

The following advice is from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/exercise>

Exercise: 7 benefits of regular physical activity

You know exercise is good for you, but do you know how good? From boosting your mood to improving your sex life, find out how exercise can improve your life.

[By Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

Want to feel better, have more energy and even add years to your life? Just exercise.

The health benefits of regular exercise and physical activity are hard to ignore. Everyone benefits from exercise, regardless of age, sex or physical ability.

Need more convincing to get moving? Check out these seven ways exercise can lead to a happier, healthier you.

1. Exercise controls weight

Exercise can help prevent excess weight gain or help maintain weight loss. When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn.

Regular trips to the gym are great, but don't worry if you can't find a large chunk of time to exercise every day. Any amount of activity is better than none at all. To reap the benefits of exercise, just get more active throughout your day — take the stairs instead of the elevator or rev up your household chores. Consistency is key.

2. Exercise combats health conditions and diseases

Worried about heart disease? Hoping to prevent high blood pressure? No matter what your current weight, being active boosts high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol and decreases unhealthy triglycerides. This one-two punch keeps your blood flowing smoothly, which decreases your risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Regular exercise helps prevent or manage a wide range of health problems and concerns, including stroke, metabolic syndrome, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, depression, anxiety, many types of cancer, arthritis and falls. It can also help improve cognitive function and helps lower the risk of death from all causes.

3. Exercise improves mood

Need an emotional lift? Or need to blow off some steam after a stressful day? A gym session or brisk walk can help. Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier, more relaxed and less anxious.

You may also feel better about your appearance and yourself when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem.

4. Exercise boosts energy

Winded by grocery shopping or household chores? Regular physical activity can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance.

Exercise delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardiovascular system work more efficiently. And

5. Exercise promotes better sleep

Struggling to snooze? Regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster, get better sleep and deepen your sleep. Just don't exercise too close to bedtime, or you may be too energized to go to sleep.

6. Exercise puts the spark back into your sex life

Do you feel too tired or too out of shape to enjoy physical intimacy? Regular physical activity can improve energy levels and physical appearance, which may boost your sex life.

But there's even more to it than that. Regular physical activity may enhance arousal for women. And men who exercise regularly are less likely to have problems with erectile dysfunction than are men who don't exercise.

7. Exercise can be fun ... and social!

Exercise and physical activity can be enjoyable. It gives you a chance to unwind, enjoy the outdoors or simply engage in activities that make you happy. Physical activity can also help you connect with family or friends in a fun social setting.

So, take a dance class, hit the hiking trails or join a soccer team. Find a physical activity you enjoy, and just do it. Bored? Try something new, or do something with friends.

The bottom line on exercise

Exercise and physical activity are a great way to feel better, boost your health and have fun. For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous aerobic activity a week, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity. Examples include running, walking or swimming. Fit in strength training for all the major muscle groups at least twice a week by lifting free weights, using weight machines or doing body-weight exercises.

Space out your activities throughout the week. If you want to lose weight, meet specific fitness goals or have even more benefits, you may need to increase your physical activity time.

Remember to check with your doctor before starting a new exercise program, especially if you haven't exercised for a long time, have chronic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes or arthritis, or you have any concerns.

The following advice is from <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/10-tips-for-exercising-safely>

Once your doctor gives you the go-ahead to exercise, the tips below can help you avoid injuries:

Take five to 10 minutes to warm up and cool down properly.

Plan to start slowly and boost your activity level gradually unless you are already exercising frequently and vigorously.

Be aware that training too hard or too often can cause overuse injuries like stress fractures, stiff or sore joints and muscles, and inflamed tendons and ligaments. Sports prompting repetitive wear and tear on certain parts of your body — such as swimming (shoulders), jogging (knees, ankles, and feet), tennis (elbows) — are often overuse culprits, too. A mix of different kinds of activities and sufficient rest is safer.

Listen to your body. Hold off on exercise when you're sick or feeling very fatigued. Cut back if you cannot finish an exercise session, feel faint after exercise or fatigued during the day, or suffer persistent aches and pains in joints after exercising.

If you stop exercising for a while, drop back to a lower level of exercise initially. If you're doing strength training, for example, lift lighter weights or do fewer reps or sets.

For most people, simply drinking plenty of water is sufficient. But if you're working out especially hard or doing a marathon or triathlon, choose drinks that replace fluids plus essential electrolytes.

Choose clothes and shoes designed for your type of exercise. Replace shoes every six months as cushioning wears out.

For strength training, good form is essential. Initially use no weight, or very light weights, when learning the exercises. Never sacrifice good form by hurrying to finish reps or sets, or struggling to lift heavier weights.

Exercising vigorously in hot, humid conditions can lead to serious overheating and dehydration. Slow your pace when the temperature rises above 70°F. On days when the thermometer is expected to reach 80°F, exercise during cooler morning or evening hours or at an air-conditioned gym. Watch for signs of overheating, such as headache, dizziness, nausea, faintness, cramps, or palpitations.

l. Dress properly for cold-weather workouts to avoid hypothermia. Depending on the temperature, wear layers you can peel off as you warm up. Don't forget gloves.

Delayed muscle soreness that starts 12 to 24 hours after a workout and gradually abates is a normal response to taxing your muscles. By contrast, persistent or intense muscle pain that starts during a workout or right afterward, or muscle soreness that persists more than one to two weeks, merits a call to your doctor for advice.