# Concerns rise over physical inactivity among UK adults and children



New research from Sport England has highlighted significant concerns about physical inactivity among adults in the UK, particularly in the country’s most deprived areas. The findings indicate that over a third of adults in these regions are not engaging in sufficient physical activity. The report underscores ongoing disparities, revealing that women, individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and members of Black and Asian communities are less active compared to other demographics.

In addition to adult inactivity, the report notes a concerning statistic regarding children; fewer than half are meeting the Chief Medical Officer's recommended daily physical activity guidelines. This situation has raised alarms about the potential long-term impacts of sedentary behaviours, especially with the increasing ease of accessing entertainment and resources online, which may contribute to a more inactive lifestyle.

Sarah Campus, a personal trainer and founder of LDN MUMS FITNESS, describes sedentary habits as behaviours that involve prolonged sitting or low levels of activity, such as excessive screen time, extended periods of sitting at work or home, long commutes, and reading without movement. Campus emphasises the importance of regular physical activity for improving both physical health and mental well-being, stating, “In particular it helps improve cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones, boosts metabolism, and prevents conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.”

To address these patterns, experts have proposed small, manageable changes that individuals can incorporate into their daily routines to reduce sedentary behaviour. Here are five suggestions offered by trainers in the field:

**Swap the Lift for the Stairs**: This simple adjustment allows individuals to increase their daily activity levels, and while it may not be feasible to take the stairs in all situations, every little bit helps. Emily Schofield, a personal trainer at Ultimate Performance, recommends taking the stairs when possible, such as hiking the last few flights after taking the lift partway.

**Try a Standing Desk**: Employing a standing desk can be beneficial for posture and energy levels. Schofield points out that being on your feet can encourage more movement throughout the day, countering the potential negative effects of prolonged sitting.

**Move Around Rather than Staying at Your Desk**: Regular movement throughout the day is encouraged, with suggestions to take breaks every hour to stand, stretch, or walk. Campus advises against eating lunch at the desk, recommending instead to enjoy meals outdoors or take short walks.

**Shop in Person Rather than Online**: The convenience of online shopping can lead to increased inactivity. Schofield encourages people to visit shops physically, recommending a stroll through aisles and carrying groceries, which adds to one’s daily activity levels.

**Go for a Morning Walk instead of Sleeping In**: To boost energy and wake the body up in the morning, Campus suggests starting the day with a short walk, yoga, or a quick workout, rather than succumbing to excessive sleeping in.

These insights reveal not only the challenges posed by sedentary lifestyles in the UK but also present practical options that individuals can adopt to enhance their physical activity levels. The emphasis is on fostering a movement-oriented lifestyle that can improve overall health and well-being.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/long-term-increase-activity-levels-positive-further-action-needed-tackle> - This URL supports the claim about the increase in adult activity levels over time, despite challenges like the pandemic and economic pressures. It highlights Sport England's efforts to address inactivity.
* <https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/childrens-activity-levels-remain-stable-significant-and-sustained-action> - This URL corroborates the statistic that fewer than half of children meet the daily recommended physical activity guidelines, emphasizing the need for sustained action to improve activity levels.
* <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/> - This URL provides information on the importance of regular physical activity for improving health and well-being, aligning with the benefits mentioned by Sarah Campus.
* <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity> - This URL supports the general importance of physical activity for health, including reducing sedentary behaviors and improving cardiovascular health.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines> - This URL provides the UK's physical activity guidelines, which are referenced in discussions about meeting daily activity recommendations.