



Huffy puffy cardio – get it pumping

Great cardiovascular activity comes in all forms and there's something for everyone at whatever level you are at. Diabetes Magazine columnist Craig Wise has these tips:

It can be an organised event such as ballroom dancing at the local hall or informal like chasing your children round the park and kicking a ball.

If you like running then run, if you don't then don't. (It's that simple.)

Often it's not about finding the activity you love to do, most likely it's about finding the one which you dislike the least. You never know you might discover a new passion.

Cardiovascular activity is about getting your heart rate up and so even those household chores can count towards your weekly activity minutes. Just as long as you're getting some physical activity for 30 minutes a day, so you're huffing and puffing but can still chat to friends while you're working out.

Here are 50 activities/past-times and sports that you might like to explore to add some activity to your life. There are also a bit more explanation of some of the most popular.

Have a go – that's what its all about.

At least try number 20 ... I bet you have forgotten how much fun it is).



HOUSEHOLD CHORES

1. Vacuuming
2. Scrubbing floors
3. Cleaning the bathtub
4. Washing windows
5. Mopping
6. Changing sheets
7. Painting
8. Heavy renovations (pulling carpet, knocking down walls, etc.)
9. Moving furniture
10. Gardening
11. Cleaning the gutters
12. Washing the car
13. Mowing the lawn with a push mower
14. Shoveling snow
15. Sweeping the patio and paths
16. Cleaning out the garage
17. Heavy landscaping such as planting trees, shrubs and bushes

PLAY TIME

18. Playing with your children
19. Walking the dog / playing with the dog
20. Hula hooping
21. Skipping / jumping rope
22. Trampoline jumping (rebounding)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

23. Cycling
24. Hiking / walking bush tracks
25. Skiing
26. Water skiing
27. Wakeboarding
28. Rock climbing
29. Running / jogging
30. Brisk walking
31. Rollerblading
32. Paddling a canoe
33. Nordic walking
34. Surfing
35. Paddle boarding
36. Skateboarding
37. Ice skating

GROUP CLASSES

38. Aerobics
39. Zumba
40. Yoga (Ashtanga and/or Vinyasa)
41. Dance lessons
42. Aqua aerobics

SPORTS

43. Tennis
44. Football
45. Hockey
46. Basketball
47. Netball
48. Rugby
49. Boxing
50. Martial arts

THE POPULAR ONES:

Running / jogging:

Running is a great way to burn calories and one of the 'go to' methods of cardiovascular exercise. You don't need any special equipment which is one of the benefits, and everyone knows how to do it. And if you are not up to running just yet then a good brisk walk is a great place to start.

You can go running outside and use the opportunity to see some scenery in your neighbourhood, or you can go running on a treadmill in your home (the scenery generally isn't so good this way though).

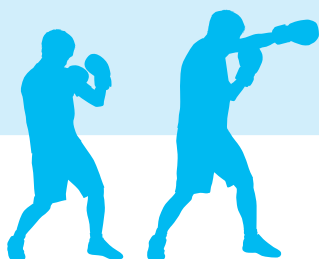
The downsides of running however are that it can be hard on the knees and legs (especially if you are carrying a little extra weight) if you don't take suitable precautions. If you have bad knees or get shin splints already then you might want to consider something else. To avoid causing problems, spend time looking into the right shoes and get them fitted especially for your feet and for your gait. Likewise try to avoid running on hard surfaces where possible and stick instead to grass. If you are running on a treadmill, be sure to always keep it on a slight incline.



Shadow boxing:

Shadow boxing is boxing in front of your own shadow where you become the opponent. This is a great way to get the heart rate up and requires even less space and equipment than skipping.

The downside of shadow boxing is that you risk over-extending your joints if you punch too hard and suddenly, so avoid this by using lighter jabs.



Swimming:

Swimming is another favourite form of cardiovascular activity. One of the great advantages of swimming is that there is no impact like there is on the knees with running. At the same time, swimming is a great full body workout that provides resistance through a vast range of movements. There are also many different swimming strokes which help you to increase variety and to target different muscle groups.

There are of course downsides to swimming as your main form of cardiovascular activity though. The first of these is that swimming requires access to a swimming pool and sometimes the hours of the local pool don't always fit with our lives. The fact that swimming is contained within a swimming pool can also put some people off, as you won't get to see anything of the surrounding area and instead will just be doing laps which some people may find a little dreary.



Cycling:

Cycling is a great form of cardiovascular activity that in many ways combines the positives of both running and swimming. There is far less impact on the joints making it suitable for those who need to take extra care of their joints. At the same time it is also outdoors so you can use cycling to see lots of your local area relatively quickly.

Cycling gets you around fast enough that it's also actually practical and you can use it in order to get from place to place. Because of this you can use the time traveling to a destination to get in some exercise rather than having to squeeze in the exercise time later in the day – it's that whole "work smarter not harder" thing that the experts are always telling us about.

Skipping:

Skipping is possibly the most underused and underrated form of exercise and can be done in a confined space. All you need to start skipping is a rope and enough floor space to swing it. Skipping is the form of cardiovascular activity used by most boxers for its practicality and for the fact that it keeps you light on your toes and requires timing.

If standing jumping a rope gets dull then this is the kind of exercise that can be done in front of the television, and at the same time there are lots of different types of skipping, like skipping backwards or with your arms crossed over.

It's also easy to carry a rope with you, and this makes it perfect for a form of cardiovascular activity that you can do while travelling in hotel rooms - great for sales reps, or at the park in your lunch break.



Rowing/kayaking/ canoeing:

These are fantastic forms of cardiovascular activity that have relatively low impact and work all of your upper body. It's a great activity to be able to do in the outdoors getting fresh air and seeing the scenery.

Of course it has its downsides in that it requires you to live near the water, and have, or at least be able to cheaply rent, a boat. You then also have to get to and from the river in order to do it. Or alternately you can rent a rowing machine.



Trampolining:

This is a very fun way to get the heart rate up quickly and if you happen to have a class or trampoline centre near you it can also be a social experience.

It's something you can just as easily do at home though by buying a small rebounder trampoline and by putting it in front of your television - you can get some exercise in and still keep up to date with your favourite programme.



Dancing:

Dancing is an absolutely great way to get some exercise, and it doesn't have to be organised or professional dancing. Stand in your living room, put some of your favourite music, and shake that booty! The good thing about this too is that you can put as much effort as you want into your dancing in order to have a big workout, or just a short one.

Dancing is also great for the social aspect. Dancing comes in many forms from ballroom dancing to line dancing. Check in your local area you will be surprised how many local dance groups there are from beginner's ballroom, to Zumba to Scottish Highland dancing - try them out - you're bound to find one you like.



Diabetes New Zealand is a national membership organisation. Our aim is to support people affected by diabetes and health professionals throughout New Zealand. We act for people affected by diabetes by:

Providing local support • Acting as an advocate • Raising awareness of diabetes, especially interventions that will prevent type 2 diabetes or reduce diabetes complications • Educating and informing people about diabetes, its treatment, management and control • Supporting research into the treatment, prevention and cure of diabetes.