

# Exercise and menopausal health

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines physical activity 'as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure'

## Benefits of physical activity

The benefits of an adequate level of physical activity include:

- maintaining a healthy body weight
- reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease
- reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes
- reducing the risk of cancer
- improving bone and muscle health
- reducing the risk of fractures
- improving mental health
- improving quality of life

## Physical activity and the menopause

- Evidence is conflicting regarding the benefits of exercise on menopausal **hot flashes**.
- Randomized controlled trials with digital 24-hour recording of **vasomotor symptoms** and physical activity are required.

Worldwide, one in four adults do not meet recommended levels of physical activity.

## Recommended levels of physical activity

The WHO recommends that adults aged 18–64 years should engage in:

- at least **150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic** physical activity;
- or at least **75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic** physical activity;
- or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week
- **muscle-strengthening activities** at moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on two or more days a week, as these provide additional health benefits.

Insufficient physical activity is associated with a 20–30% increased risk of death compared with people who are sufficiently active.

## Further information

**Berin et al. (2019) Resistance training for hot flashes in postmenopausal women: A randomized controlled trial** <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2019.05.005>

**Daley et al. (2015) The effectiveness of exercise as treatment for vasomotor menopausal symptoms: randomised controlled trial** <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0528.13193>

**World Health Organization. Physical activity** <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>