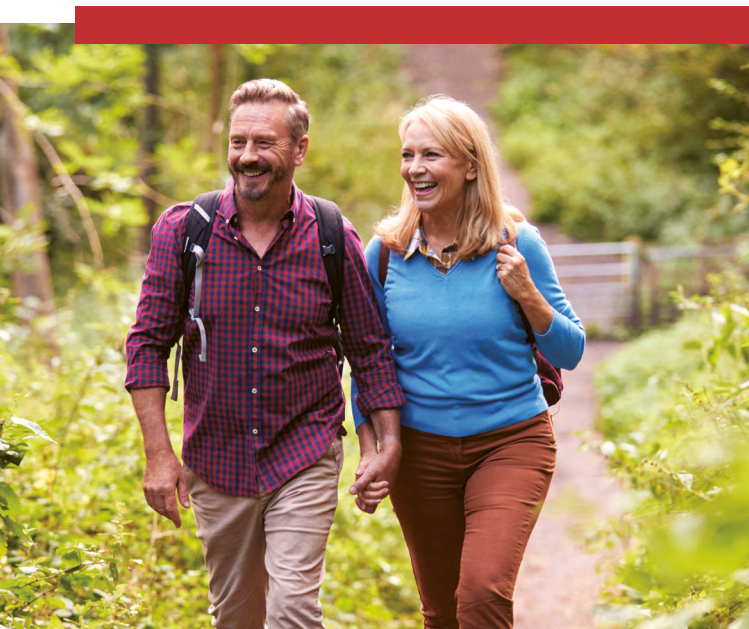




# Recommend Heart Foundation Walking to your patients

Most Australians can significantly reduce their risk of heart disease, and other conditions, simply by walking regularly for 30 minutes or more.

The Heart Foundation supports Australians to meet Australia's physical activity guidelines in a safe, fun and supportive way through **Australia's largest free walking program.**





## Why physical activity?

The Heart Foundation recommends physical activity to anyone who is not currently meeting the physical activity guidelines.

There are many benefits linked to regular physical activity, it has been proven to:

- Lower a person's risk of developing heart disease and other chronic illnesses by up to 35%.
- Control the risk factors for heart disease, like high blood pressure, high cholesterol and being overweight.
- Improve sleep quality.
- Reduce the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.
- Reduce the risk and ease the symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Improve quality of life through increasing social connections.
- Build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints, reducing risk of injuries from falls.
- Improve independence and the ability to perform daily living tasks.

## How much physical activity?

The Heart Foundation recommends that any physical activity is better than nothing. If people don't do any activity, they should start slowly and build up to the recommended amount of 30 minutes a day, on most days.

Support others by sharing these tips:

- Walk on most, if not all, days of the week.
- Aim to do 30 minutes of walking a day, at a moderate intensity.
- If 30 minutes is too much, start with 10 minutes and slowly increase time spent walking until you reach 30 minutes a day.
- Spend less time sitting.
- Do muscle strengthening activities on at least 2 days each week.
- Remind people that it's never too late to start and get the benefits.

## Next steps

- Encourage people to download a Personal Walking Plan, our free six-week program designed to get participants meeting the recommended physical activity levels. Plans come with text message support, strength and flexibility programming.
- Encourage people to join their local Heart Foundation Walking group. Participants get rewarded at walk milestones and benefit from the social connections within their community.

### Direct them to the right information

- [walking.heartfoundation.org.au](http://walking.heartfoundation.org.au)
- The Heart Foundation, **13 11 12**



## What are the national guidelines?

For adults aged 18–64, the recommended minimum level of activity for health benefits is 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both, each week. **For adults aged 65 and over**, the guidelines recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all, days.

Moderate physical activity takes some effort, will make you sweat and breathe harder, but you'll still be able to hold a conversation. For example, instead of a stroll suggest a brisk walk.

## More information

- [walking.heartfoundation.org.au](http://walking.heartfoundation.org.au)
- **Heart Foundation on 13 11 12**

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