

General fitness

As well as exercises that work on maintaining or building strength, it is also important to keep yourself fit, making your cardiovascular system - heart and lungs - do the work

You may already be doing activities that make you breathe a bit deeper and get your heart rate going faster. It doesn't have to be 'exercise' as such, it may be anything such as dancing, swimming, gardening or walking.

It is possible to just tweak some activities to make them challenge your cardiovascular fitness - perhaps walk faster for part of your route (between certain landmarks such as seats in the park, shops on the High Street etc), climb the stairs instead of using the lift or escalator, dig the garden a bit more vigorously. The increase in speed or effort need only be for part of the activity but you should be aware of breathing deeper and feeling a bit warmer from the effect on your circulation.

If you find it difficult to make yourself breathe deeper and get your heart rate going because your balance is not so good or your legs tire very quickly then there are things you can do sitting in a chair.

Sitting jogging

Get your arms and legs pumping as if you are running but stay seated. Even if you keep going for just one minute you will find your heart rate has gone up and you are breathing deeper.

You can also split your arms and legs so that you can simply 'arm jog' or keep your arms still and 'march' with your legs.

Punching

Punch your arms alternately forward or upward. This one is good if you are feeling a bit stressed - you can imagine all sorts of people or situations that have made you feel a bit fed up and punch them away!

It is good to have a trigger to remind you to exercise. Maybe do one of these exercises when the adverts or weather come on the television, or when waiting for the kettle to boil. Exercise in short bursts will still make a difference to your fitness.