



# Why exercise?

By moving about, getting slightly warm and getting a red face, you help your heart, lungs, muscles and bones.

If you walk, jog, cycle, swim, play a sport or do any kind of exercise that keeps you moving fairly quickly for some time, you will feel slightly warm, go red in the face and begin to sweat

▼ (Picture 1) Exercise doesn't need to involve running a marathon. Regular fast walking, such as walking about 3km a day, or playing a game in the playground, is all you may need. Exercise gets your muscles working, helps your blood circulation and reduces the excess fat in your body. It also makes your bones stronger and heavier.



gently. This is enough to keep the body healthy (Picture 1). Here is why.

## Bone health

Bones are just as alive as any other part of the body. They are continually growing and changing. When you move about for a while, you jolt the bones and this makes them become more dense and strong. Lack of moderate exercise causes bones to do the reverse, becoming less dense and weaker and more liable to break.

## Heart and muscle health

When you exercise you make your muscles work harder. More blood vessels will grow to supply the larger muscles. Hard-working muscles are stronger and more able to cope with any sudden need for movement.

The heart is a muscle and, like all muscles, it works better when it is exercised (Pictures 2 and 3). A healthy person cannot damage their heart by working it hard. They can only strengthen it.

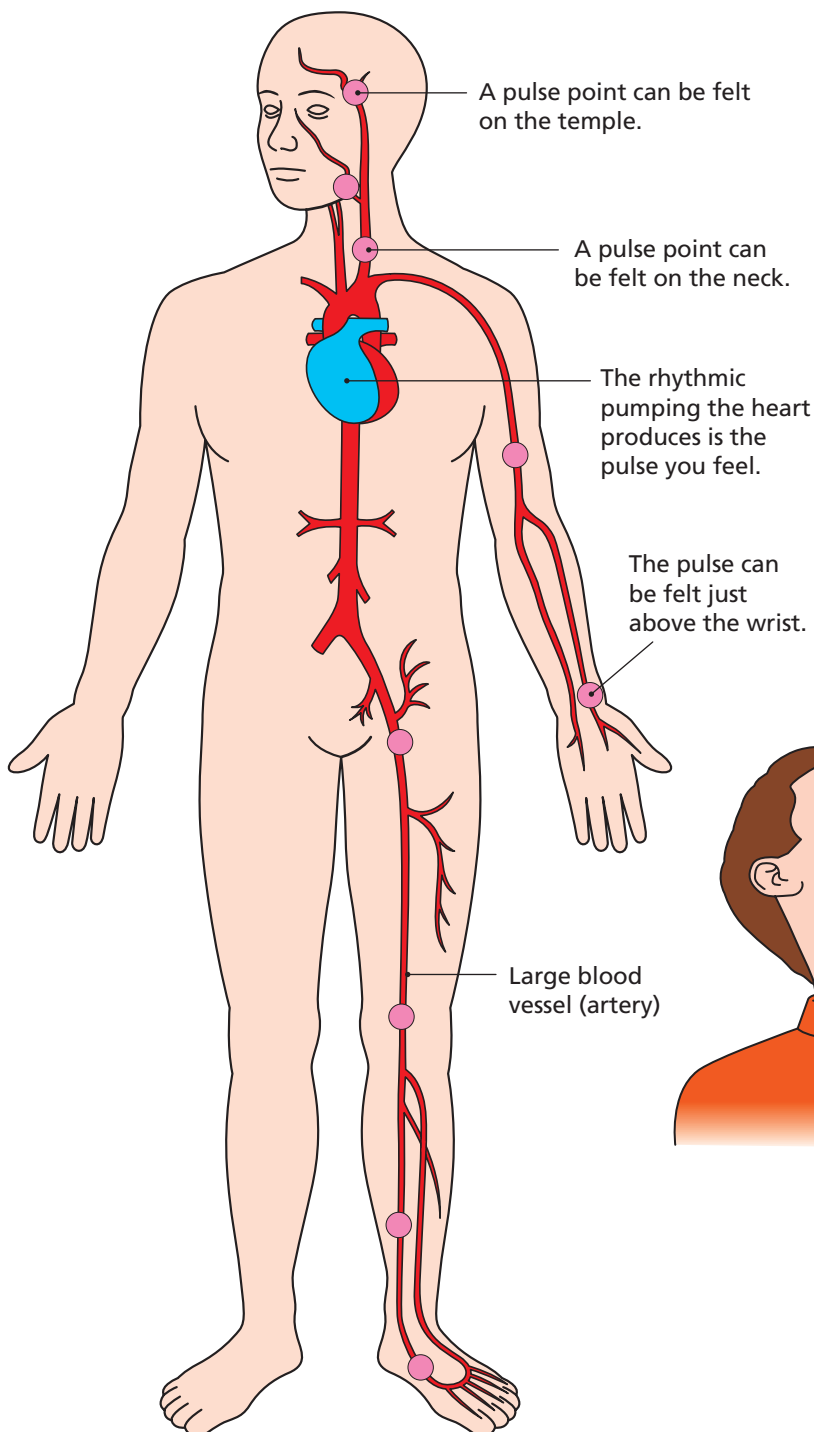
## Red face meter

When your body changes food into energy it releases the extra energy it can't use as heat. To get rid of the heat, your

▼ (Picture 2) Pulse and the body.

The heart pumps the blood around the body. The heart is connected to the tubes (blood vessels) that carry fresh blood (red) from the heart, and return used blood (blue) back to the heart.

Each time your heart works, it sends a wave, or pulse, of high pressure blood through your body. You can feel this pulse most easily in the big blood vessels (arteries) that run close to the surface of the skin. The main pulse points are shown as pink dots.



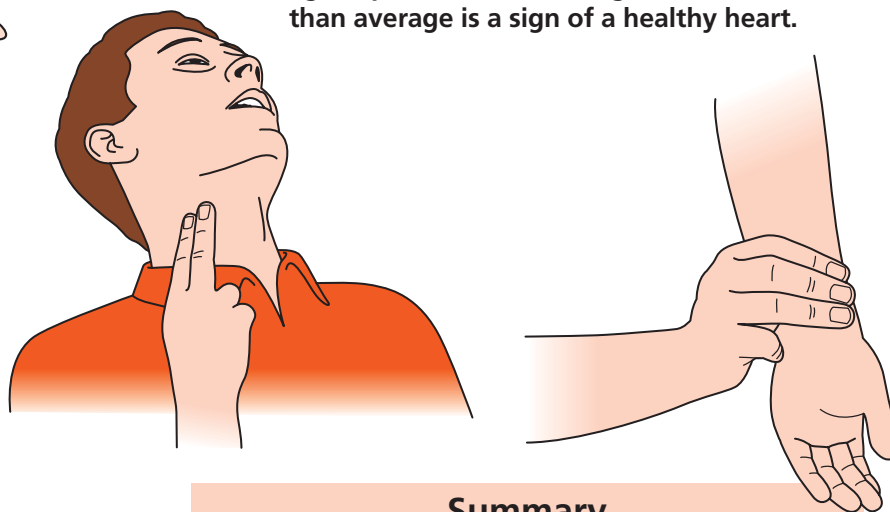
body sends more blood to blood vessels close to the skin, so that extra heat can be released into the surrounding air. In young people, you see the extra blood as a red face.

To help you lose even more heat, your body loses water from small holes in the skin. This is called sweating. As the water evaporates from the skin it helps cool the blood close to the skin.

So, you can judge when you are making your body work harder by whether you have a red face, and whether you start to sweat.

▼ (Picture 3) Feeling your pulse. Apply light fingertip pressure to the skin, for example, just above the wrist. The speed at which your pulse works matches the speed of the pumping of your heart.

What you want to feel is a strong, regular pattern of pulses of about 80 to 100 beats per minute. For adults this will be lower, about 50 to 80 beats per minute. At any age, a pulse rate that is regular and slower than average is a sign of a healthy heart.



### Summary

- Exercise maintains healthy, strong bones.
- Exercise is good for the heart and other muscles.
- You are exercising if you get red in the face and sweat.