

ACTIVE PEOPLE

HEALTHY HEARTS

 **sport**
Northern Ireland
LOTTERY FUNDED

The lead agency for developing sport in Northern Ireland

ACTIVE PEOPLE: HEALTHY HEARTS

Sport Northern Ireland is keen to promote the message that sport and physical activity are for everyone and that the benefits of an active lifestyle should be fully embraced and enjoyed by all. One of sport's greatest contributions is its positive impact on public health, and in keeping hearts healthy.



DID YOU KNOW?

Heart disease is the 2nd biggest killer in Northern Ireland.

In Northern Ireland 3,500 people (approx. nine per day) die each year as a result of heart disease.

More women die in Northern Ireland from heart disease than every other form of cancer combined.

Younger men are more likely to have heart attacks than younger women.

65% of people are not physically active enough to protect them from getting Coronary Heart Disease.

40% of people with Coronary Heart Disease die through inactivity.

Coronary Heart Disease **costs the UK economy more than £9 billion each year.**



WHAT IS CORONARY HEART DISEASE?

Coronary Heart Disease is caused when arteries supplying blood to the heart become narrowed by a build up of fatty material. A completely blocked artery can cause a heart attack.

WHY BE ACTIVE?

Being physically active is a key element of living a longer, healthier and happier life.

Participating in regular sport and physical activity can help you lower the risk of developing Coronary Heart Disease and other chronic diseases such as:

- **Diabetes**
- **High Blood Pressure**
- **Angina**
- **High Cholesterol**
- **Stroke**
- **Obesity**

- ✓ Being active reduces your risk of Coronary Heart Disease by up to 50%.
- ✓ Taking regular exercise reduces your blood pressure and the levels of bad cholesterol in your blood.
- ✓ Physical activity helps your heart recover after surgery or a heart attack, improves your heart if you already have a heart condition, and reduces the risk of further heart problems.
- ✓ Being physically active through regular participation in sport and recreation helps you reduce a number of the risk factors associated with Coronary Heart Disease.



HOW MUCH ACTIVITY SHOULD I DO?

As a minimum, take part in sport or moderate physical activity for **30 minutes, 5 days a week**, or preferably every day for good general health.

Increasing the intensity or the amount of time of your activity can have additional health benefits.

No matter what activity you choose, it can be done all at once, or divided into two or three parts during the day. Even 10 minutes of activity count toward your total.

Even some activity is better than none.

MAKE SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY A REGULAR PART OF YOUR DAY

Choose activities that you will enjoy and can do regularly. Fitting activity into your daily routine can be an easy way to get active.

Keep motivated by trying something different on alternate days - be active at least 5 days a week. Do at least 10 minutes activity at a time, and think about a longer activity on the weekend.

Your heart is a muscle that needs to keep fit to pump blood and oxygen around your body – it beats around 100,000 times a day.

Aerobic activities, such as cycling, walking and running, increase your heart rate and are best for heart health as these make your heart and circulation more efficient over time.



GETTING AND STAYING ACTIVE



AT HOME AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Join a sports club, or take an exercise class
- Join a walking group
- Recruit a partner for support and encouragement
- Get the whole family involved—enjoy an afternoon bike ride with your kids
- Walk and/or cycle more, and drive less
- Talk to your health professional about referral programmes



AT WORK

- Get off the bus or train one stop early and walk the rest of the way
- Cycle to work – or part of the way
- Replace a coffee break with a brisk 10-minute walk. Ask a friend to go with you
- Walk to talk instead of using the phone or email
- Take part in an exercise programme at work or a near by gym
- Encourage and participate in sport and physical activity at work

WHAT WORKS?



JENNIFER'S STORY

Jennifer was referred to a community based physical activity programme by her consultant. The programme was specifically designed to improve the basic health and fitness of participants at risk of heart disease through walking, cycling and gym sessions. Over the 12-week period Jennifer lost 10 kilograms and showed considerable reductions in blood pressure and resting heart rate. Her consultant reported that she overcame a lack of confidence to go swimming and now swims regularly as a form of cardiovascular exercise. Jennifer also feels much healthier and capable, and her general mood has improved.

ABOUT SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

Sport Northern Ireland is the leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland. Its corporate vision is:

“a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport which contributes to a peaceful, fair and prosperous society”.

The full report ‘**Active People: Healthy Communities**’ can be downloaded online at www.sportni.net

This document is available in other accessible formats on request, and online at www.sportni.net



Sport Northern Ireland
House of Sport
2a Upper Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5LA

T: (028) 9038 1222
E: info@sportni.net
W: www.sportni.net

Endorsed by:

