

Solihull's Adult Physical Activity & Health Pathway

There is robust evidence of the importance of physical activity in helping to prevent and treat poor physical and mental health and to support healthy ageing. The benefits of taking part in physical activity outweigh the risks, including for people with long-term health conditions. Those who are least active stand to benefit the most in terms of their health and wellbeing by getting active.

Supporting people with long-term health conditions to wait well and live well

Adults on waiting lists for specific services (e.g. support from OT, physio, social worker, specialist)

Adults who are being discharged from specific services (e.g. NHS secondary care, social care)

To help adults to self-manage long-term health condition(s)



Physical Activity Support and Signposting Information

Person's preference is to exercise at home/build within daily life

Move More at Home - A range of inclusive online activities, including options suitable for older adults, people with disabilities & long-term health conditions.

Strength and Balance - Exercise at home options including Strong & Steady initiative.

Visiting local parks & open spaces - A wonderful way to enjoy the outdoors. Packed with gardens, lakes and facilities to suit all ages, they provide a natural meeting point for friends and families.

Gardening - It could be something that requires less exertion like weeding or pruning, or a more strenuous activity like raking or mowing grass.

Ways to increase activity in daily life - Finding easy ways to fit more activity into daily life can help people to build up and start a more active lifestyle.

Dementia Specific Programme - Love to Move from British Gymnastics Foundation, online exercise videos and downloadable exercise booklet.

Person's preference is to engage with community physical activity options

Person prefers individual exercise options:

- [Swimming](#)
- [Walking Routes & Maps](#)
- [Cycling Routes & Maps](#)
- [Gym-based exercise at leisure centres](#)

Person prefers group exercise options:

- [Walking groups](#)
- [Cycling sessions & groups](#)
- [Jogging/Running groups](#)
- [Gentle Exercise Programme](#) (Step into Solihull – aimed at 45+ age group)
- [Inclusive Activity Programme](#) (Solihull Gets Active – aimed at people with disabilities)
- [Strength and Balance exercise classes](#)
- [My Solihull Map](#) (An interactive mapping service, helping residents to find out what's going on in their area).

Person requires more tailored support to get started:

- [DocSpot Exercise Referral Scheme*](#)

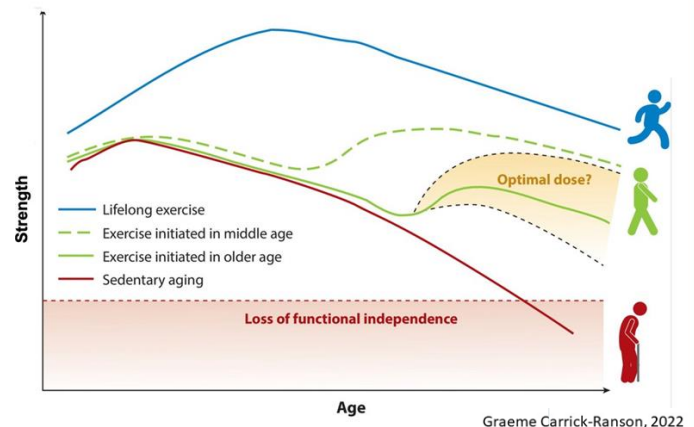
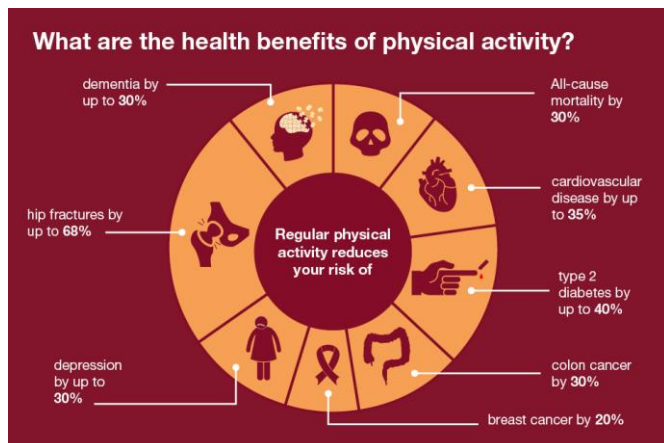
Person has one of these health conditions & wants to attend the specialist service:

- [Cancer Rehab*](#)
- [Cardiac Rehab*](#)
- [MS & Parkinson's Disease](#)

*Please note a completed referral form is required to access these services, via a GP surgery or NHS UHB Foundation Trust.

The importance of physical activity

In adults, physical activity contributes to prevention and management of noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes and reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety, enhances brain health, and can improve overall wellbeing.



Getting started: Exercising with long-term health conditions

Regardless of whether someone already has a diagnosed health condition or they're at higher risk of developing one, physical activity will be able to help. It is important to consider the age, abilities and type of condition someone has, as well as their needs and preferences, when they undertake physical exercise. Some people will have participated in regular exercise over the years and the idea will not be new to them, while others might have exercised very little. Those that are just starting out should start slowly and build up gradually. Lower impact and low-moderate intensity activity types can help build confidence and strength. It is most beneficial to try and find activities that someone will find enjoyable, which will mean that they are more likely to continue with them long-term.

How much exercise is recommended

It is important to remember that any amount of physical activity is better than none and all movement counts, especially as everybody will have their own starting point. Adults and older adults, including those with long-term health conditions (LTCs) should aim for the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity a week, unless specifically advised otherwise by a GP or LTC healthcare specialist. To help keep muscles, bones and joints strong and maintain functional independence, people should also aim to build in the recommendation of twice weekly strength activities. For older adults, taking part in activities that improve balance two days a week will also reduce the chance of frailty and falls. This may sound like a lot for people just starting out, but they can build up gradually towards these levels, and daily activities all count, such as brisk walking, cleaning or gardening.

Is it safe for people with health conditions to exercise?

The benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks. Physical activity is safe, even for people living with symptoms of multiple LTCs. Regular physical activity, in combination with standard medical care, has an important role in the management and prevention of many LTCs. When physical activity levels are increased gradually, the risk of serious adverse events is very low. Find out more at:

<https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/riskconsensus/>

For further information about having conversations with people living with LTCs and physical activity please visit [Moving Medicine](#) for directive conversation support.

When is exercise not appropriate?

It is important to exercise only as much as a person's current physical condition allows. People should avoid exercise on days where they are feeling ill or fatigued and wait until they feel better and/or if their GP or specialist Healthcare Professional has recommended to avoid it for a specific reason.

