

# Exercise Therapy

Patient information leaflet



**movement  
is medicine**

## Movement is medicine

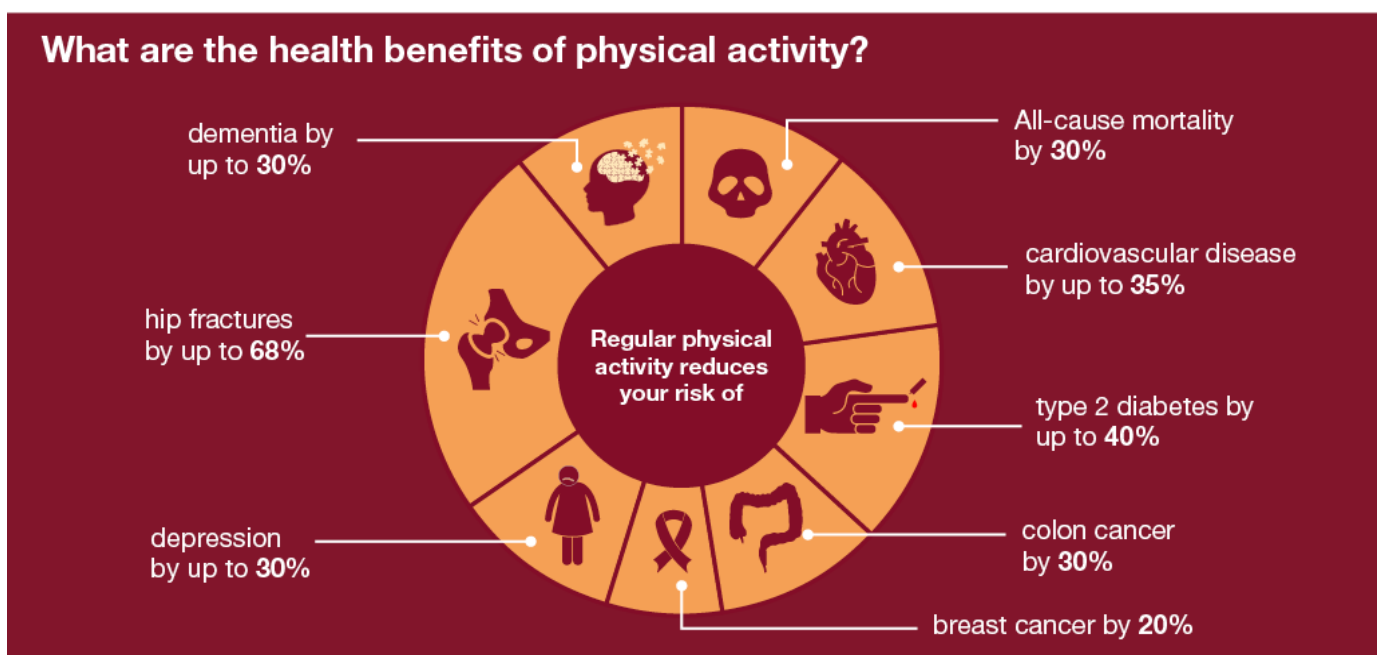
If physical activity was a medication it would be classed as a 'wonder drug'. Physical activity can help manage or prevent over 20 chronic conditions or diseases.

Inactivity directly impacts on your health and contributes to one in six deaths across the UK; which is on a par with smoking.

Those of us with a mental illness are:

- Twice as likely to die from heart disease
- Four times as likely to die from respiratory disease
- And on average, likely to die between 15 and 20 years earlier than the general population.

This highlights the importance of looking after your physical health and wellbeing, by maintaining an active lifestyle and eating a healthy balanced diet.



Here are a few more benefits to increasing your activity levels:

- improves sleep
- improves self esteem
- reduces anger or frustration
- improves social skills
- reduces tension, stress and agitation
- provides a natural energy boost
- improves mood and motivation
- improves concentration
- provides a positive focus

## Exercise recommendations

Ask yourself two questions

- On average how many days a week do you engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity?
- On those days, on average, how many minutes do you engage in physical activity at this level?

If the answer is less than 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise per week you could benefit from increasing your activity levels.

**Be active**

at least **150** minutes moderate intensity per week  
increased breathing able to talk

at least **75** minutes vigorous intensity per week  
breathing fast difficulty talking

**Build strength**  
on at least **2** days a week

to keep muscles, bones and joints strong

Gym Yoga Carry heavy bags

Swim Brisk walk Cycle Run Stairs Sport

BOWLS Tai Chi

Dance

**Minimise sedentary time**  
Break up periods of inactivity

**Improve balance**  
For older adults, to reduce the chance of frailty and falls  
2 days a week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

## **What is exercise therapy and what can we offer you?**

The Exercise Therapy Service is currently available to inpatient services at Hopewood Park, St Georges Park and Hadrian Clinic. The aim of exercise therapy is to provide a structured exercise programme that is discussed with you and tailored to your goals, likes/dislikes and physical health needs, which will help improve both your physical and mental health.

We have a variety of groups on our weekly programme, including:

- Gym sessions
- Various exercise classes (dance, core conditioning, circuit training, kettlebells etc)
- Walking groups
- Group sports (football, badminton)
- Healthy lifestyle and nutrition group
- Weekly or monthly gym challenges

You can try them all or just choose the ones you like. Everyone is welcome from experienced exercisers to those who have never exercised before but want to improve their physical and mental health.

A weekly timetable will be available from the department and may vary from week to week and across the hospital sites.

## **How do I access exercise therapy?**

Speak to a member of the exercise therapy team or nursing staff and we will arrange a health screen. During this we will discuss your goals, likes/dislikes, physical health needs, take some baseline measurements and devise your structured exercise programme.

## **Progress review**

This is an opportunity to re-visit your physical health measures so that you see your improvements and discuss whether you are achieving your goals. We will also discuss new goals/targets and make the required progressions to your exercise programme to support you to achieve your future exercise goals.

## **Discharge**

Our ultimate goal is for exercise to become part of your daily/weekly routine and for you to continue to exercise independently in your local community after discharge. The exercise therapy team can provide signposting information for physical activity opportunities in your local area. Please speak to a member of staff if you would like further information.

## **Does exercise therapy really work?**

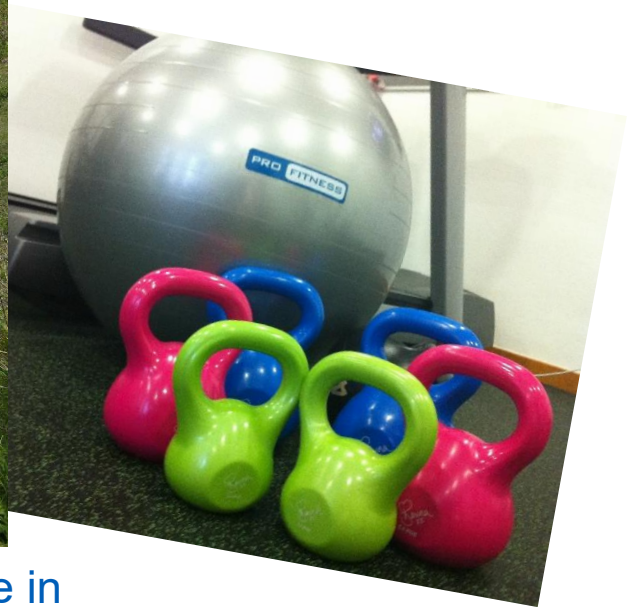
The result of recent department audits show those who attended the department at least twice a week experienced the following benefits:

- 53% lost weight.
- 40% reduced their body fat percentage.
- 50% lowered their resting blood pressure.
- 40% lowered their resting heart rate.
- 87% increased their activity levels.
- 89% felt exercise had improved their general health and wellbeing.
- 73% felt exercise had an impact on their mental health
- And 99% felt supported to achieve their exercise goals.

## **Service user feedback on exercise therapy**

- “Using the gym gives motivation and insight into my physical health”
- “Exercise therapy is a key part to my recovery and to be frank the most important part”
- “Exercise keeps you focused on positive activities and you get the feel good factor afterwards”
- “It is crucial that we help our patients to reduce their risks, the exercise therapy teams are key to achieving this”
- “Being healthy helps your mind”





“If it wasn’t for the gym my experience in hospital would have been a lot worse.”



“Exercise helped me to improve my motivation and energy. It helps to get rid of any negative thoughts.”

“I’ve found exercise helps me focus on something positive and found medication side effects can be managed through exercise”

“I have been very encouraged by the enthusiasm and encouragement that has been made by the whole team I feel better in mind and in body thanks to the support of the team, without exception I have lost a considerable amount of weight due to their motivation.”



## References

- National Statistic and NHS digital 2017 – Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/613532/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2017-rep.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/613532/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2017-rep.pdf)
- Public Health England 19 July 2016 – Health matters; getting every adult active every day.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-getting-every-adult-active-every-day/health-matters-getting-every-adult-active-every-day>

Websites listed above were accessed in November 2024 and were correct at that time.

## What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website  
[www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints/](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints/)
- telephone the Complaints Department on 0191 245 6672
- email [complaints@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@cntw.nhs.uk) Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk

We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at [www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice)
- complete a Your Voice survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff
- other options for sharing your feedback and experience [www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback)

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns that you may have about any aspect of your or your loved ones care.

We act independently when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and, where appropriate, relevant organisations, to negotiate prompt solutions. If necessary, we can also refer patients and families to specific local or national-based support agencies.

### **North of Tyne**

Tel: 0800 032 0202

Email: [pals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@nhct.nhs.uk)

Post: FREEPOST PALS

### **South of Tyne**

Tel: 0800 328 4397

Text: 07825 061 035

Email: [pals@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@cntw.nhs.uk)

Post: Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Garden Lodge,  
Hopewood Park, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

9am – 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday

An answerphone is available at all times for you to leave a message. A member of the PALS team will aim to return your call as soon as possible.



**For further information please contact the team on:**

- Exercise Therapy, Hadrian Clinic, Campus for Ageing and Vitality, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 6BE  
Telephone: 0191 246 8678
- Exercise Therapy, Hopewood Park, Ryhope, Sunderland SR2 0NB  
Telephone: 0191 566 7068
- Exercise Therapy, St Georges Park Hospital, Morpeth Northumberland, NE61 2NU  
Telephone: 01670 502 660



Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

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