



Move more, sit less

Am I active enough?



How much do you sit?

Adults spend more than half of their waking hours sitting.¹⁻³

Think about how long you have been sitting today. You may have sat:

- at the table to eat meals
- at your work desk
- in the classroom
- in the car
- on the train, bus or tram
- in front of the TV/computer in the evenings.

It all adds up to hours of sitting.

*Sitting less is important
no matter how active you are.*

What are the risks of sitting too much?

Even if you're getting enough exercise in your day, you may be sitting too much.

We now know that sitting time is a health risk for children and adults, and can have short- and long-term negative impacts.

Sitting too much contributes to a number of health problems:

- obesity
- insulin resistance
- diabetes.

These health problems also increase your risk of developing coronary heart disease.

To reduce your risk of health problems, you need to be aware of how much you sit and try to move more throughout the day.

Sitting less is better for your health

- Adults who sit less throughout the day have a lower risk of early death – particularly from cardiovascular disease (CVD).^{4,5}
- Adults who watch less than 2 hours of television a day are less likely to have type 2 diabetes or be obese, and have a lower risk of developing CVD.⁶
- If an adult meets the Australian Government's physical activity recommendations of 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week, they are classified as 'physically active'.
 - Adults may increase their health benefits if they also sit less during the day.
- New evidence suggests that, no matter what your total sitting time is, regular interruptions from sitting (even as little as standing up) may help to reduce your risk factors for developing coronary heart disease and diabetes.^{2,7}

*Adults who do regular, planned exercise,
such as going to the gym or running, may
still sit for long periods of time every day
and need to move more.*

Did you know?

- Higher levels of physical activity can help reduce your risk of some cancers and prevent unhealthy weight gain.
- Even if you do more than the recommended amount of physical activity every week, you will still benefit from minimising the time you spend sitting each day, and from regularly interrupting periods of sitting.

How much should you exercise?

Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Adults (18–64 years) recommend:

- Minimise the amount of time spent in prolonged sitting.
- Break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.
- Doing any physical activity is better than doing none.
 - If you currently do no physical activity, start by doing some, and gradually build up to the recommended amount.
- Be active on most, preferably all, days every week.
- Accumulate 150–300 minutes (2–5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity (activities that don't make you breathless), or 75–150 minutes (1–2 hours) of vigorous-intensity physical activity (activities that make you huff and puff), or an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous activities, each week.
- Do muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days each week.

What else can help?

Limit screen time to 2 hours a day.

- Studies have shown that adults who watch less than 2 hours of television a day have a lower risk of early death than adults who watch more than this.^{8–10}
- The more time adults spend watching TV, the higher their risk of health problems.

We recommend that workplaces implement strategies to reduce the amount of time their employees spend sitting.

- Sitting is a large part of many people's workday. The benefits of encouraging employees to sit less include lower rates of obesity and chronic disease, and, in turn, reduced absenteeism and increased staff participation.^{11,12}

How can I reduce my sitting time?

At home

- Watch TV while doing household chores, such as folding clothes, washing dishes or ironing.
- Stand to read the newspaper or online articles.
- Wash your car by hand rather than using a drive-through car wash.
- Move around the house when making phone calls or checking your text messages and email on your mobile phone.



At work

- Stand and take a break from your computer every 30 minutes.
- Take breaks by standing up during long meetings.
- Use the stairs instead of the lift.
- Stand during phone calls.
- Walk to a colleagues' desk rather than phoning or emailing.
- Use a height-adjustable desk so you can stand while working.
- Eat your lunch away from your desk.



While travelling

- Leave your car at home and take public transport so you walk to and from stops/stations.
- Walk or cycle at least part way to your destination.
- Park your car further away from your destination and walk the rest of the way.
- Plan regular breaks during long car trips.
- Stand while using public transport.
- Get on and off public transport one stop earlier and walk the extra distance.



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Want to know more?

For more information on how to move more, sit less, call our Health Information Service on 1300 36 27 87 and talk to one of our trained health professionals. You can also visit www.heartfoundation.org.au



For heart health information,
please contact us

1300 36 27 87

heartfoundation.org.au

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