24 Hour Movement Guidelines

# What Are Movement Guidelines?

To help Australians make healthy choices, The Australian Government develops research-based guidelines. The Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Young People provide advice on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep.

For greatest health benefits, children and young people (aged 5–17 years) should achieve the recommended balance of high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behaviour, and sufficient sleep each day.

A healthy 24 hours includes:

* accumulating 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day involving mainly aerobic activities
* several hours of a variety of light physical activities
* limiting sedentary recreational screen time -no more than 2 hours per day
* breaking up long periods of sitting as often as possible
* an uninterrupted 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night for those aged 5–13 years and 8 to 10 hours per night for those aged 14–17 years
* consistent bed and wake-up times.

Vigorous activities, as well as those that strengthen muscles and bones should be incorporated at least 3 days per week.

For greater health benefits, replace sedentary time with additional moderate to vigorous physical activity, while getting enough sleep.

**Why Follow the Guidelines?**

Following the guidelines is better for:

* heart and lung health
* healthy muscles and bones
* maintaining a healthy weight
* concentrating at school
* mental health and social interaction.

Sticking to the 24-hour Movement Guidelines may be hard at times, however, the health benefits are worth it. If you don’t currently meet them, start slowly and gradually change your habits to meet the recommendations.

**I am very active, so why do I have to limit my sitting and screen time?**

You might do enough physical activity but if you sit down in front of screens for a long time this can reduce the health benefits you achieved through being active.

**What about strength activities – does this mean I have to join a gym?**

Activities that strengthen your bones and muscles are important for your growth and development. This doesn’t mean you have to hit the weights in the gym. Strength activities include:

* skipping
* running
* jumping
* push-ups
* sit-ups
* using resistance bands
* lunges and squats.