



Physical Activity Tip Sheet

What do desks, textbooks, lectures, food courts and libraries all have in common? You are mostly stationary (sedentary) while you are doing these things! We know movement is incredibly important for our physical health, but it can also help us get the grades that we want.

Exercise helps memory and cognitive function through both direct and indirect means. The benefits of exercise come directly from its ability to reduce insulin resistance, reduce inflammation, and stimulate the release of growth factors in the brain. Indirectly, exercise improves mood and sleep, and reduces stress and anxiety.

The ***Fit for Study*** program was designed by Dr Sjaan Gomersall (School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, UQ) and Dr Emma Beckman (School of Human Movement and Nutrition Sciences, UQ), based on the latest research evidence about exercise and movement^{1,2}. Fit for Study aims to teach students about how exercise might help them manage their health while studying and learn some specific strategies to get the most out of the time they spend moving.

Fit for Study is a 4-week program for first year UQ students with little to no experience in sport, exercise and fitness. The program has online content for students to work through in their own time and then 4 x 1 hour 'live' sessions (delivered either in person or online in small groups). The focus is on understanding our body, the benefits of getting active and providing a safe and effective program to gradually build confidence to get and stay physically active for the long term.

Fit 4 Study is FREE for first year UQ students, and groups will start from week 3 and later in the semester. Sign up now: info@sharperminds.university

N.B. If you are enrolled in PSYC1030 or NEUR1020, you can earn up to 6 credits research participation. Sign up via the SONA system <https://uqpsych.sona-systems.com> and look for the Sharper Minds project listings.

¹ Babaeer, L., Stylianou, M., Leveritt, M., & Gomersall, S. (2021). Physical activity, sedentary behavior and educational outcomes in university students: A systematic review. *Journal of American College Health*, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2020.1846047>

² von Haaren, B., Haertel, S., Stumpp, J., Hey, S., & Ebner-Priemer, U. (2015). Reduced emotional stress reactivity to a real-life academic examination stressor in students participating in a 20-week aerobic exercise training: A randomised controlled trial using Ambulatory Assessment. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 20, 67-75. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2015.04.004>