

It's only the beginning.....

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As we roll through summer, the sun invites us to get off the lounge chair and enjoy the great outdoors. Despite this temptation, the majority of Australians remain physically inactive. Moderate regular exercise can provide proven health benefits and the prospect of a life free from much illness and incapacity.

The National Health Survey, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2007-08, found that over 60% of adults are sedentary or have low physical activity levels.

Disturbingly, one in five Australians neglect to walk even ten consecutive minutes in the course of a week. Yet as little as 30 minutes of brisk walking each day can make a significant difference to our health. And while exercise doesn't have to be vigorous to be effective, the myth: 'no pain, no gain' remains firmly in place.

Findings from Sports Medicine Australia show close to one in two Australians still wrongly believe we need to 'puff, pant and sweat' to achieve health benefits from physical activity.

Why is exercise and physical activity so important for us? The answer is simple. You are more likely to live a better and healthier life!

Physical activity helps to prevent chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, osteoporosis and lung problems. It also promotes better mental health and can help to reduce stress. For older people, physical activity is also important for maintaining functional ability and mobility. It is vitally important to maintain strength, flexibility and balance with age in order to avoid falls and fractures. However, when starting an exercise program it is important to start slowly and listen to your body. If it hurts or you feel pain slow down or stop.

No matter what your fitness level, age or exercise goal, start training for the City to Surf 2010 sooner rather than later – your body will thank you for it.

