



osteopathy for  
health

## Get active

**We all know that getting active is good for both our bodies and our minds. It can improve your mood, give you more energy, and significantly reduces your chances of serious health conditions such as dementia and certain forms of cancer.**

When you visit an osteopath, they can provide advice on keeping active so you can stay healthier for longer and fend-off those aches and pains. Not sure where to begin? Osteopaths provide advice on how much physical activity you should be aiming for, how to get started and about the positive influence that physical activity can have on your health.

### Find an activity you enjoy

You don't need to spend hours in the gym if you don't want to, find something that you enjoy instead. You will then be able to fit it into your life and sustain doing it. Gardening, dancing or a walk in the park – every little helps.

So how much is enough and what level of activity is appropriate? The guidelines differ slightly depending on your age, but everyone is advised to do some physical activity every day. This should include aerobic and strengthening exercises.

Adults aged 19 – 65 should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity (e.g. cycling, brisk walking or pushing a lawn mower) every week, or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity (e.g. running, a game of singles tennis or using a skipping rope). Additionally, strength exercises should be done on two or more days a week. These should work all the major muscles (arms, legs, back, abdomen and chest).

If you are over 65 you should also include balancing exercises twice a week (such as yoga, Tai Chi or dancing) as this will reduce your risk of falls.

### What types of activity should I do?

A mixture of moderate and vigorous intensity aerobic exercises is also acceptable. As a rule of thumb, one minute of vigorous activity provides the same health benefits as two minutes of moderate activity. Moderate activity should leave you still able to continue a conversation without pausing for breath whereas with vigorous activity this will not be possible.



## Different types of exercise and what they do

**Aerobic/cardiovascular exercises:** exercise that stimulates the heart and lungs to improve their function e.g. cycling, vigorous housework or mowing the lawn.

**Strengthening/resistance training:** this is where you are using the muscles against resistance such as lifting weights or using resistance bands or even activities that involve you resisting your own body's weight such as sit-ups or press-ups.

**Stretching/flexibility exercises:** these help to loosen stiff muscles, joints, scar tissue, and helps you relax e.g. yoga or Pilates

**Balance:** this can help with the control of movement and ensure that muscles are ready to support the body when needed e.g. dancing, Tai Chi or yoga. This is especially beneficial for those over the age of 65.

## Tips for getting started

- It is important to build up slowly and allow your body time to get used to the new activity
- It is normal to feel a little sore or uncomfortable after exercise, but this does tend to lessen with time
- You are more likely to keep your new activity up if you start off with something that you enjoy, can do regularly or if you exercise with others

Remember any exercise, even a little, is better than none.

If you have been inspired to become more active but want more advice on how to get started or if an injury is stopping you, an osteopath may be able to help.

## How can your osteopath help?

It is common to feel some minor discomfort after exercise as the body takes a little time to recover and adapt to the demands of your activities. Soreness often quickly resolves itself, but occasionally it may persist for more than a few days or make it difficult for you to continue your normal activities. In these instances you may want to seek advice from an osteopath.

Osteopaths are highly trained, healthcare professionals, regulated by law and recognised as one of the Allied Health Professions by NHS England. Osteopathic care is a safe and effective therapy that aims to promote the health of people, through the use of manual therapy, exercise and health advice. It is suitable for all ages, from babies to the elderly.

Contact your osteopath at: