Basketball - health benefits
Basketball is one of the most popular sports in the world and one of the most widely viewed. It is a team sport that involves two teams of five active players each trying to score points against one another by throwing a ball through a 300 cm (10 feet) high hoop (the ‘basket’) under organised rules. It is played on both indoor and outdoor courts.

The size of the court, height of the basket, size of the basketball, and length of time that the game is played, can all vary according to the age, size and skill level of players.

Basketball is a fast moving game that involves a lot of variety, including shooting, dribbling, passing, rebounding, defence and much more.

**Health benefits of basketball**

Basketball involves a lot of starting and stopping. While not renowned as an aerobic sport, it is still a great workout that can help you:

- burn calories (an hour of basketball can burn 630–750 calories)
- build endurance
- improve balance and coordination
- develop concentration and self-discipline
- build up muscle.

**Other benefits of basketball**

As well as being a great way to stay fit, basketball can also:

- help you to make new friends and see them regularly teach you about being a good team player
- be played by people of all ages and all abilities
- be played all year round because it’s usually an indoor sport
- be a fun game that kids of all levels and ages can enjoy
- be practiced alone – all you need is a ball and a hoop (and you can find a hoop in most local parks and school grounds)
- be played and enjoyed with as few as two people (although official games require 10 players).

**Getting started with basketball**
Although official games of basketball require 10 players, you can play a game of basketball with just one other person. You can also go out and shoot baskets by yourself. If you want to play basketball competitively, you can become a member of a team and get involved in local competition. Check out your local sports centres and associations for information on how to join a team, or start your own.

**Basketball equipment**

One of the great things about the game is that apart from having a basketball, you require very little other equipment to play. However, as basketball involves a lot of running and jumping, it can also be wise to have:

- basketball or sports shoes that provide good ankle support
- mouth guards
- protective knee and elbow pads.

**Basketball and children**

Basketball is a great way for kids to get active and have fun. ‘Aussie hoops’ is a national introductory basketball program for primary school children, started by Basketball Australia and the Australian Sports Commission. It provides primary school girls and boys of all ages, abilities and skill levels, with the opportunity to play basketball and develop sport and social skills in a safe environment.

The program is delivered at local schools, community centers and local stadiums throughout Australia, by local associations and trained professionals. To find your local association, contact Basketball Victoria on (03) 9927 6666.

**Some general tips**

Suggestions include:

- Adults should check with their doctor before taking up basketball.
- Be aware that basketball is a fast-action game with lots of running, jumping, pivoting and twisting, so injuries and accidents can happen easily.
- Basketball puts a lot of stress on the legs, especially the knees and ankles, and puts pressure on tight shoulders.
- Protect yourself by becoming strong and flexible, as basketball is a very physically demanding game.
- Warm up and stretch your muscles and joints before hitting the court. Also cool down and stretch after playing.
- Make sure you have plenty of fluids on hand and rehydrate regularly.
- Don’t overdo it (this will depend on your age and condition). Mix it up with other low-impact sports.
- While playing in a full team competition is great, you can also have fun and benefit from a small space, a basket and a game of one on one.

**Where to get help**

- Local council
- Local basketball club
- Basketball Australia Tel. (02) 9469 7200
- Smartplay Tel. (03) 9674 8777

**Things to remember**

- Basketball teaches you about being a good team player and can be a great social sport.
- Adults should check with their doctor before taking up basketball.
- Basketball puts a lot of stress on the body and injuries can happen, so warming up, stretching your muscles and joints, and cooling down is important.
- Make sure you have plenty of fluids on hand and rehydrate regularly.

**References**

- Why is basketball a great sport for kids?, Basketball Victoria. More information here.

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More information

Keeping active

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- Keeping active basics
- Getting started
- Staying fit and motivated
- Exercise safety and injury prevention
- Healthy eating and exercise
- Keeping active throughout life
- Health conditions and exercise

Keeping active basics

- Balancing energy in and energy out

  A kilojoule is a unit of measure of energy, in the same way that kilometres measure distance...

- Body mass index (BMI)
Body mass index or BMI is an approximate measure of your total body fat...

- Energy in food (kilojoules and calories)
  A kilojoule is a unit of measure of energy, in the same way that kilometres measure distance.

- Exercise intensity
  If you can talk but not sing, you’re exercising at the right intensity.

- Exercise in your local surroundings (video)
  Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it’s running up...

- Exercise - the low-down on hydration
  You need to drink enough and regularly to keep hydrated during exercise.

- Exercise with a friend
  Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you’re more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan.

- Fitness centres - how to choose one
  Do some research before signing up at a fitness centre.

- How to make exercise fun
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

- Kids and energy needs
  It’s important for kids to eat a wide variety of foods for a healthy, well-balanced diet and to be physically active. Creating healthy habits during childhood helps to ensure lifelong healthy.

- Personal trainers – how to choose one
  Make sure your personal trainer is properly qualified before entering into any agreement.

- Physical activity for men
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare.

- Physical activity for seniors
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease.

- Physical activity for women
  If you can't make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family.

- Physical activity - how to get active when you are busy
  Even if you’re busy, you still need to find a way to be physically active.

- Physical activity - it's important
  Just 30 minutes of moderate activity each day can improve your health and reduce the risk of developing certain conditions or diseases.

- Physical activity – setting yourself goals
  When you’re trying to become more physically active, set realistic health and fitness goals.

- Physical activity - what’s your excuse?
  There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day.

- Resistance training – health benefits
  If you do resistance training repeatedly and consistently, your muscles become stronger.

- Secrets to healthy ageing
  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!

Getting started

- Exercise programs
  If you are unfamiliar with what is involved, starting an exercise program can be challenging.

- Exercise - the low-down on hydration
You need to drink enough and regularly to keep hydrated during exercise...

- **Exercise with a friend**
  
  Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you’re more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan...

- **Gardening for children**
  
  Children can learn new skills, have fun and develop self-confidence when they grow their own plants...

- **Gardening for health - starting out**
  
  Gardening is a healthy activity that can be enjoyed by everyone...

- **Gardening for older people**
  
  Garden spaces and equipment can be modified or adapted to help older people enjoy gardening...

- **Gardening safety**
  
  Gardening is an enjoyable form of exercise, but you need to take care...

- **Getting active - tucker talk tips**
  
  The main thing is to choose physical activities that you enjoy and that you can stick to in the long term...

- **How to make exercise fun**
  
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

- **Physical activity - choosing a provider**
  
  Choosing the right fitness centre or service provider requires some research...

- **Physical activity – choosing the one for you**
  
  You are more likely to keep up a healthy lifestyle change if your chosen activity suits you...

- **Physical activity for men**
  
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...

- **Physical activity for seniors**
  
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease...

- **Physical activity for women**
  
  If you can’t make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family...

- **Physical activity - how to get active when you are busy**
  
  Even if you’re busy, you still need to find a way to be physically active...

- **Physical activity – how to get started**
  
  If you’ve been inactive and want to begin physical activity, see a doctor first...

- **Physical activity - learn how to swim (video)**
  
  Swimming is a great low-impact exercise for all ages and abilities. Australian marathon swimmer, Tammy Van Wisse shows ex-AFL (Australian Football League) player and coach, Tony Shaw some swimming...

- **Physical activity - overcoming barriers (video)**
  
  Former world aerobics champion, Sue Stanley shows us how to overcome common exercise excuses...

- **Physical activity – overcoming the barriers**
  
  If you think physical activity is boring, try exercising with a friend...

- **Physical activity – setting yourself goals**
  
  When you’re trying to become more physically active, set realistic health and fitness goals...

### Staying fit and motivated

- **10 tips to plan your exercise**
  
  Physical activity won’t just happen. Most activities require planning – starting and maintaining a physical activity program does too. Here are some tips for getting ready to exercise: Make...

- **10 tips to stay active year round**
Pick an activity you enjoy... 10 tips to stay active year round...

- **Exercise and mood**
  
  Exercise can have an enormous impact on your mood. Not only can exercise help in treating depression, it can also prevent people from becoming depressed again. So it’s important to keep up an exercise...

- **Exercise - everyday activities**
  
  There are lots of everyday activities that provide an opportunity to be active and provide health benefits...

- **Exercise in your local surroundings (video)**
  
  Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it's running up...

- **Exercise programs**
  
  If you are unfamiliar with what is involved, starting an exercise program can be challenging...  

- **Exercise with a friend**
  
  Exercise is important for your physical and mental health. Working out with a friend means you're more likely to have fun and stick to your exercise plan...

- **How to make exercise fun**
  
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don't know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...

- **Pets can make you healthy (video)**
  
  Australians have one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world...

- **Physical activity – choosing the one for you**
  
  You are more likely to keep up a healthy lifestyle change if your chosen activity suits you...

- **Physical activity for men**
  
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...

- **Physical activity for seniors**
  
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- **Physical activity - learn how to swim (video)**
  
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- **Physical activity - overcoming barriers (video)**
  
  Former world aerobics champion, Sue Stanley shows us how to overcome common exercise excuses...

- **Physical activity – staying active during summer (video)**
  
  Physical Activity and Fitness Trainer Sherri Bourne gives us some great tips for staying active over the summer months...

- **Physical activity - staying motivated**
  
  Pick an exercise or fitness activity that appeals to you and suits your lifestyle...

- **Physical activity - what's your excuse?**
  
  There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day...

- **Stretching exercise in winter (video)**
  
  When starting out an exercise program, it's really important to do a warm up and cool down before and after exercise...

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**Exercise safety and injury prevention**

- **10 tips for safe stretching**
  
  Make stretching part of your life... 10 tips for safe stretching...

- **10 tips to exercise safely**

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Exercising regularly has wide-ranging physical, emotional and social health benefits. You need to exercise safely to remain healthy and injury-free. If it’s safe and painless, you’re more...

- **Aerobics - preventing injury**

  Aerobics injuries are usually caused by trauma and overuse, but can be prevented by using the right techniques and equipment.

- **Australian rules football - preventing injury**

  Australian rules football is a physical contact sport that often results in injuries from tackling, kicking, running and constant competition for the ball.

- **Basketball - health benefits**

  Basketball is a sport enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

- **Basketball - preventing injury**

  Basketball is a fast game with frequent and aggressive body contacts - injuries can and do occur.

- **Canoeing and kayaking - health benefits**

  Canoeing and kayaking can be done as a hobby, a competitive sport or as a fun activity on holidays.

- **Canoeing and kayaking - preventing injury**

  Careful preparation and the right equipment can help prevent canoeing and kayaking injuries.

- **Cricket - health benefits**

  To play cricket you need to be fit and strong and have good hand-eye coordination and ball-handling skills.

- **Cricket - preventing injury**

  Cricket is a very popular sport. Injuries are often caused by overuse, being struck by a cricket ball and falls.

- **Cycling - health benefits**

  Cycling can help to protect you from serious diseases.

- **Cycling - preventing injury**

  You are much more likely to hurt yourself by falling off your bike or hitting a stationary object than colliding with another vehicle.

- **Dance - health benefits**

  Dancing can be a fun way to stay fit for people of all ages and abilities.

- **Dancing - preventing injury**

  Dancing is fun and a great form of exercise, but make sure you avoid injuries.

- **Dog walking - the health benefits**

  If you are planning to buy a dog, make sure you choose a breed that's appropriate to your lifestyle.

- **Exercise safety**

  Training too hard or fast is a common cause of sports-related injuries.

- **Fishing - preventing injury**

  Never go fishing alone? always fish with someone else and, ideally, with two other people.

- **Golf - health benefits**

  Golf provides a stimulating challenge, combined with a healthy walk in pleasant surroundings.

- **Golf - preventing injury**

  The average golfer playing an 18-hole game walks about seven kilometres.

- **Heat stress and exercise**

  Heat stress occurs when sweat can't evaporate fast enough to keep the body sufficiently cool during physical activity.

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**Healthy eating and exercise**

- **Food for sport - tucker talk tips**

  Carbohydrate is the most important nutrient for athletes.

- **Secrets to healthy ageing**

  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!
- Sporting performance and food
  Good nutrition and a healthy diet are essential to improving your sports performance.
- The amount of physical activity you need
  It’s important for your health that you get enough physical activity every day, and that you limit your sedentary behaviour. But getting the amount of physical activity you need doesn’t have to be...

Keeping active throughout life

- 10 tips for active seniors
  Stay independent for longer with regular exercise... 10 tips for active seniors...
- Children – keeping them active
  A young child is naturally active, so build upon their inclinations to use their body...
- Exercise and stretching in the office (video)
  Sitting behind a desk all day doesn't mean you can't exercise...
- Gardens for all – a health activity
  Gardening has many health and therapeutic benefits, and is an activity that most people can enjoy...
- Getting active - tucker talk tips
  The main thing is to choose physical activities that you enjoy and that you can stick to in the long term...
- Healthy active Koori kids - tucker talk tips
  Good nutrition and physical exercise help to keep Koori kids healthy and avoid diseases when they get older...
- Healthy ageing – stay involved
  Reach out to the world around you for fun, a sense of achievement, social contact and mental stimulation...
- Healthy and active ageing
  Being physically active, eating well, socialising and improving your health can help you live a healthy, happy and active life as you get older...
- How to make exercise fun
  Many of us find it difficult to stick to some form of exercise, others don’t know where to start. Experts say the key to taking up or keeping to any form of physical activity is to have fun. Get off...
- How to volunteer and boost your health
  Volunteering is great for our health – it makes us feel good, while helping others in the process...
- Older people in hospital – Get well soon
  Learn about improving and maintaining your health during a hospital stay...
- Parent's guide for active girls
  Physical activity is an important part of health and wellbeing, and girls should remain active as they grow up...
- Physical activity for men
  Many men are only motivated to become more active after they have a health scare...
- Physical activity for seniors
  Physical activity can help older people maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their risk of disease...
- Physical activity for seniors – staying active during summer (video)
  Physical Activity and Fitness Trainer - Sherri Bourne shares a few easy and low-impact ways for seniors to stay healthy over the summer months...
- Physical activity for women
  If you can't make the time to exercise for yourself, do it for your family...
- Physical activity - what's your excuse?
  There are many excuses we can come up with to avoid being active, but the truth is there is always a way to fit some physical activity into your day...
- Postnatal exercise
  Always consult with your doctor or midwife before starting any postnatal exercise program...
- Pregnancy and exercise

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Unless you have complications, you should be able to exercise throughout your pregnancy.

- **Secrets to healthy ageing**
  Experts say the key to living well into our 80s and 90s is making a commitment to live healthily. Check out these simple ideas and embrace your senior years!

- **Sport and children**
  Make sure that some family outings offer opportunities for physical activity, such as playing sport together.

- **The amount of physical activity you need**
  It’s important for your health that you get enough physical activity every day, and that you limit your sedentary behaviour. But getting the amount of physical activity you need doesn’t have to be...

- **Vision loss and sport**
  Many sports can be adapted to suit people who are blind or have low vision.

- **Walking for good health**
  Walking will improve your fitness and reduce your risk of heart disease.

- **Walking - the benefits for older people**
  Walking is great exercise for older people. It has a range of health and social benefits, and most people can do it.

### Health conditions and exercise

- **Arthritis and exercise**
  Exercise can reduce some of the symptoms of arthritis, and improve joint mobility and strength.

- **Asthma and exercise**
  Exercise-induced asthma can be prevented with medication and by preparing for exercise and physical activity.

- **Breathing problems and exercise**
  A little physical activity and some breathing exercises can help people with lung disease.

- **Cancer - exercise to help you cope**
  People with cancer should be as physically active as their abilities and condition allow.

- **Dementia - reducing your risk**
  Adopting a ‘brain healthy’ lifestyle may reduce your risk of dementia in later life.

- **Diabetes - issues for children and teenagers**
  Many parents worry when their child with diabetes starts or returns to school.

- **Epilepsy and employment**
  Many people living with epilepsy are successfully employed across a range of professional fields.

- **Epilepsy and exercise**
  It is rare for a person with epilepsy to have a seizure during physical activity, but you should always take safety precautions when exercising.

- **Exercise and mood**
  Exercise can have an enormous impact on your mood. Not only can exercise help in treating depression, it can also prevent people from becoming depressed again. So it’s important to keep up an exercise.

- **Exercise in your local surroundings (video)**
  Want to exercise, but find gyms boring or expensive? Sue Stanley and Shane Bilsborough team up to show you how to exercise indoors and outdoors using your local surroundings - whether it's running up...

- **HIV, hepatitis and sport**
  People with HIV or hepatitis B or C participate in a wide range of sports without restrictions, and the risk of transmission to another player is extremely small.

- **Menstruation - athletic amenorrhoea**
  Women who are athletes or who exercise a lot on a regular basis are at risk of developing athletic amenorrhoea, which is the absence of periods.

- **Osteoporosis and exercise**
  Exercise can reduce the risk of fractures resulting from osteoporosis by both slowing the rate of bone loss, and reducing the person's risk of falling by building muscle strength and improving balance.
- Sports injuries
  A sports injury may be more severe than you think...
- Type 2 diabetes - healthy eating and exercise (video)
  People with type 2 diabetes talk about positive lifestyle changes that improve their quality of life...

Related Information
- Squash - preventing injury
  Eye protection is recommended to prevent eye injuries...
- Basketball - preventing injury
  Basketball is a fast game with frequent and aggressive body contacts - injuries can and do occur...
- Aerobics - preventing injury
  Aerobics injuries are usually caused by trauma and overuse, but can be prevented by using the right techniques and equipment...
- Dancing - preventing injury
  Dancing is fun and a great form of exercise, but make sure you avoid injuries...
- Martial arts - preventing injury
  The risk of injury from martial arts is low compared to other contact sports...

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- Basketball Victoria

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