

Exercise Tips for U3A Members

By Jolanda Adams, Fitness Instructor

Some form of physical exercise every day is essential.

It is just about finding what is right for you, something that you enjoy so that it doesn't become a chore.

Stretch

- Stretching keeps the muscles flexible and healthy.
- Stretching before exercise puts your muscle fibres in a safe state that helps prevent injury.
- Stretching after exercise not only returns the muscle fibres to a safe state but can improve the muscles performance.
- 5 minutes a day is a great habit to get into, you could do it while the kettle boils or whilst running a bath. But if not daily then at least 3 times a week.
- Remember to stretch your wrists and ankles.
- Did you know that back pain and sciatica is sometimes linked to the Gluteus Maximus, so don't forget to stretch this rather large muscle.

Walk

- Walking workouts are particularly recommended.
- Generally, we all know how to walk - which is a bonus - and it is a great form of exercise. It is also gentle on your joints.
- But don't just walk forwards. Walking backward and sideways uses different muscles.
- You can jazz up a walk to your favourite music at home with wedding dance moves too.
- You can even do standing crunches whilst walking just by lifting your knee above waist height. Much more comfortable but with the same result as a sit up.
- Having strong tummy muscles can really help your back too. If your back starts aching after a long walk just tighten your stomach muscles and you should find this gives some relief.

If anyone has a specific question around exercise and stretch Jolanda is happy for you to ask her and she will try to help.

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