



*Basingstoke
and Deane*



Get moving, get active

in Basingstoke and Deane

Your guide to getting more active in Basingstoke and Deane

Get moving, get active

Here you'll find lots of good ideas for fun ways to get moving. This booklet will tell you why it's so important to be active and help you to find out where you can get active near your home or office in Basingstoke and Deane.

We hope you enjoy it and that it inspires you to get out and about in the borough. But don't spend all your time just reading, remember, there's nothing more fun than the real thing... you've got to **Get moving, get active!**

You will find much much more about **Get moving, get active** on our website, www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Our website gives you the most up-to-date information on where to go and what to do in Basingstoke and Deane. You can also get further information by calling us on 01256 844844.



“80% of people think they do enough activity to benefit their health but only 25% of women and 37% of men actually do.”

Contents



4	Get moving, get active		
5	How to Get moving, get active		
6	Why?		
10	Safety points		
11	Choose a way to Get moving, get active		
12	Getting started and keeping on track		
14	Stay motivated		
15	Start at home		
17	Weekly activity chart		
18	Gardening		
19	Dancing		
20	Walking		
	Keeping it interesting	21	
	Striding ahead	22	
24	Jogging		
	Is jogging safe for me?	24	
	Where should I run?	25	
	How do I keep at it?	26	
27	Cycling		
29	Swimming		
30	Food and drink		

Get moving, get active

It only takes 30 minutes a day to become fitter, healthier and happier – and you don't even have to do them all at once.

You can get off the bus a stop early and walk for ten minutes or kick a ball around with the kids – that's another 20, job done 30 minutes clocked up without even thinking about it!



You'll be amazed how quickly a few small decisions add up to one big change for the better.

“95% of people aged 65 and over do not take part in the recommended level of physical activity.”

Use this book to set your goals, count up your minutes, challenge your friends and work out your favourite activity in Basingstoke and Deane. Most of all use this book to **Get moving, get active.**

“Adults who are physically active have a 20-30% reduced risk of premature death.”

How to Get moving, get active

Get moving, get active is about building activity into your everyday life. It can be simple and fun.

“The cost of physical inactivity in England - including direct costs of treatment for the major lifestyle-related diseases and the indirect costs of sickness absence - has been estimated at £8.2 billion a year.”



It only takes 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week (**5x30**) to feel healthier and happier. Moderate exercise can be anything from playing cricket to getting off the bus one stop early. Do what you enjoy most. Try to fit some of these alternatives into your day.

TAKING THE STAIRS

WALKING TO SCHOOL

CYCLING

HAVING A KICKABOUT

DANCING

SWIMMING

GETTING OFF THE BUS EARLY

GARDENING

“Sedentary people who become active halve their risk of colon cancer.”

Why?

It's no secret that regular activity is good for you and your body **but what does it actually do?**

BRAIN

Exercise triggers the release of naturally produced chemicals that protect brain cells and keep them performing at top speed, according to recent research. In fact studies amongst older people suggest that it can actually protect an ageing brain from dementia and even Alzheimer's disease.

At any age, exercise boosts concentration simply by helping you to get a restful night's sleep. Ironically, being unfit often makes you susceptible to tiredness – and being tired often means that you don't exercise enough. Gradually increasing your exercise levels will actually give you more energy – and the desire to do even more.



BONES

Regular exercise produces stronger bones. This is particularly important for both men and women who are prone to osteoporosis or thinning of the bones as they get older. Weight bearing activities (anything you do standing up) running, skipping, aerobics, tennis, weight training and brisk walking are particularly useful.

SMILE

Exercise releases natural chemicals into your brain like serotonin. These have a strong effect on your mood, helping to reduce anxiety, stress and depression. In addition there is also the sense of achievement and satisfaction you get from setting activity targets and achieving them.

BLOOD

Physical activity can reduce the risk of high blood pressure – and if you already suffer from it, can help to bring it down, although you should seek medical advice before getting started. Exercise helps you to maintain normal blood glucose levels and helps in the prevention and management of type 2 diabetes.



ABDOMEN

Many women find that exercise helps them to cope with pre-menstrual cramps. It might be the last thing you feel like doing but it takes your mind off any discomfort, helps keep the blood moving around your body and can ease any heavy bloated feelings. Some simple abdominal exercises can help.

MUSCLES

You can't bank muscles. It's a case of use them or lose them. Regular exercise helps keep muscles supple and strong. It's not about bulk - you can leave that to the bodybuilders - it's about flexibility. Anything that involves gentle reaching, bending and stretching of muscle groups - golf, bowls, yoga, tai-chi, dance and walking - can help you achieve a full range of movement and stay independent as you get older.

Strengthening your muscles with activities such as stair climbing, carrying your shopping from the supermarket, weight training and walking uphill will help to give you good balance and posture and reduce your risk of falling. The improved muscle tone can help improve your shape, making you look and feel better. Finally, larger muscles use up more calories so can help you keep to a healthy weight.



HEART

Like any muscle, the more you use your heart the stronger it becomes. Aerobic activities that get your heart beating that little bit faster - like brisk walking, dancing, cycling or swimming - will help your heart to become a more efficient pump. They also reduce blood pressure, increase good cholesterol, improve blood flow and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes - all key risk factors in coronary heart disease and strokes.

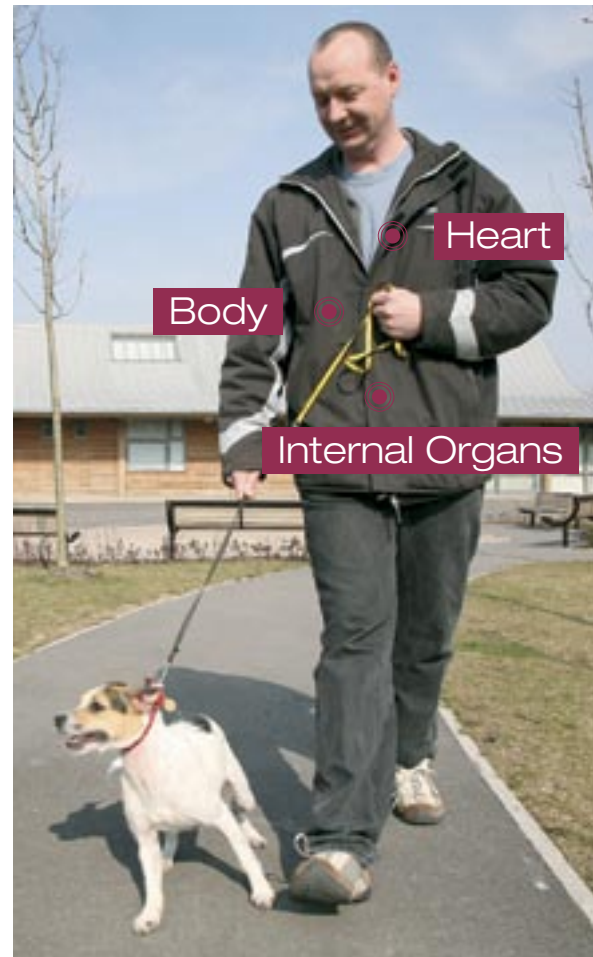
INTERNAL ORGANS

Not moving around enough increases your risk of colon and breast cancer. Inactivity has also been linked with cancer of the womb, lung and prostate. Being very active can significantly reduce the risk of colon and bowel cancers.

High blood pressure or hypertension can speed up the process of heart disease or kidney failure. So as exercise helps to control blood pressure, it can also help you to look after your kidneys, your heart and reduce the risk of a stroke.

BODY

Combined with healthy eating, exercise is crucial to preventing obesity and helping you to lose weight. Activity encourages the body to use up stored fat, while the larger muscles it builds also burn more calories.



Safety points

If you feel discomfort or pain when being more active, then you should get advice from a doctor.

If you have any medical conditions, particularly if you are taking prescribed medication, consult your GP about your chosen activity.

Increase your level of activity gradually. This relates to both the amount of time you spend on the activity and the intensity. If you are currently fairly inactive, don't get carried away and rush into it, start off very slowly.

When you are doing any activity, begin slowly for the first few minutes and build up gradually. At the end spend a couple of minutes slowing down gradually. If you are taking part in sport, make sure you warm up and cool down to prevent muscle injury.

Stop exercising if you feel pain or dizziness or if you feel sick, tired or unwell.

If you are cycling, wear a helmet and reflective clothing. Use lights if cycling at night.



Choose a way to Get moving, get active

Take a look at your lifestyle now - is your home or work place well suited to help you to **Get moving, get active?**

Do you think that exercise can fit into the life you lead now? Be honest about any excuses you have made in the past to avoid getting started or reasons why you didn't continue on a programme of healthier living.

Remember that you don't need expensive equipment or to join a gym or sports club if you don't want to. Trainers or comfortable walking shoes are perfect for brisk walks. If you decide to swim, check out the sessions available - usually you'll find sessions before and after work and adults or women only sessions too.

Could you combine exercise with one of your other interests? Countryside walks or cycling in town taking in local history? Maybe a friend would like to go dancing - activities like this are a great way of meeting new people. Exercising is a very social activity; and fitter people tend to have more energy for socialising with friends and family.

You might choose conservation work, dancing or walking; how about swimming or badminton - whatever activity you like or whatever is easiest for you.

There are hundreds of activity suggestions on our website at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure or you can telephone us on 01256 844844 for further details.

When you **Get moving, get active** your life will change for the better.



Getting started and keeping on track

You don't need to over exert yourself - you just need to get moving, get active.

To see real benefits, you should feel that you get warmer; you can hear your breathing and your pulse has quickened but you still should be able to talk and hold a conversation.



Here are a few suggestions for your first couple of months.

What to do in your first month

- **What to wear**
Make sure you are wearing comfortable walking shoes or trainers; and warm clothes if you are heading for a brisk walk or cycle ride.
- **Before you start**
Spend a few minutes preparing for exercise before you start. Perhaps a few really gentle smooth stretches just to make sure your body is in good working order.
- **20 minutes exercise**
If you feel the need to slow down from a brisk walk or cycle ride or to slow down your breathing - do so for two or three minutes and then gradually build up the pace again.
- **Preparing to stop**
In the last few minutes of your session gradually ease the pace so that you finish with your breathing and heart rate almost back to normal.

In the following month, try to increase the duration of your sessions. Continue with five minutes warm up; steadily increasing the number of minutes per session.

Over time your resting heart rate will drop; your blood pressure will improve significantly and the rate at which your body burns energy will increase, even if you are at rest. This means your body is using fuel more efficiently - so make sure you continue to give it good fuel with lots of fruit and vegetables and plenty of water. You should have more energy, enhanced moods and improved sleep.



If you **Get moving, get active** four or five times per week remember to praise yourself - it's a fantastic investment you are making in your health and happiness. You might want to treat yourself to a delicious and healthy meal out or a new top or shirt.



“Remember the focus has to be on regular activity, the key is the frequency of exercise sessions.”

Stay motivated

If sometimes you lack motivation, remind yourself how 30-45 minutes exercise, four to five days per week significantly reduces the risk of serious illness, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer, as well as improving skin, hair and waistlines.

Focus on the everyday benefits you have been feeling - finding the stairs easier; having more energy to socialise with friends and family. Chat to friends and colleagues and see if anyone would like to join you on your exercise session or ask them to encourage you to make your new programme part of your everyday life. Many employers also support their staff in their efforts to get active.



“Whatever activity you choose and whether you exercise by yourself or with friends it’s all about doing something that you enjoy to benefit your heart and your body.”

Start at home

Turn your house into a gym. Your home is a great place to do your **5x30** because it's free and private.

Do step aerobics on the stairs, walk the dog like you are on the treadmill. Do some squats whilst gardening. Dance to music whilst you do the house work. Don't take the car to the shops, walk there!

Start today, aiming for 30 mins, 5 times a week (5x30). Why not plan a weekly routine using the planner on page 17, or record your activity in a diary?



Get moving, get active

- Do some light digging and weeding - good for you and the garden
- Hoover your way to health
- Improve your home and fitness with painting and DIY
- Try exercising while watching TV (stretching or exercise biking, for instance)
- Put on some music and dance to the beat
- At work take the stairs instead of the lift
- Go for a walk during a break or at lunchtime



Gardening

Gardening is one of the best ways to **Get moving, get active** and you can literally eat the fruits of your labours.

Eating fresh fruit and vegetables has a significant effect on improving your health and you will also get a lot of satisfaction from your attractive garden or allotment.

Why don't you enter your front garden in the "in Bloom" competition in July?

If you want to know more about gardening opportunities in Basingstoke and Deane give us a call on 01256 844844 or visit our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure



Conservation

Are you interested in your local environment? Do you have a passion for conservation and wildlife? If so, then look no further!

Spend time in the fresh air with like minded people and give something back to your local community at the same time. No experience is necessary, all training and tools will be provided.

Popley Conservation Volunteers
Chineham Conservation Group
Mill Field Conservation Group
Black Dam Ponds and Eastrop Park Conservation Group

If you want to know more about opportunities to improve your local environment give us a call on 01256 844844 or visit our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Dancing

Social dancing will give you many health benefits. It can reduce stress, increase energy and improve strength, muscle tone and coordination.

Dancing is every bit as beneficial as walking or riding a bike, it all depends on the distance you travel while grooving to the beat. In one study, researchers found that square dancers covered five miles in a single evening. That's a lot of do-si-doing!

Following the success of dance programmes on the television, everyone seems to want to learn to dance. There are dance classes available at many local community centres and social clubs but why not just pump up the volume and Hoover your way to health in the comfort of your own home.

Many leisure centres and community centres hold dance classes and aerobics. There is a wide choice of dance options in Basingstoke and Deane - everything from street dance, to tap and ballet even capoeira and dance-ercise. Check out our website for more information or telephone us on 01256 844844.

30 minutes of dancing burns between 200 and 400 calories



If you want to know more about opportunities to dance in Basingstoke and Deane give us a call on 01256 844844 or visit our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Walking

Regular walking gives you more energy and staying power, better health and lower stress. It also helps prevent thinning bones (osteoporosis), heart disease and certain cancers. And you'll be doing your bit for the environment by leaving your car at home.

It doesn't matter whether you do your 30 minutes all in one go or as two or three chunks throughout the day. And, did you know – walking a mile uses up just as many calories as running a mile? That's between 70 and 100 calories, depending on your weight.

Build walking into your life

Try these ideas to clock up 30 minutes of walking a day – you'll be amazed how easily the weight drops off and your fitness levels increase:

- Walk to the shops instead of taking the bus.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Pick the kids up from school on foot rather than by car.
- Walk all or part-way to work – you'll save money and feel bright and positive when you get in. (Wear comfy shoes and you can carry some others in your bag).
- Instead of a tea break, take a walking break at work.
- At work, take your lunch out with you to the park instead of eating it in the canteen.
- If you're at the laundrette, go for a stroll while your clothes are drying.
- Set your alarm for 20-30 minutes earlier in the morning so you can walk before breakfast.
- Stretch your legs at the station while waiting for your train to depart.
- Park your car at the far end of the car park from where you're going, so you get a few strides in on the way.
- Going shopping? Amble around Festival Place once or twice before you go in to a shop.

Keeping it interesting

- Take the scenic routes - through the park or via quiet side roads. But at night stick to well-lit streets and it's better to walk in company.
- Try varying your pace - alternate between walking five minutes fast and five minutes at medium speed.



- Set yourself some targets - in week one you might walk from home to the next bus stop, then get on your bus. In week two you might head for the bus stop after that and so on until you're walking all the way to work.
- Count up how many minutes you have spent walking and log it in a diary like the one on page 17.

Striding ahead

Once you've been walking for a few months you'll be raring to go. Here are some ideas for branching out.

There are many footpaths running through the beautiful Hampshire countryside surrounding Basingstoke and the villages in the borough. Walking guides can be bought from many retail outlets ranging from family walks around the villages to National Trail Guides. You can also pick up a free leaflet on the Basingstoke Canal Heritage Footpath or download further information from our website.

The Wayfarer's Walk runs 70 miles across Hampshire, passing through Ashmansworth, Kingsclere, Oakley, Dummer and The Candovers



Self Guided Walks

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has devised three self-guided walk leaflets that can be downloaded from our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure.

Walk 1 - Around The War Memorial Park

Walk 2 - Around Eastrop Park and The War Memorial Park

Walk 3 - Around The War Memorial Park, Black Dam Ponds and Crabtree Plantation

Health walks

www.whi.org.uk

Enjoy your local parks and open spaces and improve your fitness, by joining the walking for health scheme in Basingstoke and Deane. Led by volunteer leaders, the walks vary each week. They are non-competitive, everybody is welcome and all walks are FREE of charge.

The following ramblers clubs run affordable days out to the countryside and shorter walks in towns and cities.

Basingstoke Ramblers Club

www.hants.org.uk/basingstokeramblers

Basingstoke Ramblers Club is a group of some 200 people of all ages and fitness levels. They walk three times a week and occasionally go away for a weekend or holiday excursion. Most walks are about six to eight miles but some are a little further and include a pub stop.

If you want to know more about walking in Basingstoke and Deane give us a call on 01256 844844 or visit our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Whitchurch Rambling Club

www.whitchurchramblers.org.uk

The Whitchurch Rambling Club meets on a regular basis throughout the year. If you are interested in seeing the beautiful Hampshire countryside, keeping fit and meeting people, why not drop them a line?

North Hampshire Downs Group (Ramblers' Association)

www.hants.gov.uk/ramblersnhd

The NHD group have an interesting and broad-based walks programme including leisurely and brisk walks. The distance covered is usually between four and seven miles and occasionally longer walks of around ten miles taking half a day.



Jogging

If your last experience of jogging was limping around the school cross-country course in the pouring rain, then don't be put off forever - jogging is as easy as a walk in the park... only a little bit faster.

There's no need to go pounding the pavements for hours with a red face. It's much better to take a brisk walk around the park, mixed in with some gentle jogging. Consider upgrading to jog-walking - where you intersperse brisk walking with some slow jogging, for a couple of minutes and then slow down to walking.

Just 10 minutes of jog-walking several times a week can burn fat and strengthen your legs.



Is jogging safe for me?

As long as you're healthy and start slowly, you should be fine. But if you have diabetes, chest pain, asthma, epilepsy, high blood pressure, have had recent surgery or are pregnant, it is best to check with your GP first.

You're ready to jog once you can easily walk fast for 30 minutes. But remember you're not in competition with anyone, so if you're gasping for air or you're in pain, go back to walking.

- Wear comfortable clothing in thin layers but don't overdress
- In winter a tracksuit under a light windproof top is ideal
- At night and in bad weather wear bright reflective clothing - such as a luminous vest
- Women should wear a well-fitting, supportive sports bra

Where should I run?

The best jogging routes are scenic, well lit and traffic-free - have a look at our recommended routes in The War Memorial Park, Eastrop Park, Black dam Ponds or Crabtree Plantation. Our website has full details at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure - or you could telephone us on 01256 844844.

Wherever you go, try to choose recognised trails, smooth grass or tarmac rather than hard pavements that will jar your knees and hips.

Keep safe

- If you're jogging at night, stick to well-lit streets and try to run in a group. Or let someone know your route and when you will be back
- Be careful with music or headphones, because you may not hear cars coming. And watch out for bikes and pedestrians
- Don't worry about getting faster - go further or for longer, not harder
- Never run when you have a virus or fever
- Never run through an injury - you could make it worse



How do I keep at it?

- Give yourself a clear aim - such as running in a fun run. There are many local events in the borough each year including Race for Life held at the Down Grange Sports Complex. This and many other events are designed for all types of runners - from beginners to more experienced athletes.
- Take it slowly it's tempting to try keeping up with friends who are much faster than you. Although you'll probably improve, you could develop shin splints or another injury that will stop you jogging for a while.
- Encourage yourself. If you keep saying to yourself "I'm rubbish at this," you'll run out of energy. So create a more positive statement and repeat this out loud as you run. You could try: "With every step I take, I'm getting fitter and stronger."
- Vary your route. Try your usual route the other way round or somewhere new.
- Keep a training diary - so you'll be able to look back and see just how far you've come.
- Get social - jog with a friend or consider joining a club - they'll show you new routes and you'll meet like-minded positive people.

If you are serious about your running, some of the best local clubs include:

Basingstoke and Mid Hants Athletic Club

www.hants.org.uk/basingstokeathletics

Tadley Runners

www.hants.org.uk/tadleyrunners

North Hants Hash House Harriers

www.nh4.org

Related internet links:

www.jogathon.co.uk

www.runnersworld.co.uk

running.timeoutdoors.com/venues

Cycling

Getting on your bike regularly not only gets you where you want to go faster, it protects you against a wide range of ill health problems and also makes you feel better. Cycling reduces stress.

Forget traffic jams and problems with parking – riding your bike provides real door to door travel. Like all the exercises in this book, cycling can de-stress you and give you more zest for life.

Cycling is particularly good because it puts little strain on joints such as ankles and knees. It not only helps to shed those extra pounds but also helps increase muscle tone and reduces the risk of heart attacks.



It's great for everyone

Cycling fits in with your daily life. Spend time with the family at the weekend or go “off road” in the evening. It's an activity you can enjoy at any level.

There's no time like the present to start. Cycling is an activity for all seasons and in our mild climate there are few days too hot or too cold to enjoy being on a bike.



Anyone can ride a bike; once learned, never forgotten. Start off on flat roads or paths and build up slowly. For suitable routes near to your home visit some of the websites listed below or give us a call on 01256 844844 for a brochure.

www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Basingstoke Cycleways

www.hants.gov.uk/cycling/routes

Basingstoke Off Road Cycle Trail

Whitchurch Off Road Cycle Trail

Watership Down Off Road Cycle Trail

Ellisfield Off Road Cycle trail

Abbotstone Off Road Cycle Trail

If you haven't used your bike for a while and need to boost your confidence on the road contact Hampshire Cycle Training on 07963 237619 or log on to www.hampshirecyclettraining.org.uk for individual or group tuition at a small cost.

Cycling Touring Club

www.ctc.org

Reading to Basingstoke Cycle route

www.nhampshirectc.org.uk

Swimming

Swimming is a great way of improving your all-round fitness because it can boost strength, stamina and suppleness all at the same time. It has all the benefits of running but with some of the strength-building effects of weight training and improves suppleness almost as much as a dance class.

Swimming uses all the major muscle groups and is a demanding exercise that helps to keep your heart and lungs healthy. Swimming also helps to keep joints flexible, especially in the neck, shoulders and hips as your limbs and body move through the water.

Once you can swim a wide range of other water based activities are open to you, from sailing to snorkelling, water polo, canoeing or aqua aerobics.

Try the Amateur Swimming Association's **Swimfit** programme which gives support and guidance to those who swim for fitness, including those who want to swim to lose weight.

Swimming is, generally, kinder to your body than land-based exercise because your natural buoyancy in water helps you avoid the jarring knocks that can cause injuries.

Swimming often suits those who have arthritis or back problems, weight problems or women who are pregnant.

Strength and co-ordination built up by swimming reduces the risk of falls and hip fractures in the elderly.

Tadley Swimming Pool 0118 981 7818

Basingstoke Aquadrome 01256 472343

Basingstoke Sports Centre 01256 302222



If you want to know more about swimming opportunities in Basingstoke and Deane give us a call on 01256 844844 or visit our website www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure

Food and drink

Healthy eating goes hand in hand with a healthy lifestyle; a diet rich in fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meat and fish is great.

“Eating out? Have a two course meal only and go for a fruit-based starter instead of a dessert.”

Remember to drink lots of water throughout the day - don't wait until you are thirsty, as your body is already dehydrated by then. It's a good idea to have a small bottle of water with you when exercising.

Most of us know it's important to look after our hearts. In the UK, one adult dies of heart disease every three minutes of the day (unsurprising when more than 70% have high cholesterol and 25% have high blood pressure). A few dietary changes can have a positive effect on heart health.

Good digestion is often taken for granted until it goes wrong. One in five adults in the UK suffers digestive problems at some stage in their life but the good news is there are simple steps we can take to keep our digestive tracts in good working order.

It really is beneficial to eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables a day, as well as being good for your heart, they keep your digestive system healthy and the vitamin C helps build collagen which is good for strengthening your skin.

“Eat breakfast - it will help to stop you snacking later in the day.”





“You don’t need to cut out cakes, crisps, chips and biscuits - just avoid eating them every day.”

Bodies need protein - it is necessary for the maintenance of cells and the manufacture of hormones - good choices are chicken, salmon and nuts.

Don’t add salt and sugar to food and watch out for hidden salt and sugar in processed foods and ready meals. Get used to reading food labels.

Know your drink - a glass of red wine or two is said to be good for the heart but try to stick to the recommendation of 14 units a week for women (21 for men) with one or two drink free days each week. Regular drinking in excess of these levels increases the risks to your health and will be adding a lot of calories.

For more information on healthy eating visit our website on www.basingstoke.gov.uk/leisure or telephone us on 01256 844844.



“Try ‘more wholegrain bread, less spread’ as a rule of thumb.”

“30 minutes five times a week”

Thirty minutes? It's nothing. It's the time it takes to watch a soap opera or travel home from work. In fact, it is just 2% of your total day. But how you choose to spend it could make all the difference to how good your day is.

It only takes 30 minutes, five times a week, to dramatically improve your health and happiness.



Many thanks to Sport England for their permission to use the information on Everyday Sport which is reproduced in this book.

For further information on Everyday Sport visit www.everydaysport.com

Get moving, get active is also available online at www.basingstoke.gov.uk. For further copies please call 01256 844844 or e-mail: leisure.services@basingstoke.gov.uk.

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Here to help - If you find any of our information difficult to read please let us know. We try to write everything in Plain English and want to make sure that everyone has access to the information they need.

