

# Exercising for your environment

You already know the benefits of exercising and how it impacts your health and well-being. However, the environment in which you live may make it more challenging to keep active. Below are some ideas to help you keep fit – no matter where you call home.



## City life and the concrete jungle

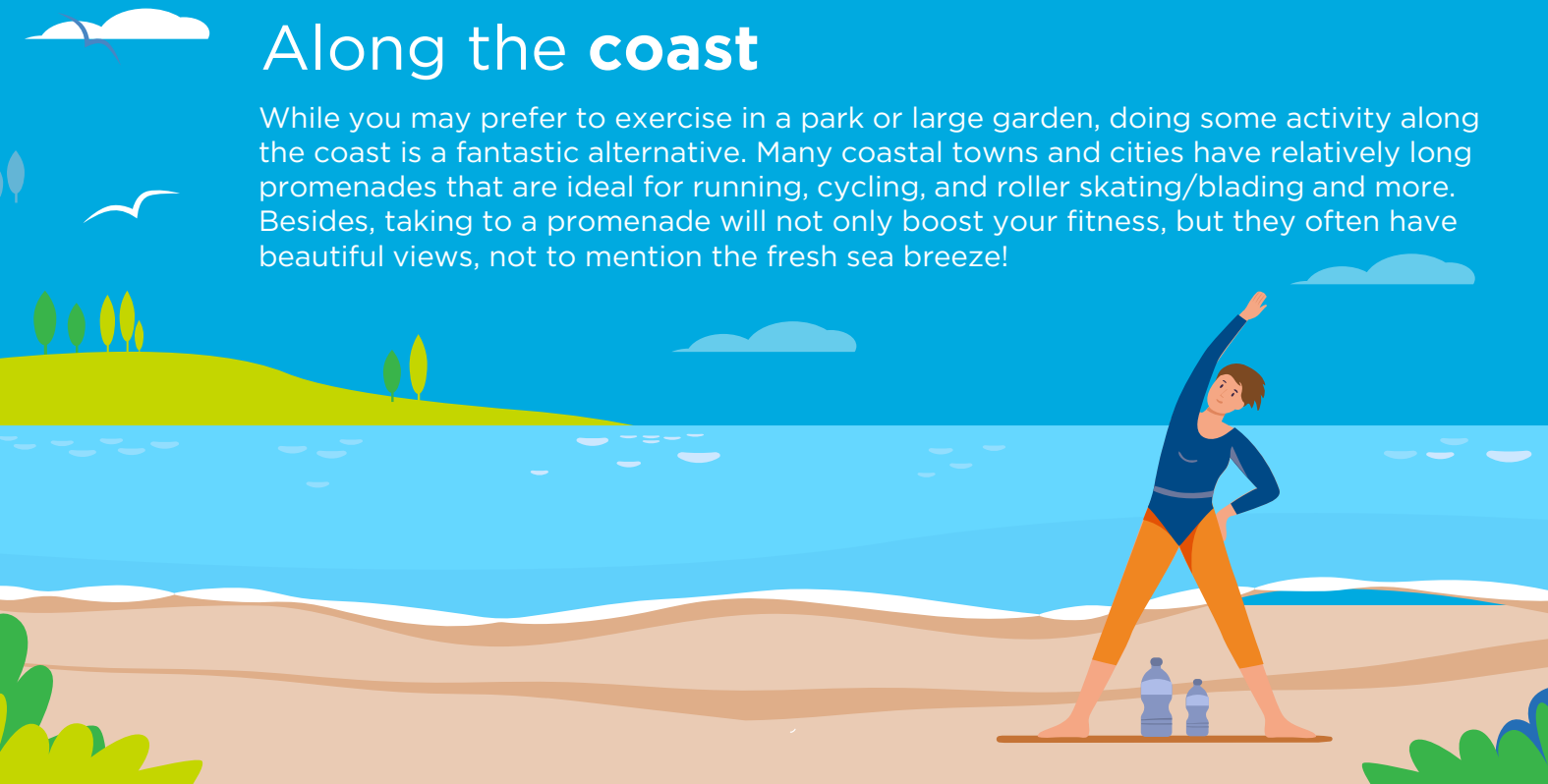


Living in the city means you may be put off by a long run or cycle because of traffic and air pollution. Yet, city parks and playgrounds are often equipped with exercising equipment (such as benches, bars, steppers, and rowers), making exercise a little more accessible.

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) – alternating between periods of high-intensity exercise and low-intensity exercise – is a good way to make the most of limited space. Why not incorporate HIIT\* into your cardio routine by doing a few reps of 30-second sprints, followed by 15 seconds of jogging?

## Along the coast

While you may prefer to exercise in a park or large garden, doing some activity along the coast is a fantastic alternative. Many coastal towns and cities have relatively long promenades that are ideal for running, cycling, and roller skating/blading and more. Besides, taking to a promenade will not only boost your fitness, but they often have beautiful views, not to mention the fresh sea breeze!





## Living in the suburbs

In contrast to city life, where pretty much everything you need is within walking distance, life in the suburbs generally means driving from place to place. You could consider jumping on a pushbike to get around instead. If cycling isn't your thing, joining a gym is another good option. Gyms and health and fitness centres are often near major shopping centres, making it easy to squeeze in a session before or after doing the groceries or running other errands.

## Countryside calling

Research has shown that being out in nature promotes good health.<sup>1</sup> This, paired with regular activity, is good for your overall physical and mental health. If you live in the countryside, there are a number of activities – also known as ‘green exercises’ – you can participate in and include cycling, horse riding, boating, and hiking.



## Tips from a medical professional:

**"Take the stairs instead of the lift, and if you are taking the bus, train, or underground, get off one or two stops before your stop,"** says Dr Sissel Lia Johansen, Medical Advisor at Cigna.  
**"Incorporating these small changes into your daily routine will not take up too much time and will help to increase your daily activity."**



Are you working on your Whole Health? Why not visit our Whole Health Calendar page for a range of helpful articles ranging from exercising to nutrition and managing chronic conditions. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your HR department or Cigna customer service.

\*In consultation with your doctor or a medical professional.

This article was reviewed by Dr Sissel Lia Johansen, Medical Advisor, TH&N – Integrated Health Team, Cigna.

Sources: 1. A Countryside for Health and Wellbeing: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise. [http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/outdoored/health\\_wellbeing.pdf](http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/outdoored/health_wellbeing.pdf). Accessed 7 December 2021.