

A GUIDE TO EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular exercise has many benefits for our health. It can help us maintain good heart health, assists with bone strength, helps manage and reduce the risk of chronic disease, promotes good sleep and is positive for our mental health.

Unfortunately most people in Australia are not doing enough exercise or the right type of exercise.

HOW MUCH EXERCISE DO WE NEED

It's important to get regular physical activity. Australian guidelines recommend adults should do the following amounts of activity each week.

Either:

- 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity – such as a brisk walk, golf, mowing the lawn or swimming
- 1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous intensity physical activity – such as jogging, fast cycling, soccer or netball
- an equivalent combination of moderate and vigorous activities.

Muscle-strengthening activities

It's also recommended you do muscle-strengthening activities at least two days a week. These are also called resistance exercises. These are exercises that cause muscles to contract against external resistance. Examples include resistance bands, other gym equipment or using your own body weight by doing push-ups or squats.

Balance exercises

While these exercises won't usually elevate your heart rate, they can be important for people who have a higher risk of fracture. Balance exercises can reduce the risk of falls which could lead to fractures. Examples include standing on one leg while doing other movements, or tai chi.

Factors to be aware of

Exercise can be highly beneficial for people with pituitary conditions, but it's important to be aware of potential risks and considerations. Pituitary disorders can affect hormone levels, which may impact how the body responds to physical activity.

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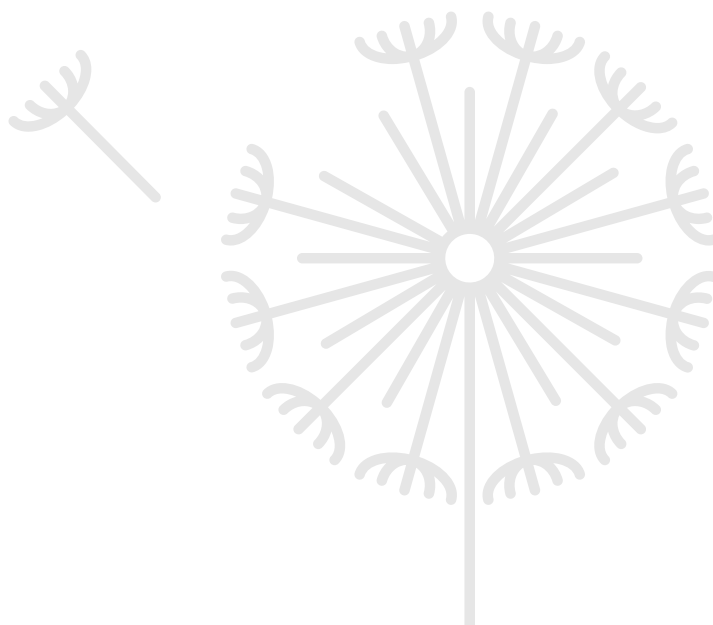
For example:

- People with growth hormone deficiency might experience increased fatigue during workouts which can make exercising a challenge.
- Some conditions, like Cushing's disease, can lead to decreased bone density, which may increase the risk of fractures when doing high-impact exercises.
- Vision problems associated with pituitary tumours may make some activities difficult or even dangerous to engage in.
- Cardiovascular changes, such as those seen in acromegaly, might require a more careful and tailored approach to high-intensity cardiovascular exercise.
- Some pituitary disorders affect fluid and electrolyte balance, potentially raising the risk of dehydration or electrolyte abnormalities during intense physical activity.

It's also worth noting that medications used to treat pituitary conditions may affect exercise tolerance or heart rate during exercise.

To ensure you exercise appropriately and safely for your condition, speak to your specialist before starting a new exercise program.

It's also helpful to seek the help of an accredited exercise physiologist who can tailor exercise that supports your goals but considers your individual needs and concerns. Working with a physical therapist or trainer experienced in endocrine conditions can be beneficial.



HOW TO EXERCISE SAFELY

While it's important to get regular exercise it's also important to exercise safely.

Here are some tips that can help.

- always wear appropriate shoes – they should be supportive and comfortable
- wear clothes that stretch with your body
- drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated
- warm up and stretch properly to avoid injuries
- start out slowly and gradually increase intensity or duration of exercise
- listen to your body and stop if you feel any pain
- ensure you know how to use exercise equipment properly
- monitor your blood sugar if you have diabetes
- be cautious with high-impact activities if you have osteoporosis and follow the advice of your specialist.

TIPS FOR MORE MOVEMENT

For some people, regular structured exercise can be challenging. But the good news is that all movement is positive and doing something is better than nothing.

To build extra movement into your day you can:

- stretch for five minutes when you first wake up
- do squats while you wait for the kettle to boil
- park the car in a car spot away from the entry to a shopping centre and walk the extra distance
- take the stairs instead of a lift or escalator
- walk or bike ride instead of driving, where possible
- get off at an earlier bus stop and walk the rest of the way
- stand up and walk around while you're on the phone
- use a standing desk at work
- set a timer to stand and stretch every 30 minutes when at work
- hang washing on the line instead of using the dryer
- dance while you clean or cook.

While exercise is generally beneficial, it's crucial for people with pituitary conditions to work closely with their medical team to develop a safe and appropriate exercise program tailored to their specific condition, risk factors, and levels of fitness.

MORE INFORMATION

The Australian Pituitary Foundation provides social support for patients and carers, and has published a range of patient resources on pituitary conditions and treatments.

For more information, please visit our website: www.pituitary.asn.au

Email: support@pituitary.asn.au

Phone: 1300 331 807

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