



HEALTH Plus WEALTH

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Move it, or Lose it

Have you noticed a change in seasons recently? Does it feel as though Summer is finally just around the corner?

For me, growing up in the leafy suburbs of SW19 as Wimbledon fortnight approached, I always knew June marked the start of Summer. This was true even if the sunshine hadn't been out much because all the normally empty courts in the park were suddenly full of would-be tennis players!

Everyone benefits from moving more and being more physically active; it's another one of the recognised 5 ways of wellbeing. We can also think of physical activity as another one of those "accounts" we can invest or deposit in today, to reap future benefits or gains later on in life. This really can help us benefit from more years in our life and life in our years!

Both the sunshine and events like Wimbledon are great triggers to help us all get up, move more and be active. In today's sedentary lifestyles, where we either "move it or lose it" some of us need all the trigger-helps we can get.

I'm sure I don't need to tell you about the many and varied benefits we have when we are regularly physically active that lead to reduced risk of lifestyle diseases including heart disease, high blood pressure leading to strokes, type 2 diabetes, cancers, osteoarthritis, etc.

Nor do I need to remind you about the benefits to our mental and emotional health and wellbeing including improving our mood, reducing risk of Alzheimer's, dementia, depression, anxiety, worries, stress and so on...

And I probably don't need to say that physical activity doesn't have to be in the form of recognised sports like tennis, football, badminton or indeed any other organised form of sport. Physical activity can also include activities such as walking, gardening or even doing household chores; in fact, anything that gets us moving more.

However, I thought it would be a good for us all to take a moment and appreciate that for those activities to really count and benefit our health and wellbeing, the

Government's Chief Medical Officer recommends that they are **moderate in intensity and we should be doing a total of around 150 minutes per week.**

This means, to reap these benefits, we need to make sure we undertake activity minimum bouts of at least 10 minutes or more, at a rate that gets our heart beating so we can feel it beating in our chest, and our breathing rate to a level that meant we could still hold a conversation, but would probably struggle to sing.

It's also good to remember that we **"Move it or lose it!"**

If we invest enough into our physical activity while we can, we will reap significant rewards later in life, helping us be more resilient to natural ageing, coping with falls, keeping mobile and feeling well into our older years.

In fact, the benefits of being physically active are so great that if you could package up all the benefits and all the side effects and put them into a pill, it would be known as a super-pill. This is because physical activity has so many benefits and so little side effects. And if that wasn't enough, as little as 15 minutes a day can add 3 years to your lifespan alone.

In today's sedentary society, where a super-pill might be far easier to stomach than being active, we need to be intentional to move more in our everyday lives.

So, whilst we may be tempted to watch Wimbledon from the comfort of our own armchairs, eating strawberries and cream and drinking Pimm's, why not be intentional and take a brisk 10-minute walk to your local park and see if you can spot any potential would-be tennis champions there too?

I appreciate not everyone is into tennis, so please do let me know how you might be more intentional about being more active, by emailing niky@intentionalhealth.uk.

Thank you to those of you who are taking time to write back about how you are finding these blogs helpful in being more intentional about investing into areas of increased health and wealth too.

Niky Dix *Intentional Health*