

Be Active safely fact sheet

Safety is very important while being active and following these guidelines will help you avoid injury and maintain your favourite activities over time, without setbacks.

Play it safe in the sun

Queenslanders can enjoy sunshine nearly all year round, so it's easy to get out and about to enjoy physical activity. Remember, the sun's UV rays can be harmful and you still need to be sun safe on cloudy days, so:

- limit sun exposure between 10am-3pm
- seek shade when you can
- wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears
- wear sunglasses to protect your eyes
- wear clothing to protect your skin
- use SPF30+ sunscreen on exposed skin. Remember to reapply every 2 hours.

Drink plenty of water

Don't wait until you're thirsty after an activity to drink water, your body will already have started to dehydrate. Drink water before as well as after activity. You also need to drink water during activity if you're being active for more than half an hour or if the activity is quite vigorous. So take a water bottle with you and drink during your session. Make sure you drink plenty of water in hot weather too. Plain water is best - some sports drinks can be high in salt and sugar.

Care for your back

If you're picking something up, always bend your knees, not your back.

After eating and drinking

Don't do vigorous physical activity on a full stomach or after drinking alcohol. This is important for your comfort and to stop muscle cramps or feeling sick.

Playing sport, cycling, rollerblading or skating

Be sure to use safety gear when necessary (e.g. helmets, knee or wrist guards, mouthguards) to protect yourself from impact. If you're on or near roads, wear reflective clothing so you're clearly visible to traffic.

Prepare for vigorous activity

It's always wise to do some warm-up exercises to prepare yourself before any vigorous activity such as jogging, aerobics and fast cycling, or playing sports like football, squash and netball. Warming up

increases blood flow to the heart to prepare for the work ahead and increases blood flow to and flexibility of the muscles, which helps prevent injury.

Be safe at the park

When you're at the local park with your kids, have a quick look at the play equipment to make sure it's in good working order. Make sure the ground under the play equipment is of a soft material. Even do a quick check to make sure there are no sharp objects lying around.

Think about your own personal safety

Make sure you know the traffic rules. If walking or jogging on your own, take care to walk in areas or along walking paths with good lighting. Better still, walk or jog with a friend, your dog or in a group - it's great to have some company and it's safer for you too.