

Physical Wellness and Coronavirus

As we find ourselves spending more time at home, we need to make sure we maintain a healthy body and keep active. Taking care of your physical health is not only great for ageing well, it could reduce your risk of becoming severely ill in the event you catch diseases such as Coronavirus.

Exercise at home

Keeping active for 20-30 minutes a day ensures your body and mind stay healthy.

There are many ways to exercise at home:

- Walking around the home or yard
- Gardening
- Chair yoga
- Dance lessons
- Strength exercises

} Search for free exercise videos at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

Balance exercises

Balance exercises are the single most important exercises to prevent falls. Some good examples are: knee raises, side leg raises, heel raises, stepping up and sit-to-stand exercises.

Institute researcher, **Associate Professor Kim Delbaere** has designed a home-based virtual program to help with reaching the recommended 2 hours per week at standingtall.org.au

Eating well

Eating healthy food is important for your body and your mind.

Research lead by **Professor Kaarin Anstey**, Director of the UNSW Ageing Futures Institute, has shown that the MIND diet is not only healthy for the body, but can reduce the risk of decline in thinking and memory abilities. Read about the MIND diet at [healthline.com/nutrition/mind-diet](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mind-diet)

Some foods to eat on the MIND diet include:

- Vegetables
- Berries
- Nuts
- Olive oil
- Whole grains
- Fish
- Beans
- Chicken



Sleep

Getting 7-8 hours of sleep is great for our immune systems.

You can improve your sleep by:

- Going to bed the same time
- Staying away from TVs and other screens before bed
- Limiting your intake of tea and coffee in the afternoon



Avoid alcohol and drugs

Staying at home can, for some people, lead to increased alcohol, cigarette and drug use.

"When it comes to alcohol, less is better. Ensure a number of days free from alcohol and monitor your consumption to keep within guidelines. Check and ensure that any other medications such as pain killers or sleeping tablets are kept to the absolute minimum."

Professor Michael Farrell

Director, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

More advice

Below are some suggestions if you are looking to improve your physical wellness:

- **Talk to your GP** before starting any new exercise or diet routine. Call your doctor who may be able to visit or organise an online telehealth consultation service.
- **Safe Exercise at Home** have a range of exercises that you can do safely at home. For more information on physical activity and exercise for older people, search safeexerciseathome.org.au
- **Healthdirect** have a collection of resources about how to ensure you take medication safely. Go to [healthdirect.gov.au/medication-safety-for-older-people](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/medication-safety-for-older-people)

Source • Website: research.unsw.edu.au/ageingfutures

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