

This leaflet will inform you about the many benefits of **regular stair climbing** – be in for a surprise.

Don't go to pieces – climb the Shard



Just take the stairs

All it takes is a minimum of 5 minutes per day of continuous stair-climbing (up and down)

Let the staircase be your

- **Gym**

Moderately paced continuous stair climbing for a few minutes will bring your heart rate up and train your cardiovascular system the aerobic way. You will also strengthen the muscles in your legs, hips, back and maybe even arms if you hold on. Your fitness and strength will improve.

Check your condition at weekly intervals with a simple fitness test as described in <http://cdaar.tufts.edu/protocols/Chair-stand.pdf>).

- **Doctor**

Regular physical aerobic exercise has been scientifically proven to effectively reduce or regulate excessive weight, blood pressure, blood lipids and blood sugar levels. It also helps to prevent cancer or assists coping with cancer therapy. It also increases your vital capacity.

Climbing stairs is also very beneficial to prevent deep venous thrombosis by the repeated action of the big calf muscles.

- **Dietician**

Even though you are maybe not changing your diet, two minutes of stair walking a day can keep off 2 lbs of weight/year. You burn 7x more calories than when taking the lift or standing still.

- **Psychologist**

Regular physical activity promotes the secretion of endorphins and other 'happy hormones'. This can help you deal better with stress and will improve your mood. It can also help with anxiety.

- **Counsellor**

You may find likeminded others on the stairs who you can talk to, or simply think over a problem whilst climbing, often finding a creative solution to a problem.

- **Punch-ball or Peacemaker**

Faced with a stressor or danger the release of stress hormones is automatic and cannot be undone as it prepares you to fight or flee. Your brain can then not think reasonably. Simple repeated movement helps to reduce those hormone-levels quickly and effectively. Go climbing when something gets to you.

- **Inspiration**

The creative process in our brain is enhanced when we leave our normal place of work and move.

The Greek philosophers had a creative corridor to walk along.

- **Heating**

Our metabolic rate reduces after twenty minutes of rest – we burn less fuel. Walking or climbing can reset your inner thermostat burning more fuel, so you may feel warmer the whole day. This works better if you climb first thing in the morning or after lunch.

- **Beautician**

Improved peripheral circulation will be visible as a healthy glow of your facial skin, but it will also improve the nourishment to your hair and nails.

- **Back Support**

Have you ever 'done your back in' with a bend and twist? Strong leg muscles are needed to adopt a correct posture for lifting from lower levels and other manual tasks like gardening.

And it's free!

Leading an inactive, mainly seated, lifestyle may be partially responsible for weight gain, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol and blood sugar levels, and the associated health problems.

While standing more and sitting less is definitely beneficial, it does not get us fit.

Did you know?

According to a study done at Harvard University fitting in 8 flights of stairs per day can reduce your death rate (whatever that may be) by 32 %.

Another study stated that climbing 7 minutes of stairs per day can reduce the risk of a heart attack by 50%.

Safe stair climbing

Accidents on stairs are fairly common, so a little safety briefing is necessary:

Slow and steady: climb about two steps per second, not more – stop if you have a tight feeling in your chest and consult your doctor.

Don't skip steps, place your whole foot on them (this also avoids Achilles strain)

Hold on with your right hand – stay on the right side, if there are other users, too. If you are alone, change the sides so either arm is used. Please observe good hygiene and wash your hands after touching the rails.

No slips and trips: wear shoes with a good sole, do not go on stairs with wet shoes or if the stairs are wet. Avoid high heels.

See: wear the appropriate glasses – reading glasses may change your perception of the step distance.

Stair-steps have very different heights but average at about 18 cm. You would need to count 1355 stair-steps to make it to the platform.

At the recommended pace of 2 steps/second on up and a little faster in between stairs and when coming down, you average climbing 10 1/2 metres height in 90 seconds (empirical value). You will need to climb 7 minutes daily Monday to Friday (or 8 ½ minutes for four days) to climb and decent the Shard each week.

The Shard is presently the EU's highest building scraping the sky above London with its antenna at 309 metres height. The Shard is also the second tallest free standing structure in the UK.

Visitors can enjoy magnificent views from the viewing deck which was opened in February 2013 at 244.3 metres. There is no access to the staircase for visitors, who have to take one of the 44 lifts, but just imagine you can climb it!