

10 of the Best Reasons to Exercise

1. Exercise improves the quality of your life.

The old adage, “add life to your years as well as years to your life by exercise” has considerable merit. A properly designed exercise program will give you more energy to do the activities you enjoy and will enhance your functional capability to do the things you like to do at home, work and play.

2. Exercise relieves depression.

Several noted physiologists have concluded that “exercise is nature’s best tranquilizer.” Researchers have found, for example, that mildly to moderately depressed individuals who engage in aerobic exercise for 15 to 30 minutes at least every other day typically experience a positive mood swing within two to three weeks.

3. Exercise prevents certain types of cancer.

Several studies found that physical activity, even at relatively low intensity levels, can play a positive role in preventing some types of cancer. To date, these investigations have shown that exercise has its greater impact against colon cancer, breast cancer, and cancers of the female reproductive organs (e.g. endometrium, cervix, uterus, and vagina).

4. Exercise enhances self- image.

Research has documented the assertion that individuals who exercise regularly feel better about themselves than do sedentary individuals. Strong evidence exists that all factors considered, the more you exercise (to a point), the more your sense of well- being, person value, and self- esteem goes up.

5. Exercise relieves stress and anxiety.

Several studies indicate that exercise dissipates hormones and other chemicals that build up during periods of high stress. Exercise also generates a period of substantial emotional and physical relaxation that sets in approximately an hour and a half after a relatively intense bout of physical activity.

6. Exercise reduces the risk of heart disease.

Experts have found that non-exercisers have twice the risk of developing heart disease than individuals who exercise regularly. Furthermore, individuals who exercise on a regular basis are at least 20% less likely to suffer a fatal heart attack. The point to remember is that your heart needs more than love—it needs the beneficial consequences of exercise (eg. Reduce demand on your heart to pump blood, lower heart rate, less wear your cardiovascular system).

7. Exercise can slow the aging process.

It is never too late to improve the functional quality of your life. Sound exercise can slow the age-related decline in the various physiological systems that many individuals experience as they get older. For example, instead of losing aerobic fitness, as older adults often do, typically at the rate of 10% per year, proper exercise can increase your aerobic capacity as you age. Furthermore, sound strength training exercise can reverse the loss of muscular fitness that typically occurs in older adults.

8. Exercise increases the “good” (HDL)

cholesterol. Exercise is one of the few voluntary activities that is effective in raising your level of HDL—the type of cholesterol that lowers your risk of heart disease. In fact, research indicates that for every 1% increase in HDL: you experience, you incur a 2% to 3% reduction in your risk of heart disease. At the same time exercise increases your level of HDL, it lowers your level of LDL (the “Bad” cholesterol).

9. Exercise improves the quality of sleep.

Researches have found that exercisers go to sleep more quickly, sleep more soundly, and are more refreshed than individuals who do not exercise.

10. Exercise improves mental sharpness.

Numerous studies have shown that individuals who exercise regularly have better memories, better reaction time, and better levels of concentration than non-exercisers. All factors considered, research suggests that exercise can do for your mind what it does for your body—energize and revitalize it.

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