



### Are there any risks?

On the whole the benefits of exercise and keeping active far outweigh any potential risks. However for a few people there may be certain activities which might be inadvisable e.g. if you have neck problems gymnastics may not be a good idea. Always check with a member of the healthcare team before starting. If your disease is very active you might find that doing very strenuous exercise is too painful or tiring. However there are probably some simple exercises you can do -contact your physio for advice or a simple exercise programme.

### Remember

If you haven't exercised for a long time begin gently and build up slowly. Be kind to yourself and don't worry if some weeks you don't manage as much, as long as you are doing more than before you will get some health benefits.

### More info?

If you would like more info or would like to discuss any of the topics mentioned in this leaflet please ask any of the rheumatology team when you next visit. Alternatively you can download information from the web-sites listed on the back of this leaflet.

## Useful Web Addresses

### General health and exercise

[www.lifebytes.gov.uk](http://www.lifebytes.gov.uk)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/health](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health)  
[life\\_young.shtml](http://life_young.shtml)  
[www.who.dk/childhealthenv/risks](http://www.who.dk/childhealthenv/risks)  
[www.bhf.org.uk/youngpeople](http://www.bhf.org.uk/youngpeople)

### Osteoporosis

[www.nos.org.uk](http://www.nos.org.uk)  
[www.bonezone.org.uk](http://www.bonezone.org.uk)  
[www.doctarann.org](http://www.doctarann.org)

### Sport and disability

[www.britishwheelchairsports.org](http://www.britishwheelchairsports.org)  
[www.exercisealliance.org.uk](http://www.exercisealliance.org.uk)

### Department of Rheumatology

Tel: 0121-333-8208/9	Fax: 0121-333-8211
Physiotherapy	0121 333 8221
Occupational Therapy	0121 333 8213

### Data Protection

We collect information about our young people and families relevant to their diagnosis and treatment. We store it in written records and on computer. We may have to share some of your information with other people and organisations. If you have any questions and/or do not want us to share that information with others, please talk to the Adolescent Rheumatology team or contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on (0121) 333 8403/8611.



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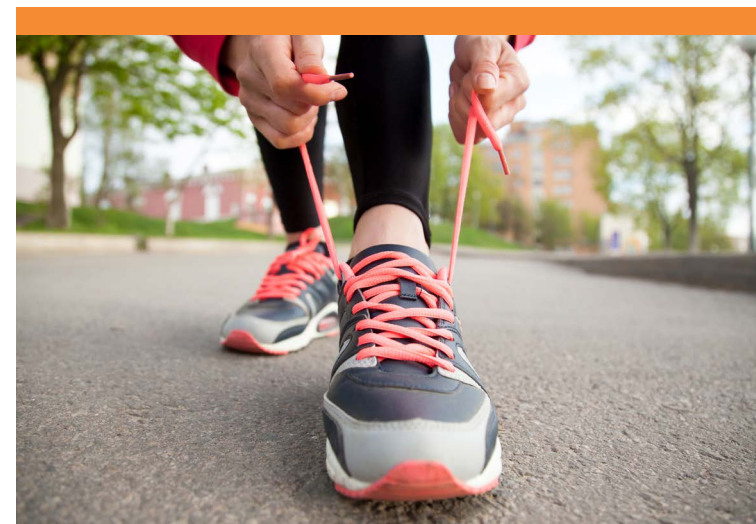


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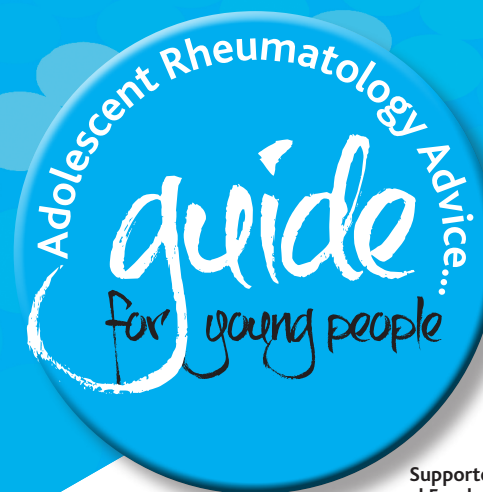
E: [questions@kidslikeus.info](mailto:questions@kidslikeus.info)  
[www.kidslikeus.info](http://www.kidslikeus.info)



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# Get Active! Get Fit For life



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## Why do young people need to keep active?

There are many benefits of keeping active. These include:

- Improved fitness – exercise helps to improve your overall feelings of well-being, boosts energy levels and increases strength, flexibility and stamina so you can cope better with everyday demands on your body and enjoy the things you like to do.
- Improved mood– exercise can help lift your mood by releasing hormones that make you feel good. Exercising with friends can also be fun and you might make new friends in the process.
- Improved sleep– being physically active during the day helps you sleep better at night.

Research shows that keeping reasonably active can also:

- Reduce the risk of coronary heart disease
- Prevent obesity
- Reduce the risk of Type II diabetes
- Reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life. This is the thinning of the bones which can lead to fractures.



## How much activity is enough?

- Aim to do between 30-60 minutes 5 times a week.
- Try to do activity of a moderate intensity that makes you a bit warm and sweaty.
- Ideally twice a week do exercise that is good for bone health these are weight bearing or resisted activities.

## I don't have the time, what do you suggest?

If the thought of doing 30 minutes brisk walking (or other activity) is too daunting then try splitting it into smaller bouts instead. Here are a few suggestions.

- Use the stairs instead of the lift.
- Don't always rely on the car/bus, think about walking or cycling all or part of the way to school/college/work
- Volunteer to take the dog out for a walk
- Dance around the living room to your favourite CD
- Help with household chores!
- Go out with your friends at weekends for a bit of shopping

## Tips for getting started

- If you haven't been very active for a while, you need to build up your activity levels gradually
- You could try starting with gentle walking and gradually increase the pace and distance
- Swimming is a good gentle activity to start with (if you like it)
- If you want to join a gym or take up a new sport then that's good too.
- Some leisure centres together with local GP's offer a scheme called 'exercise on prescription', which enables you to be assessed and have discounted gym/exercise sessions
- If you find it difficult to access regular activities try contacting your local leisure centre as they may be able to offer activities specifically for disabled young people.
- If you're not very sporty perhaps you could try dance classes/drama/ orienteering/sea scouts.
- Try to choose activities which fit in with your lifestyle as you are more likely to stick with it.



Exercise  
doesn't have to  
be strenuous  
to be  
beneficial

30mins of  
exercise 5  
times a week will  
keep your whole  
body healthy

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