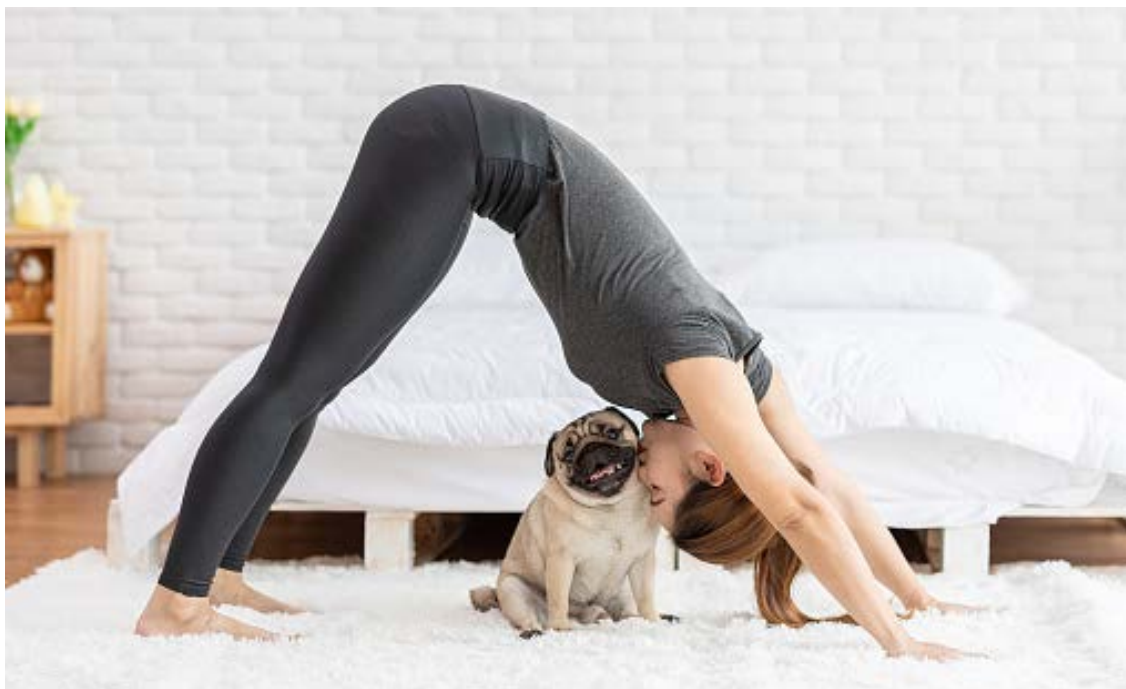


## *Exercising under lockdown*



**The benefits of exercise are well established, not only for keeping physically fit, but also to enhance mood, sharpen concentration and boost the immune system. And I don't know about you, but I think these are things that might come in handy right about now.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends 150 minutes of medium-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of high-intensity activity each week. This does not have to be done in one mad 75-/150-minute display after which you lie hyperventilating in the foetal position, but can be achieved through an accumulation of short sessions during the week.

If you can continue to exercise outside, enjoy it! The gifts of fresh air and sunshine await you! In urban areas, be mindful of the new social etiquette. Remember to keep your distance from the next person to at least 2 m and do not walk or run in groups. Recent [preliminary research](#) from the Eindhoven University of Technology indicates that aerosol droplets from runners, cyclists and walkers may have a larger radius than previously thought, so if you have a face mask, wear it. And if you're living somewhere where you need to bring a form with you, don't forget to fill it before you go out, and be mindful of the time and distance of your workout!

But remember you can also exercise at home. Even in the smallest apartments you can dance, do yoga or Pilates, or engage in high-intensity interval training (HIIT). If you have space to lie down and extend your arms fully, you've enough room to exercise. (Granted, you also have enough room for a nap but we will ignore that for the moment.) YouTube, Instagram, podcasts, apps or the Internet can provide you with free guided routines. And then there's also the Zoom yoga classes kindly provided by our colleague, Mara Gonzalez.

Worried about a lack of equipment? A towel can be used instead of an exercise band or can take the place of a yoga mat. Large bottles of water or cans can act as weights. Books can function as yoga blocks. You can do [press ups against the wall](#), or you can also use your couch, a chair or windowsill for another firm favourite, [triceps dips](#). Big up for triceps dips! (I would, but having done them, I cannot raise my arms...) Again, there is etiquette for indoor exercise. If you're in an apartment, be mindful of your neighbours and try to land a little less like Godzilla when doing cardio.



For those with children, a great way to occupy them and burn off some energy for both you and them is by following classes on YouTube (e.g. [PE with Joe](#) at 10am CET) or over Zoom (e.g. [Little Yoga House](#)) daily. Pets might also wish to join in, though they may not be so keen to follow the routine...

Some of you might wish to include your partners. I saw something recently that suggested a workout routine for you and your partner that finished with you in [plank position](#) while your partner jumped over you followed by [sit-ups](#) face to face with you high-fiving each other at the top. I would say the likelihood of my involvement in that one is miniscule, but feel free to give it a go and maybe add a few Tom Cruise style whoops at the end.

Suggested routines are plentiful, the [French Government](#) and [WHO](#), offer some, to name but two, and as mentioned above YouTube, Instagram, etc., are also great resources. For some of us, it may be best to exercise in short breaks during the day. Or if you prefer a longer routine, pick a time of day that suits you and block it in your calendar, clear your exercise space, mix your routines (e.g. Zumba one day, HIIT the next), remember to warm up (simple [walk outs](#) or [lunges](#) for a minute or so will do) and cool down (e.g. [pigeon pose](#), [cat/cow](#), [hamstring stretches](#) for approx. four minutes), and have fun!

Motivation in many areas is difficult at the moment but exercising will have a worthwhile effect both physically and mentally. What we need to do now is endure for a little bit longer and exercise, no matter for how short a time, will help us do that.

*We wish to thank our colleague and OIE News Team member, Lucy Hogan, for writing this article.*