



Easy Exercise

OULU'S GUIDE TO HEALTHY EXERCISE





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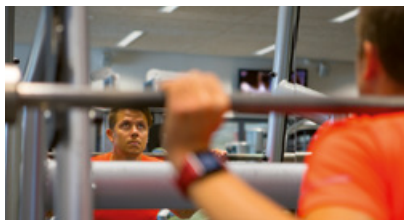
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Health by Moving

Exercise does not require particular effort. Small acts and choices will lead us toward a healthier life. Gentle movement, taking breaks from being still and adequate sleep are all parts of physical activity recommendations.

The core of the recommendations is 2 hours and 30 minutes of brisk exercise every week or, alternatively, 1 hour and 15 minutes of heavy exercise. You can build up weekly exercise in multiple couple-minute periods. Additionally, it is good to practice muscle care and mobility two times every week.

Choose your sport

Good forms of endurance exercise are, for example, walking, Nordic walking, cycling or heavy household work. Muscle care should be practiced twice every week. On top of the gym, you can practice muscle care with your own body or with small equipment. Mobility exercise can be practiced as, for example, gymnastics, dance or yoga. Versatile sports, such as skiing and hiking, can be beneficial forms of both muscle care and mobility exercise.



Weekly physical activity recommendation for 18–64-year-olds
ukkinstituutti.fi/en

 UKK Institute

Weekly physical activity recommendation





10 Tips for Everyday Wellbeing

We have compiled 10 tips for promoting wellbeing in your everyday life. Remember to take breaks when sitting, move as much as possible and eat as healthily and regularly as possible. It is also important to sleep enough.

TIP 1

Walk or cycle whenever possible to the store, library or even museum. You build up a lot of exercise minutes to your day if you travel to your errands and hobbies with your own muscles.

TIP 2

Change your position often, stand up and move around a couple of times every hour. Try doing brainwork while walking, have a coffee or read while standing. Taking breaks while staying still stimulates your metabolism, activates muscles, reduces pain in the locomotor system and refreshes your body and mind.

TIP 3

Keep your midsection muscles in good shape – strong abs and back muscles support your back. Stretch your back backwards regularly. This will recover your back's range of movement after periods of sitting. Pull your neck in regularly as if nodding to stretch your cervical spine. The muscles supporting your cervical spine will grow stronger when you push your head forward and to both sides while resisting movement with your fingertips on your forehead and both temples in turn.

TIP 4

Take the stairs instead of using the elevator. Climbing stairs daily promotes health and reduces the risk of brain infarction significantly according to research. For elderly people, climbing stairs requires maximum effort and can even work as strength training. Stairs are also excellent places for stretching your calf muscles.

TIP 5

Invite a friend or someone you know for a walk, for example, to some of Oulu's nature sites. While walking it is easy to chat, and the forest surroundings will calm and relax you. You will produce less of the stress hormone cortisol and your blood pressure will begin to decrease already after 10 minutes of walking.

TIP 6

Try outdoor exercise gyms during the summer months. They offer good muscle care opportunities for all skill-levels. You will find outdoor exercise gyms here and there in Oulu. www.ouka.fi/kuntoilupiistot

TIP 7

Try to calm down while eating by eating slowly in silence or add some social aspects to your meal by eating with people.

TIP 8

Reduce the amount of red meat, for example, by halving the amounts of minced meat and replacing it with beans, lentils, pulled oats, minced oats, field beans or diced root vegetables. Your food will include less calories and more nutrients.

TIP 9

Make sure you sleep enough. 7-9 hours of sleep every night is enough for most people. Aim to wake up at the end of your sleep cycle to make waking up easier. Sleep consists of approximately 1,5-hour cycles during which light and deep sleep alternates. Count how many sleep cycles you can sleep during one night and what is a suitable waking up time for you to be energetic in the morning. By listening to your body, you can find a suitable amount of sleep and a sleep rhythm for yourself.

TIP 10

Drink at least 1-1,5 liters of water and other liquids every day on top of liquids in your food. Quench your thirst with ordinary tap water or unsalted sparkling water when you need some variety. Coffee and tea are light drinks as they are or with milk (fat-free, low-fat or oat milk) without added sugar.

Gym Training

The goals of gym training can be elevating your health and wellbeing, changing your body, or increasing performance.

The goals, intentions, and reasons of gym training are personal. The goals can be elevating your health and wellbeing or increasing your performance. Gym training can develop general muscle health, strength, and muscle mass. Gym training is also suitable for bodybuilding, weight management, improving your stature and muscle balance, releasing stress, or rehabilitating pain or injuries. As you get old, the goal can be maintaining your ability to function and preventing falls. For some, the reason is the fun and social aspects of gym training. When you concentrate on the goal or the reason for exercising, it is easier to stay motivated, committed, and excited.

Gym training does not have to be the same every time. You can choose from about five training methods, and dozens of exercise equipment, as well as hundreds of different exercises that target different muscle groups. You can alternate these to build yourself a different exercise every time. Alternating programs once every couple of months is enough to maintain motivation and development.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT GYM TRAINING

- Ask a professional for suitable training intensity, especially if you have underlying health conditions.
- Don't be afraid to ask for guidance from an instructor or advice from other exercisers.
- Warm up carefully for 5–10 minutes before training. Include mobility exercises in your training as well.
- Practice the exercise techniques before incorporating heavier weights.
- Carry out the exercises carefully with good technique.
- Make yourself a training program that rises in intensity or have a professional make it for you.
- Increase the weights and the intensity slowly but boldly.
- Change your training program every 6–8 weeks.
- Be especially careful when lifting loose weights from the ground or from the equipment.
- Wind down for 5–10 minutes peacefully after training by cycling, rowing or walking.
- A healthy and diverse diet supports gym training.

Basic Gym Program

Warm up

Cycle, row, walk or run for 5–10 minutes.



Leg press

Sit in the leg press machine and place your legs on the plate hip-width apart. Hold your back and buttocks against the seat. Lower the plate until your legs are at approximately a 90-degree angle. Straighten your legs.



Low row machine

Sit with your back straight, knees slightly bent and hold the handle in your hands. Pull the handle to your lower stomach and pull your shoulder blades together by the end of the movement.



Abdominal crunch

Sit in the machine and pull the shoulder supports against your shoulders. Press your head towards your knees while keeping your back round. Crunch your abdominal muscles. Slowly return to the starting position. Do not straighten your back.



Back extension machine

Adjust the machine according to the manufacturer's instructions. Release your arms next to your body and keep your back round. Roll your back one vertebra at a time upwards. Avoid overextension.

Ending cooldown and stretches

Mobility exercises suit winding down excellently. Stretch the muscle groups you have targeted lightly with 10–30-second stretches.



Endurance Exercise

Endurance exercise effectively improves your heart's function and your respiratory system's condition and capacity. Popular forms of endurance exercise are walking, Nordic walking, running, cycling, skiing, swimming, orienteering, and rowing. Moving in the varied terrain of nature also supports your balance and revitalizes you in many ways.

Some benefits of regular endurance exercise:

- Increases the functionality of the respiratory and circulatory systems
- Improves the health of your heart, veins and lungs
- Improves the fat and sugar balance in your blood
- Helps manage your weight
- Improves your mood
- Relieves stress
- Improves the quality of sleep

**Drink
enough liquids
and have
a balanced
diet.**

Your heart rate indicates the effectiveness of exercise. Your heart's size and capacity increase with regular exercise; your heart rate will decrease, and exercise will feel easier. As your heart capacity increases, your resting heart rate will decrease as well. Burning fat as an energy source also becomes more efficient thanks to endurance exercise.

Oxygen uptake

Oxygen is the fuel of the body. The respiratory system includes the heart, lungs and veins. Their job is to ensure that **muscles and other organs receive enough oxygen**. The better shape you are in, the better you can deliver oxygen.

As you get stronger, the same exercise intensity will not raise your heart rate as much as before.

Endurance in different ranges

Exercise with a low heart rate is comfortable and can be executed for longer periods. When the intensity rises enough, producing lactic acid and breathing will increase significantly. Energy consumption will remain high for multiple hours after high intensity exercise.

Maximum heart rate and rate ranges

Your maximum heart rate is the number of heartbeats you achieve in maximal performance. Maximum heart rate is personal to everyone. Determining your maximum heart rate is the easiest and safest with a fitness test. You can also determine your indicative maximum heart rate with the following calculation: **220 – your age, for example 220 – 40 = 180.**

ENDURANCE EXERCISE	EXERCISE RANGE (% OF MAXIMUM HEART RATE)	GOAL
Incidental and health-enhancing exercise	50–60 %	For example, exercising during grocery and work travel
Basic endurance	60–70 %	Building basic fitness, effective and safe weight management
Speed endurance	70–85 %	Enhancing endurance exercise
Maximum endurance	85–100 %	Increasing lactic acid tolerance, competitive sport

Muscle Care and Mobility Exercise

Good mobility makes relaxed movement possible and prevents strain and sports injuries. Stretching and other mobility exercises can speed up and boost recovery, and you can get the most out of exercising.

Development of skill, strength and endurance will become faster with good mobility. Increased mobility makes many sports easier and more pleasant.

Good mobility makes movement more effective; performance becomes easier and expends less energy. **Elastic muscles also recover faster and are less prone to injuries and strain damage.**

Tight muscles are hard and inelastic. The elasticity and blood circulation have decreased or disappeared. At worst, movement ranges become shorter and muscle work leads to exhaustion faster.

ABCS OF MUSCLE CARE AND MOBILITY

- Take care of your muscles regularly
- Warm up lightly before muscle care. Only stretch warmed up muscles.
- Choose the length of stretch based on your goals: warm up 5 s, recovery 20–30 s, and mobility development 30–120 s.
- Do not stretch muscles too strongly before or after exercising.
- Focus and breathe calmly. Deepen your stretch as you exhale.
- Your mobility will improve in a couple of weeks. With two months of regular exercise, your mobility will improve significantly.
- Choose the most comfortable and relaxed stretching position.
- Focus on feeling the stretch in the correct muscle.
- The movements must not hurt, stretching should always feel comfortable.

Mobility Exercises for upper and lower body



Upper back stretch crosswise

Sit on the floor with your legs bent. Grasp the opposite foot by the outer edge with your hand pointing your thumb to the floor. Pull your chin to your chest and lean heavily backwards. Feel the stretch in your upper back muscles. You may intensify the stretch by straightening your leg while resisting the movement with your hand.



Forearm flexors stretch on all fours

Stretch your arms toward the floor. Press your hands into the floor until you feel the stretch in your forearm flexors. This is a good stretch for people who work a lot on computers.



Lower back stretch with rotation

Lie on your back. Lay your hands on either side into a T shape. Bend one leg over your stomach. Twist it over your straight leg towards the floor. There will be great rotation in your back and stretch in your chest muscle, buttock, lower back, and your side.



Hip flexor stretch on your back

Sit on the edge of a seat. Hug one knee with your hands and lie down on your back on the seat. Allow the leg to hang over the seat's edge. Flex your abdominal muscles. Do not let your back rise from the seat.



Back of the thigh stretch while seated

Sit down with one leg outstretched and one leg bend next to the other. Lean your upper body forward towards the straight leg. You may also try this movement while seating on a bench.

Exercise at Home

Home exercise is exciting, effective and diverse. You can easily work out without equipment, and with small investments exercise opportunities build up significantly.

Your body – the key to diverse exercise

Your own body makes an endless number of different exercises possible, out of which squats, jumps, abdominal and back muscle exercises and push-ups are most popular and effective. Exercising with your body's resistance develops coordination on top of your muscles.

Dumbbells – Comprehensive effort with free mobility

Dumbbells are effective and diverse exercise equipment. With them you can perform countless easy and hard exercises, as well as comprehensive and targeted exercises. Dumbbells train your balance and coordination as well as your muscles.

Exercise ball – unstable ball supports

The exercise ball is an effective and diverse piece of exercise equipment. The unstable ball forces your muscles to cooperate to maintain your position. Training with an exercise ball is especially effective for your abdominal muscles, coordination and balance.

Kettlebell – power and endurance

Kettlebell exercises require more balance and coordination than dumbbell exercises. Kettlebell exercises develop your entire body's muscles.

Hula hoop – control over your body

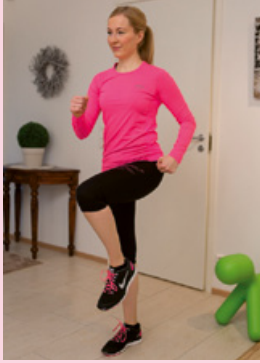
Hula hooping especially develops your abdominal and lower back muscles.

THE BASICS OF HOME EXERCISE

- Warm up before exercising by walking, climbing stairs or with targeted exercises.
- Practice muscle care 1–3 times per week.
- Repeat each exercise 10–20 times. Perform all exercises through, for example, on rotation when you will perform each exercise one after another by switching directly to the next. You may also take a 30-second rest between exercises. Once you have finished all the exercises, take a 3–5-minute break before the next round.
- Maintain good posture and good technique when performing the exercises and breathe freely.

Home Fitness Exercises for Beginners

Perform 10–15 repetitions of the exercises in 1–2 rounds, 1–2 times each week.



Marching in place

Keep your centre of balance in the middle of your body. Point your toes straight forwards. Allow your hands to swing back and forth on either side of your body.



Squat without weights

Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Point your toes straight forward. Squat down and stand back up.



Opposite arm and leg extension on all fours

Come down on all fours. Extend your opposite arm and leg horizontally. Maintain the tension for a moment holding your limbs up. Switch up the arm and leg. You may also try this while lying down.



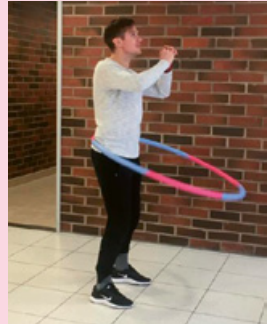
Upper body rotation on all fours

Come down on all fours. Reach one hand to the floor past the supporting hand. Rotate your body in the opposite direction and pull your elbow backwards. Continue the motion in one continuous rotation.



Push-up with your knees down or against a wall

Come down to plank. Lower your upper body down until your chest hits the floor and push yourself back up straightening your arms. Bend your elbows to each side. Hold your abdominal muscles tight and keep your back straight. You may also try this exercise against a wall.



Hula hooping

Stand in a strong and balanced stance and spin the hoop by rotating your midriff. Change direction at times. Keep your shoulders relaxed.



Nutrition and Exercise

Nutrition

- Regular meal rhythm
- (Eat every 3–4 hours) 4–6 meals every day.
- Add vegetables, fruit and berries to your diet.
- Sufficient amounts of fiber and protein in your diet.
- Reduce the amount of high-energy snacks.

Exercise

- Increase the amount of exercise slowly into your week. Start by increasing the number of exercise sessions, then increase their length, and finally increase intensity.
- The goal is to make exercising regular.
- Divide your exercise sessions on multiple days of the week, exercise every day if possible.

Endurance Exercise

- Recommended exercises: Brisk walks, Nordic walking, cycling, skiing, swimming, and using aerobic gym equipment.
- Practice reasonably intense exercise for 150–300 minutes every week.

Muscle care

- Two times every week.
- Starting warm up and final cooldown for 5–10 minutes.
- Target 6–8 of the largest muscle groups, repeat each exercise 8–12 times, and perform 2–4 sets.

You can support weight management by improving the amount of sleep you get each night. On top of the amount of sleep, sleep quality also has a great effect.



Refreshed Mind – pieces of wellbeing

Wellbeing consists of a combination of rest, nutrition and exercise. When we rest well, it is easy to make good nutritional choices. When we eat well, we have the energy to exercise better. When we exercise, we feel better, and it is easier to relieve stress and enhance sleep quality. This forms a circle of positivity that pushes us forward as if automatically. The body and the mind both stay refreshed, and your life is balanced.

Balance of stimulation and rest

In our modern society, static work has replaced physical work, and the physical intensity of work has decreased hundreds of percents in a short time.

Simultaneously, the number of stimulants has grown enormously. We are dependent on smart phones and social media. We are always accessible, in a continuous flood of updates.

We experience continuous pressure from multiple directions. This is why it is important to learn to relax and offer our bodies and minds a balanced ratio of rest and stimulation.

Everyday Wellbeing

High-quality everyday life is important for our wellbeing. Everyday life represents a cycle that repeats more often than anything else in our lives. Everyday life includes routines, and everyday life should be balanced, safe and comfortable.

In modern life, you are always in a hurry to go, succeed and accomplish. Stopping and slowing down is too often considered being lazy. However, normal stopping and slowing down is very important for our wellbeing. When we can stop every once in a while, we have more energy to give in a hurry.

Sleep and sufficient rest are the most important things for our wellbeing. If we are constantly over-active and we cannot rest, it has a direct effect on our sleep quantity and quality. If your body and mind cannot rest and wind down regularly, they will never recover either.

The number of stimulants today is massive. It is challenging to find the time to relax and wind down. You will feel better if you try to ensure calm and relaxed moments in your life.

Cornerstones of Mental and Physical Wellbeing

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Rest and sleep
- Enjoyable everyday life:
- sociality that suits you

Benefits of relaxation:

- Decrease in blood pressure and heart rate
- Increase of pleasure hormones
- Decrease of stress hormones
- Improves immunity
- Relaxation of the autonomous and peripheral nervous systems
- Improved nutrition and oxygen for tissue: eases anxiety



**MICRO BREAKS
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breaks into your
everyday life.**

Exercise Routes

Updated outdoor exercise routes, nature routes, ski tracks and outdoor gyms
www.ouka.fi/en/sport-exercise



1. Raksila Sport Centre

2. Raatti Sport Centre

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