



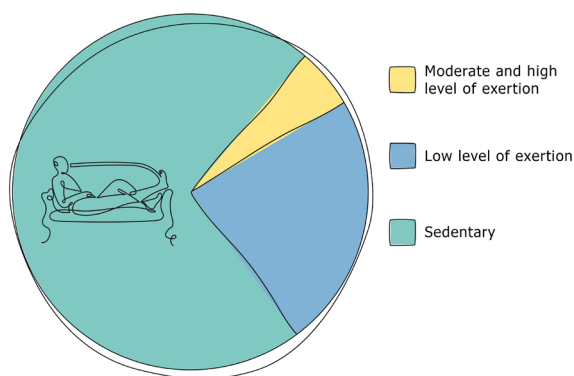
Promote physical activity and limit sedentary behaviour

All children, young people, adults and older people should have equal access to physical activities based on their interests, age and ability.

Physical activity contributes to improved physical and mental health, boosts learning, concentration and sleep quality. Everything from simple everyday movement to elite sports make up the concept of physical activity. However, we are moving much less and are physically inactive for a large part of the day.

Being sedentary refers to the waking hours we spend sitting, reclining or lying down and not expending much energy. Being sedentary for long periods increases the risk of several diseases and can lead to neck and shoulder problems. We should therefore break up this sedentary behaviour with movement.

Figure 1. Children and adults are sedentary for a large proportion of their waking hours. The rest of the time, we are active to varying extents.



Everybody should have the chance to be physically active

To ensure that everybody has access to physical activity, we need to take action such as:

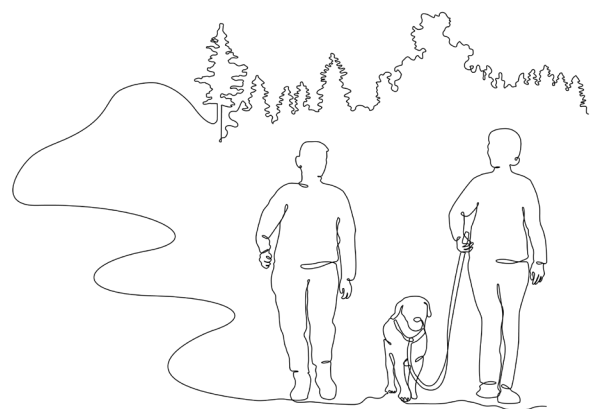
- planning and creating supportive community environments;
- promoting physical activity in schools and giving children the opportunity to develop their mobility;
- enabling movement variation in workplaces;

- providing support for behavioural changes within health and social care;
- changing norms relating to gender, sexual orientation and functional ability.

A person with a physical disability may need adaptations and aids that facilitate their mobility. An intellectual disability may mean a person requires extra support and encouragement from those around them and society.

Remember:

- Every move counts. Make sure to move throughout the day and find everyday activities to do.
- Take sedentary breaks, a few minutes every half hour.
- Start with some physical activity and gradually increase the amount. Some is better than none.
- Make it easier for children to move throughout the day and provide them with a variety of activities.
- People with health conditions or disabilities should also aim to be as active as their condition allows.



Recommendations for different age groups

The recommendations for physical activity and sedentary behaviour presented below apply to all age and population groups in Sweden, regardless of gender, cultural background, socioeconomic conditions or disability.

1. Reduce sedentary behaviour

Everyone needs regular sedentary breaks to avoid sitting still for long periods – regardless of age. Children aged 0–5 must not have their mobility restricted and they also need to take breaks from sitting in prams or high chairs.

2. Engage in different types of physical activity

All adults and children should be physically active during weekdays and weekends. This can include physical activity in the home, school or workplace as well as during leisure time. Choosing active modes of transport such as walking, cycling and rollerblading is one way to boost activity levels. Physical activity for babies involves play and floor-based mobility when lying on their backs and stomachs. Children aged 1–5 should be able to move in different ways throughout the day as they play, use active modes of transport, spend time outdoors and explore different environments.

3. Include activities that increase heart rate

Aerobic physical activity that increase your breathing and heart rate is recommended for people aged six and above. Such activities may include taking brisk walks or spending time outdoors, exercising and playing sports.

Recommendations for aerobic physical activity

Age	Minutes
6–17 years	An average of at least 60 minutes per day
18–64 years	At least 150–300 minutes per week
65 years and above	At least 150–300 minutes per week
During and after pregnancy	At least 150 per week

Source: Folkhälsomyndigheten 2021. Riktlinjer för fysisk aktivitet och stillasittande.

4. Choose activities that strengthen muscles and bones

Children and adults should participate in physical activity that strengthens muscles and bones. The activities should involve the major muscle groups such as the legs, thighs, buttocks and back. They can be part of playing, running and jumping, or exercise and sport. They can also be part of everyday activities. Climbing the stairs is one example of an activity that strengthens muscles in the

legs and buttocks. When a person is pregnant, they should also exercise their pelvic floor muscles to reduce the risk of urinary incontinence. These exercises should continue during the postpartum period.

Recommendations for physical activities that strengthen muscles and bones

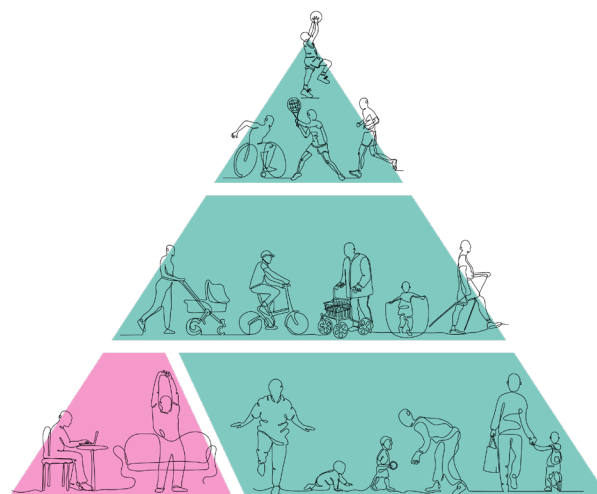
Age	Times per week
6–17 years	At least three times per week
18–64 years	At least twice per week
65 years and above	At least twice per week
During and after pregnancy	At least twice per week, plus pelvic floor exercises

Source: Folkhälsomyndigheten 2021. Riktlinjer för fysisk aktivitet och stillasittande.

5. Train your balance

Older adults should train their balance and mobility at least three days per week in order to hold on to their functional capacity and prevent falls. People with intellectual disabilities should also train their balance as this has positive health effects.

Figure 2. The pyramid shows different forms of physical activity



Keep in mind:

- Activities may need to be adapted to a person's physical condition during and after their pregnancy.
- Contact healthcare services for individual advice relating to various conditions and illnesses.