

## BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The health benefits of regular physical activity are many. At least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, for example brisk walking, is enough to bring many of these effects. However, by increasing the level of activity, the benefits will also increase.

### ■ Regular physical activity

- reduces the risk of dying prematurely
- reduces the risk of dying from heart disease or stroke, which are responsible for one-third of all deaths
- reduces the risk of developing heart disease or colon cancer by up to 50 %
- reduces the risk of developing type II diabetes 50 %
- helps to prevent / reduce hypertension, which affects one-fifth of the world's adult population
- helps to prevent / reduce osteoporosis, reducing the risk of hip fracture by up to 50 % in women
- reduces the risk of developing lower back pain
- promotes psychological well-being, reduces stress, anxiety and feelings of depression and loneliness
- helps prevent or control risky behaviours, especially among children and young people, like tobacco, alcohol or other substance use, unhealthy diet or violence
- helps control weight and lower the risk of becoming obese by 50 % compared to people with sedentary lifestyles
- helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints and makes people with chronic, disabling conditions improve their stamina
- can help in the management of painful conditions, like back pain or knee pain

We all know that physical activity – taking a walk, riding a bike, dancing or playing – simply makes you feel better. But regular physical activity brings about many other benefits. It not only has the potential to improve and maintain good health, but it can also bring with it important social and economic benefits.

Regular physical activity benefits communities and economies in terms of reduced health care costs, increased productivity, better performing schools, lower worker absenteeism and turnover, increased productivity and increased participation in sports and recreational activities.

In many countries, a significant proportion of health spending is due to costs related to lack of physical activity and obesity.

