will in turn reduce your risk of developing coronary heart disease.

It can also help you achieve and keep to a healthy weight as well as help you manage conditions such as diabetes.

Top tips for healthy eating:

- * **Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.**
- * **Eat oily fish regularly** - at least one portion a week, however, if you have had a heart attack, you should aim to eat 2 or 3 portions a week. (Women who are pregnant or who are breast-feeding and girls should not eat more than 2 portions a week.)
- * **Cut down on salt** - adults should have less than 6 grammes of salt a day.
- * **Cut down on saturated and trans fats** and choose healthier, unsaturated fats.

A balanced diet

The best way to understand how to eat a balanced diet is to think of foods in food groups. Everyone should aim for [a well balanced diet](#). Faddy crash diets may not provide the balance of nutrients you need.

Try to eat:

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Plenty of starchy foods such as bread, rice, potatoes and pasta. Choose wholegrain varieties wherever possible
- Some milk and dairy products
- Some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
- Only a small amount of foods and drinks high in fats and/or sugar.

Choose options that are lower in fat, salt and sugar whenever you can.

Fruit and vegetables

A well-balanced diet should include at least [5 portions](#) of fruit and veg a day. Try to vary the types of fruit and veg you eat. They can be fresh, frozen, dried or tinned. Pure unsweetened fruit juice, pulses and beans count as a portion,

but they only make up a maximum of one of your five a day, however much you eat in one day.

A portion is about a handful (80g or 3oz), for example:

- 4 broccoli florets
- 1 pear
- 3 heaped tablespoons of carrots
- 7-8 strawberries

Fats

To help look after your heart health it is important to keep an eye on how much fat you are eating as well as making sure you choose the right type of fats.

So to help keep your heart healthy:

- Cut right down on **saturated fats**
- Replace saturated fats with small amounts of **mono** and **polyunsaturated** fats
- Reduce the overall amount of fat you eat
- Cut down on foods containing trans fats.

It's also important to remember that all fats and oils are high in calories, so even the unsaturated fats should only be used in small amounts.

Saturated fat

Too much saturated fat can increase the amount of **cholesterol** in the blood, which can increase the risk of developing **coronary heart disease**.

Unsaturated fats

Unsaturated fats, which can be monounsaturated fats (for example olive oil, rapeseed oil, almonds, unsalted cashews and avocado) or polyunsaturated fats (including sunflower oil and vegetable oil, walnuts and sunflower seeds), are a healthier choice.

Omega-3 fats are a particular type of polyunsaturated fat, usually found in oily fish, that can help protect heart health. Try to have at least one portion of oily fish a week e.g. fresh tuna, fresh or tinned salmon, sardines, pilchards and mackerel. If you have had a heart attack, aim for two to three portions a week.

Trans fats

Another type of fat, known as trans fats, can also raise the amount of cholesterol in the blood.

Salt

Eating too much [salt](#) can increase the risk of developing high [blood pressure](#). Having high blood pressure increases the risk of developing coronary heart disease.

Top tips for reducing your salt intake

Low salt food doesn't need to be tasteless or bland. There are lots of things you can do to make sure your food is still exciting and satisfying.

- **Check the nutritional information on food labels** and try to pick low-salt options and ingredients
- **Add less salt when cooking** and don't add salt to your food at the table. As you get used to the taste of food without salt, cut it out completely.
- **Flavour your food with pepper, herbs, garlic, spices or lemon juice instead.**
- **Watch out for cooking sauces and seasonings** like soy sauce or jerk seasoning -some of these are very high in salt.
- **Swap salty snacks** such as crisps and salted nuts with fruit and vegetables instead.
- **Avoid saltier foods** such as bacon, cheese, takeaways, ready meals and other processed foods.

Alcohol

If you drink [alcohol](#), it's important to keep within the [recommended guidelines](#) - whether you drink every day, once or twice a week or just occasionally.

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Tel: 020 3675 0484

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