# All activity counts

## Even a few minutes can benefit your heart

Research Snapshot #5

**Sources:**
1. Stamatakis, E., et al. (2025). Dose response of incidental physical activity against cardiovascular events and mortality.
2. Stamatakis, E., et al. (2022). Association of wearable device-measured vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity with mortality.

## Quick take

Incidental activities such as brisk walking, climbing stairs, carrying groceries, or household tasks may provide meaningful health benefits. Just a few minutes of vigorous, incidental physical activity substantially lowers risk of cancer, cardiovascular events, and early death in adults with low-movement routines.

## Methods at a glance

**49,548**
Participants combined, reporting no sport or exercise

**Objective**
Activity measurement via wrist-worn accelerometers

**6.9–7.9 years**
Mean follow-up to track health outcomes

**Health events**
Cardiovascular events and deaths, cancer deaths, and all-cause mortality

## Key findings

Many people don't engage in structured exercise. Only 2 in 5 middle-aged adults engage in structured exercise (such as sports).



**Small amounts make a big difference**

***Just 3-5 minutes a day*** of vigorous incidental physical activity is associated with:

- **38%** lower cardiovascular mortality[1]
- **38%** lower cancer morality[2]
- **25%** lower major adverse cardiovascular events[1]

**Intensity matters**
In terms of cardiovascular outcomes,
1 min vigorous activity
= 3 min of moderate activity
= 35-50 min of light activity[1].



## Key issues → Practical recommendations

**Structured exercise may not be accessible to everyone**
→ promote everyday movement as an alternative

**Short bursts of vigorous activity count**
→ encourage stair climbing, brisk walking and active household tasks

**Intensity matters**
→ encourage people to move faster or exert more effort where safe and appropriate

**Lifestyle activity may be more achievable**
→ integrate physical activity promotion into routine healthcare and community settings

## Read more

Visit the Equally Well Australia website for more information and resources.

## Author's conclusion

> Physical activity doesn't have to happen in a gym or during a structured workout. Everyday activities that raise your heart rate can also contribute to better health.