



Physical Activity

Introduction

Physical activity refers to any activity that you do involving movement. Throughout your day you have many opportunities to be physically active - at work, in your leisure time, at home and for transport. Activities may include playing sport, walking or manual tasks such as housework, gardening and DIY.

There are many short & long term benefits of exercise and adopting a healthy lifestyle including:

- a longer life
- less risk of developing many diseases
- greater feel-good factor
- less anxiety and depression
- less stress - physical activity helps people relax
- greater ability to function at work, home and in your daily routine
- improved sleep
- better maintenance of a healthy weight
- increased social opportunities - you meet more people and develop friends through sport and exercise

Aside from the gym, here are some easy ways to involve exercise in your daily routine:

- If your trip is less than a mile or so, try walking or cycling - or at least part of the way. Work up to doing this every day and see how much better you feel
- When you have a choice - take the stairs instead of the lift
- Swim a few times a week – this is even more effective than walking
- Exercise classes - these can be great fun. CSE offer a variety of classes to suit all fitness levels. Definitely worth checking out!
- Clean / Hoover one room of your home each day to get in extra walking and work your abdominal and back muscles
- Wash your car by hand
- Walk your own dog, or if you haven't got one, a friend's dog

Facilities / Activities available at the University

The University's Centre for Sport and Exercise provide a wide range of facilities and activities for all levels of fitness, and these are available for both members and non-members. Discounted membership rates are available for staff.

- Classes
- Fitness Assessments

- Student and Staff Clinic

Walking

Walking is a good way of keeping active and research indicates that 10,000 steps a day helps to maintain a healthy heart.

Stairclimbing

Regular stair climbing not only provides free daily exercise and burns more calories per minute than jogging but it has been shown to provide other important health benefits. Research shows that just 7 minutes of stair climbing per day cuts the chances of dying from coronary heart disease by 62%. It also halves the risk of a heart attack. Stair-climbing at work (for just 7 minutes a day) is an accessible way of achieving adequate amounts of exercise to stay fit and healthy. It is exercise that you can easily build into your daily routine in the work place.

The University of Edinburgh is supporting a stair climbing campaign launched by NHS Scotland to encourage all of us in the workplace to use the stairs instead of the lift.

NHS Health Scotland have put together Stair Climbing at Work packs to help promote the use of stairs and to motivate everyone, including those who are less active. The packs contain posters (1x A4, 1 x A3, 1 x A2) , directional arrows to point people towards the stairs and stair banners for the riser part of the stairs. Stair climbing packs are available from the Health and Safety Department Health.Safety@ed.ac.uk

Jogging

For staff interesting in getting more active, the University has been working in partnership with Jogscotland and a number of groups have been set up at various University sites.

Jogscotland is a partnership between Scottishathletics, Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS) and Sportscotland, three national organisations from health and sport, working together to help people in Scotland adopt a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Staff and students can become a member of Jogscotland and participate in these Jogscotland Groups, which provide a fun and supportive way of exercising and are suitable for all fitness levels. In order to take part in the Jogscotland Groups you will need to join Jogscotland (Bronze membership is free!) where you will receive information and support on becoming more active

Further details on Jogscotland can be found on the Jogscotland website.

Cycling

The Transport Office publish details for those interested in cycling, either to work or for leisure, including information on lunchtime rides, bike buddies, interest free loans for the purchase of bicycles, discounts from local cycle suppliers, links to cycle clubs, etc.

The Transport Office also provides details for those interested in walking including links to local weather reports.

Other source of Guidance and Advice:

- Cycling Scotland www.cyclingscotland.org

Health for Life

The Health and Safety Department has again been in discussion with Sportsvine Ltd., the company which produces the nationally recognised "Health for Life" scheme, now being marketed through Stevenson's College in Edinburgh.

This scheme encourages individuals to sign up for a free programme of health promoting activity, which is carried out via distance learning, in a manner and pace to suit individual preferences and circumstances, whilst culminating in a nationally recognised certificate, the Certificate in Exercise Studies (Level 1).

If you think that Health for Life might be for you, please read the further information which provides an introduction to the scheme.

Centre for Sport and Exercise

The Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE) provides a diverse, affordable, and high quality sport and exercise programme which is proving increasingly significant in supporting the University's broader academic (helping recruit and retain quality students and staff; assisting in the delivery of sport-related academic courses), management (cost effectiveness; utilising space optimally; promoting healthy living) and social (enhancing the profile / publicity of the University; engaging with the wider community; celebrating equality and diversity) objectives.

THE CSE was awarded a top rating of 5* for its sports facilities/services in the 2006-7 Times Good University Guide and currently has over 11,500 in CSE membership, making us one of the largest leisure clubs in the UK.

The Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) lies 5th in the BUSA competition, and co-ordinates a massive 64 sports clubs. Together, CSE and EUSA demonstrate both the high quality and diversity of the University's sporting offer.

Services offered at the CSE:

- Exercise classes – from Low Impact Circuit to Ultimate Abs
- Core support & Personal Training – work with a professional
- Sports Workshops – prefer the group approach? Try Pilates
- Large Cardiovascular gym, Circuit gym & resistance training rooms
- Squash Courts – great fun with an evenly matched opponent
- Outdoor courses at Fimbush and Peffermill
- Sports Hall – from football to badminton
- Swimming Pool & saunas – from lane swimming to relaxation
- FASIC – a renowned Sports Injury Centre

What is core support and personal training? These more recent additions to the CSE “gym fit” programme deserve more information and provide great opportunities for those who want to shape up:

Personal Training

Personal Training is available for those wishing more specific, sustained advice and support or a tailor-made programme to suit. CSE can offer almost anything you could want in the way of health, fitness and sport performance. The first steps to personal training are simply that a client books in for a Fitness Assessment for their initial appointment. This covers both legal and health & safety requirements so that a client can safely undergo instruction by one of CSEs professional trainers. After this, the client can choose further appointments on either a One To One (individually) or One To Two basis (with a partner) and all at a time to suit you.

Core Support

CSE also offer a Core Support service for people who require more basic help in the gyms. Qualified staff are on hand to provide inductions, advice or encouragement on individual pieces of equipment in the following areas: C.V. Gym, Nautilus, Free Weights and Circuit Gym. Whilst CSE staff will usually be available we would ask that you avoid lunch times and early evening.

The CSE is committed to helping you maximise the enjoyment and benefit from your exercise experience - Check out the CSE website at www.sport.ed.ac.uk or call one of the Reception Team on 0131-650-2585 – CSE are here to help!