

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & AGED CARE



HOW CAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HELP ME?

Increasing physical activity can:

- Prolong and maintain your independence
- Optimise your brain health
- Improve your balance
- Improve your confidence
- Increase your mobility
- Assist with strength following an injury, illness or operation
- Increase your general fitness

The World Health Organisation (2017) states: *Multimodal exercise, including progressive strength resistance training and other exercise components (balance, flexibility and aerobic training), should be recommended for older people with declining physical capacity, measured by gait speed, grip strength and other physical performance measures.*¹

WHAT EXERCISE IS BEST FOR ME?

The Australian Physical Activity Guidelines² for older Australians states:

- Older people should do some form of physical activity, no matter what their age, weight, health problems or abilities.
- Older people should be active every day in as many ways as possible, doing a range of physical activities that incorporate fitness, strength, balance and flexibility.
- Older people should accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days, preferably all.
- Older people who have stopped physical activity, or who are starting a new physical activity, should start at a level that is easily manageable and gradually build up the recommended amount, type and frequency of activity.

- Older people who continue to enjoy a lifetime of vigorous physical activity should carry on doing so in a manner suited to their capability into later life, provided recommended safety procedures and guidelines are adhered to.

There are five physical activity recommendations for older Australians. These recommendations are also available in the [Choose Health: Be Active - A physical activity guide for older Australians brochure](#)³ which provides further information about physical activity for older Australians.





WHY USE AN ACCREDITED EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST (AEP)?

Accredited Exercise Physiologists, or AEPs, specialise in clinical exercise prescription and delivery of exercise and lifestyle modification programs for people who are at risk of, or living with, a chronic disease. In the first appointment, an AEP will determine your health status (including potential risks and likelihood of presence of comorbidities), exercise/physical activity goals and strategies, and design and develop exercise programs to suit you. Your AEP is an important member of your aged care service and is available to help guide and support you on your journey to better health.

To find an AEP in your area visit www.essa.org.au/find-aep/

ESSA accredited professionals can assist in designing a program just for you by incorporating a program similar to this example:

TYPE OF EXERCISE	INTENSITY	DURATION	FREQUENCY
Aerobic exercise (for heart and lung fitness)	Moderate	30min per day (can be broken up into smaller time frames throughout the day)	Daily
Strength activities (for muscle and bone health)	Low to moderate	30min per session (can be broken up into smaller time frames throughout the day)	2 sessions per week
Flexibility (assists with basic movement and activities of daily living e.g. putting on your socks)	Low to moderate	Can be incorporated into your strength/aerobic program	Daily
Balancing	Low to moderate	Can be incorporated into your strength/aerobic program	Daily

ARE YOU ACCESSING MY AGED CARE SERVICES?

ESSA advises those eligible for My Aged Care services to contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 to discuss accessing exercise services.

REFERENCES

1. WHO. (2017). *Integrated care for older people: Guidelines on community-level interventions to manage declines in intrinsic capacity*. Switzerland: World Health Organisation.
2. Department of Health, Australian Government. (2014). *Choose Health: Be Active: A physical activity guide for older Australians*. Retrieved 6 February, 2018, from www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/phd-physical-choose-health
3. Australian Government. (2008). *Choose Health: Be Active brochure*. Retrieved 6 February, 2018, from [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/3244D38BBEBD284CA257BF0001FA1A7/\\$Filechoosehealth-brochure.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/3244D38BBEBD284CA257BF0001FA1A7/$Filechoosehealth-brochure.pdf)

