

HEALTHFUL TIPS

Why Exercise?

Exercise takes time, energy and motivation. Is it really that important? Here's what we know:

More is Better. A decade of scientific research found that the longer, harder and more often you exercise, the greater the health benefits.

Live Longer. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans call for at least 2 ½ hours of moderate exercise or at least 1 ¼ hours of vigorous exercise weekly. Those who engage in this level of exercise are more likely to live an additional 3-7 years than those who don't.

Healthy Heart. Workouts lower the risk factors for heart disease by lowering resting heart rate, blood pressure, inflammation, triglycerides, LDL (bad) cholesterol, and decreasing the hardening of the arteries around the heart all while increasing HDL (good) cholesterol.

Cancer Crusher. Regular exercise lowers the risk for certain cancers, particularly breast and colon cancer. It may do this by lowering circulating insulin, reducing levels of the female hormones estrogen and progesterone, and/or by boosting the body's immune system.

Bone Builder. We do know that weight loss surgery increases the risk of osteoporosis. On the other hand, moderate exercise increases and maintains bone mass as bones become stronger when forced to bear more weight than normal. Perhaps a regular exercise program can offset the bone loss that can occur after weight loss surgery.

Lowers Blood Sugar. Exercise may prevent or even reverse type 2 diabetes. The body gets better at transporting glucose (sugar) into cells with regular exercise in those with insulin resistance. Glucose in the bloodstream is able to get into the cells and be used for energy, rather than causing damage to nerves and blood vessels.



Brain Booster. Certain brain chemicals get a boost from exercise and that promotes the growth and survival of brain cells, communication between the cells, the ability to learn, and memory. Smarter and happier—exercise improves mood and reduces feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Weight Loss. The relationship between exercise and weight loss is complicated. It's not as simple as work out every day and you'll lose weight. Calories in, rather than calories out from exercise, appears to be the most important factor in weight loss. Even so, exercise has a strong role in maintaining muscle tissue, and keeping metabolism high during weight loss. In fact, a long-term study of those who have lost weight and maintained that loss for a number of years indicates a high activity level—walking 15,000 steps a day.

Energy Enhancer. Exercise can be a real energy booster. This is true even in people with chronic fatigue and those suffering from serious illnesses. Exercise promotes better sleep too—boosting energy even more.

It's a wonderful cycle—you exercise, have more energy and feel better so you want to exercise more and in turn, you have more energy and feel better. Repeat and your risk for serious diseases decreases and you live a healthier, happier life. Exercise looks like it is well worth the investment of time and energy—what do you think?