



Find your fit

**Physical activity resources
for women in the ACT**

Developed by Active Beginnings

A co-designed research project with the University of Canberra, Health Care Consumer's Association (HCCA), and the Multicultural Hub Canberra (mHub)



Active Beginnings



For more information

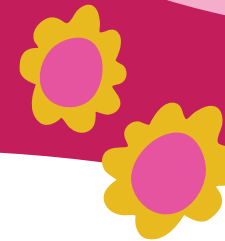
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*The content in this booklet is correct to the best of our knowledge
at time of printing (April 2024) and subject to change.*

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About

Physical Activity for Women

It can be difficult to find the time and motivation to fit exercise in our busy lives. From childcare responsibilities to work, finding the time to dedicate to exercise may seem impossible. Especially as women, it may seem that there are few places where we feel safe and comfortable to move our bodies in ways that we enjoy. Here are some resources within the Australian Capital Territory that may suit the needs of women, specifically women and pregnant women from multicultural backgrounds to help them incorporate more movement and activity in their lives as well as feel more socially connected to their communities.



Introduction

For all of us, having an active lifestyle offers many health benefits. From improved fitness to avoiding sickness, managing health conditions and supporting well-being, being active each day is important.

Physical activity involves things we do at home, with our family and community, for work and for fun, or simply walking when we are out.

Many of us do not get enough physical activity. It can be especially hard for women from multi-cultural communities to find activities that are right for them.

This booklet includes a range of activities that are available in the Australian Capital Territory that might be suitable for women from a variety of cultures.



What is exercise?

Exercise is one way we can be physically active. Exercise is an important way of moving the body to make our heartbeat faster, our breathing harder, and work our muscles.

We can vary the intensity of our exercise. Some activities like brisk (faster) walking are of moderate intensity while running or playing soccer are more intense (more vigorous).

Our body needs exercise along with other types of physical activity.



How much exercise do we need?

We need to be active on most days.

Each week, this includes doing:

2.5-5 hours of moderate intensity activity or

1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous activity.

This should also include **two muscle strengthening activities per week** such as lifting weights or tasks that involve lifting, carrying, pushing or digging.

In addition, we need to **exercise our pelvic floor**. We all have pelvic floor muscles. There are many different reasons why women and men might develop pelvic floor problems.

Doing pelvic floor muscles 3 times a day is an important way to help strengthen your pelvic floor muscles.

How can we do more exercise?

We don't have to go to a gym or join expensive exercise classes. We can find ways to include exercise as in our daily lives and do things we enjoy.

If we took a brisk walk for 30 minutes most days, and did some muscle strength exercises twice per week, we would meet recommendations. Muscle strength exercises can be done at home with our own bodies (like push ups or squats) or household items like bags of rice or filled water bottles.

Doing something is better than doing none.

Please see the resources produced by the Australian Government for more information.

Go to health.gov.au and search for 'Physical activity and Exercise Guidelines for All Australians'



Need more support?

For more specific information about pelvic floor conditions and exercises, these are two excellent websites:

- Pelvic Floor First (pelvicfloorfirst.org.au)
- Incontinence Foundation of Australia (continence.org.au)
- You can also speak to your doctor, or a continence nurse or continence physiotherapist.

If you have a health condition that you are concerned about with exercise:

- Make an appointment with an accredited exercise physiologist (AEP), or a physiotherapist
- Chat with your doctor

If you are pregnant or recently had a baby and need more support to get started:

- Chat to your midwife or doctor
- Make an appointment with a women's health physiotherapist

Mum's Exercise Group Australia (MEGA)

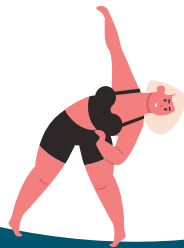
Non-profit, volunteer run exercise group for mothers. "MEGA aims to ensure that no mother is isolated from the community and that every woman is empowered to look after their health and wellbeing. Through very low-cost fitness and wellbeing training options, and sponsored memberships for women facing hardship, MEGA aims to give every mother in Australia access to fitness and wellbeing classes that will improve their health and provide the resilience and support they need to thrive in life."

Find more information at
megamums.com.au

Women's Adventure ACT

A non-profit, women-led community group hosting a range of outdoor activities accessible to women. Catering a broad range of fitness levels, skills, and interests, they are welcoming to women from all backgrounds, cultures and experiences. Women's Adventure ACT encourages and supports women to get outdoors in a safe, supportive, and judgment-free way.

Find more information at
womensadventure.net



Bluearth – Fitness for You, Play for Your Child!

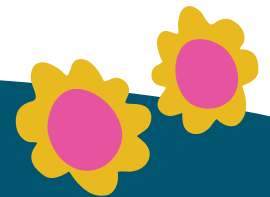
Meet & Move is an ACT-based program which combines the social and play elements of a playgroup with movement for mums. Meet & Move helps you to increase your family's physical activity together. All sessions are held outdoors, but each session is different. Most include a pram-friendly, baby-wearing friendly walk and playground play for the kids. Many of our walks are also suitable for kids on bikes and scooters. For information about walks and resources, please see the webpage below. There is an active Facebook group accessible within the webpage which contains current details of walks and activities.

Find more information at
bluearth.org/meetandmove/

Landcare ACT

Landcare ACT is part of an Australian wide and growing international community Landcare movement made up of people caring for their local environments. There are close to 100 Landcare groups actively caring for urban parks, nature reserves, urban waterways and rural areas of the ACT. Landcare ACT facilitates guided walks designed to support nature connection, social interaction, and personal wellbeing. Slow down, activate your senses, and connect more deeply with your surroundings whilst appreciating the beauty of Canberra.

Find more information at landcareact.org.au/calendar



Mama Connect

Mama Connect provides opportunities for mums to connect with themselves and others to help smooth the ride as they navigate their path through motherhood. We organise a variety of mum-focused, child-friendly activities designed to connect you with other mums, and provide some more opportunities to bring joy, learning and contribution into your life.

Find more information at
mamaconnect.org/services



Majura Women's Group

Want to get some 'you' time, learn something new or relax and connect with other mothers?

Majura Women's Group is a unique group for mothers with children under 5 that offers childcare facilities while you get to enjoy some adult time. They hold a variety of activities throughout the school term such as craft projects, exercise sessions, personal development and well-being workshops. They are there for their members and develop the term plan based on your input.

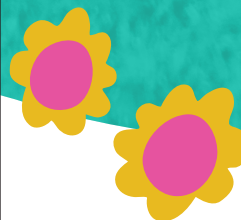
Find more information at majurawomensgroup.net

parkrun

parkrun is a free, community event where you can walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate. parkrun is 5k and takes place every Saturday morning. parkrun is positive, welcoming and inclusive, there is no time limit and no one finishes last. Everyone is welcome to come along.

There are 9 parkrun events held across the ACT every Saturday.

Find more information at
parkrun.com.au



When is it? Every Saturday at 8:00am.

Where is it? There are 9 parkrun locations across the ACT, with details available in the webpage.

What does it cost to join in? Nothing - it's free! but please register before you first come along. Only ever register with parkrun once and don't forget to bring a scannable copy of your barcode. If you forget it, you won't get a time.

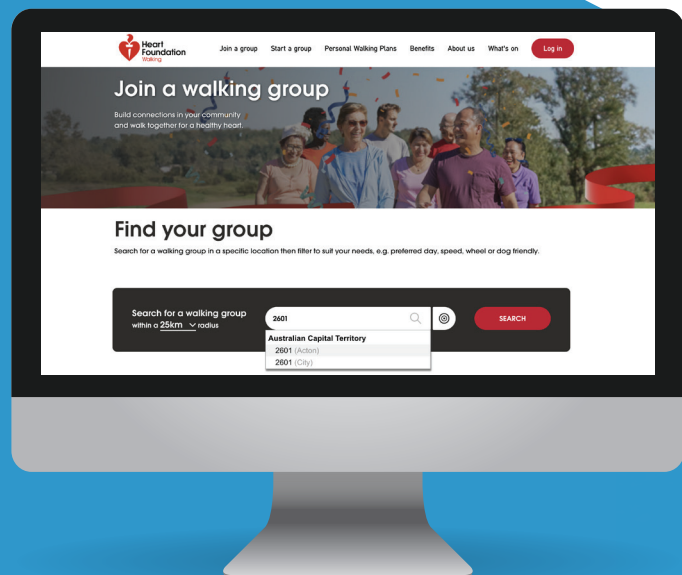
How fast do I have to be? We all take part for our own enjoyment. Please come along and join in whatever your pace!



Heart Foundation Walking Group

Heart Foundation Walking is Australia's largest free walking network. Hosted by community members, there are walking groups for everyone across Australia. Use the website to find a walking group near you, with information on frequency, group size, dog-friendliness, pram-friendliness, speed, and duration.

Find more information at walking.heartfoundation.org.au/walking



The Refugee and Migrant Swimming Project

The Refugee and Migrant Swimming Project (RMSP) provides free, culturally safe and trauma-informed swimming and water safety lessons to Canberra's refugee and migrant community.

The program caters for refugee and migrant participants with no swimming experience and is developed in partnership with Gungahlin Leisure Centre (GLC), Royal Life Saving ACT (RLS), and Multicultural Hub Canberra.

The core program centres around 10 swimming lessons delivered in the heated pool at Gungahlin Leisure Centre, and one water safety lesson at an outdoor waterway. English lessons are provided before each lesson, teaching swimming and water safety related language.

Find more information at rmspcanberra.com



Outdoor fitness stations

Across the ACT there is free fitness equipment available. Most of these are found in public parks. Examples of the park locations include:

- Henry Rolland Park, by Lake Burley Griffin
- Theodore Neighbourhood Oval
- Eddison District Park
- Lake Ginninderra District Park
- Haig Park
- Lennox Gardens
- Crace Community Recreation Park
- Franklin Community Recreation Park
- Moncrieff Community Recreation Park
- John Knight Memorial Park

Please look at the website below to find more locations as well as sample workout plans that you can follow.

Find more information at
[cityservices.act.gov.au/public-land/
public-spaces-and-facilities/fitness-stations](https://cityservices.act.gov.au/public-land/public-spaces-and-facilities/fitness-stations)

SistaPT

A Muslim woman-led fitness service based in Isabella Plains. While this program is open to all women, it specifically aims to be a safe space for Muslim women and their children to feel comfortable doing exercise, offering various classes throughout the week to suit your schedule.

Find more information at
facebook.com/sistapt



Strolling 4 resilience



Running for Resilience is pleased to announce Strolling for Resilience a new part of the R4R community that will run each Thursday at 10:30am from the Arc de Resilience on Kingston Foreshore. A run aimed specifically for young families and providing mental health support for the mums and dads by:

- Getting together as a community
- Exercising together at a pace that suits you
- Supporting each other
- Creating social connections to build mental resilience

Strolling for Resilience or S4R is free to attend. We'll grab a coffee from one of the foreshore cafes at the end of the stroll and then have the option to play with the kids in Norgrove Park on the Foreshore.

Find more information at
runningforresilience.com/strolling-for-resilience



Females in Training ACT

Females in Training - FIT is a not-for-profit community group based in the ACT designed to help women of all ages and abilities to enjoy non-competitive sports training and exercise in a fun and supportive atmosphere. No experience is necessary to join FIT and they particularly want to support women who are just starting their fitness journey to show them how fun it can be! FIT have a number of supports and resources to help you reach your fitness goals. FIT welcomes women of all ages and abilities.

Find more information at
fitact.org.au



Women only fitness classes

MustACT have developed women-only fitness classes designed for Muslim women and girls as well as any other woman who feel more comfortable exercising and socialising in a women-only space. They have developed affordable classes with a personal trainer that you are able to join with activities such as Sub30 core, boxing, circuit, HIIT and strength and conditioning with locations on both north and south sides of Canberra.

Find more information at mustact.org

Nia with Amanda

Nia with Amanda is an hour-long class where you are warmly welcomed and invited to take off your shoes should you choose. Leave your concerns at the door and be guided into the sensations of your body using movement and music to create a little magic. Each Nia body of work is set to carefully chosen music that stimulates every part of your body to move. Part choreographed using a system of 52 simple moves inspired by the martial, healing, and dance arts, part free form. New starters are welcome at any time throughout the term.

Find more information at
niawithamanda.com.au



Zumba with Becky from Kokoloco

Zumba is a fantastic and high energy class combining Latin rhythms with cardiovascular exercise to create exciting routines that are fun and easy to follow. Inspired by Latin dance and music, Zumba fitness incorporates a variety of different styles including Cumbia, Merengue, Salsa, Reggaeton, Samba, Flamenco and more to create your perfect workout! It is a super fun class that will burn fat, tone and sculpt your body whilst teaching to dance at the same time!

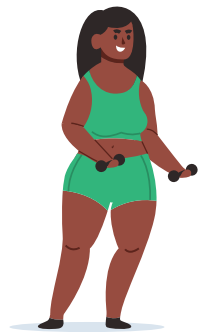
Zumba is an entry level class, suitable for both beginners and experienced dancer. Either way we're going to make you sweat!

Find more information at
kokoloco.com.au/Zumba-fitness

Aquatots Aqua Aerobics

Aquatots offers aqua aerobics across three swim centres in the ACT - Googong, Forde, and Gold Creek. The sessions run for 30-45 minutes and cater for a wide range of abilities and fitness levels. All of the classes are appropriate for pre and postnatal mothers. Babies up to 18 months of age are also welcome to attend the session with you in their unique baby aqua boats. There are a range of affordable options to join the classes.

Find more information at
aquatots.com.au/aqua-aerobics



Ira May Aquanatal

Ira May is a Midwife based in Canberra who has a passion for women's health particularly during pregnancy and after the baby is born. She offers aquanatal fitness classes designed to promote health and wellbeing for women and their families.

Find more information at
facebook.com/iramayaquanatalcanberra

Women only swimming program

MustACT have organised a women-only swimming program designed for Muslim women and girls as well as any other woman who feel more comfortable swimming and socialising in a women-only space. This program is fully sustained by MustACT from pool hire to instructors and lifeguards. Women can participate in swimming lessons, hydrotherapy, or casual swimming in a safe and secure environment.

Find more information at mustact.org



www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/health/active-beginnings