

Health Benefits of Exercise

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SHRINK YOUR WAIST THROUGH EXERCISE, IMPROVE DIABETES MANAGEMENT



Type 2 diabetes is a growing problem in the United States, currently affecting around 8% of the population and costing thousands of healthcare dollars. Now, new research in the journal *Diabetes Care* found that improving physical

fitness and decreasing abdominal fat are two key ways to improve hemoglobin A1c levels, a common marker of diabetes management.

Researchers studied several groups of type 2 diabetics engaging in various exercise regimens – aerobic exercise, muscular exercise, or a combination of both - for 9 months. Results showed that improvements in body weight, waist circumference, abdominal fat, and METs of exercise were associated with improved hemoglobin A1c. Most notably, though, those who exercised more and lost more abdominal fat than the others had even better odds of reducing their hemoglobin A1c levels. Additionally, those who exercised more and reduced their waist circumference were nearly three times more likely to have lowered their hemoglobin A1c and decreased their dependence on diabetes medications than other participants.

Ask if your health club offers a diabetes and fitness management program. Health clubs around the world often provide disease management programs to help their members achieve and maintain good health.

HEALTH CLUB MEMBERSHIP AND FITNESS TRAINING RESULT IN INCREASED FITNESS ABILITY AND WEIGHT LOSS FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS



A new study in the journal *Psychiatric Services* looked at the impact of a physical activity program called In SHAPE on fitness levels and weight among people with serious mental illness. In

SHAPE consists of weekly sessions with a fitness trainer and a health club membership for one year. The study measured participants' participation, fitness levels, weight and BMI and dietary habits, and compared them to people who were not in the program but received health club memberships and general education.

After one year, both groups saw improvements in BMI and weight, but people who worked with a trainer attended their health club three times as often as non-

participants, exercised twice as often, did more vigorous exercise, and made greater improvements in diet. These findings indicate that specialized, focused programs with fitness trainers and health clubs can help people with serious mental illness achieve weight loss and better health.

EXERCISE TRAINING BENEFITS PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS



Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a nervous system disease affecting the brain and spinal cord and causing symptoms like muscle weakness, trouble with coordination and balance,

numbness, and memory loss. Recently, a review in the *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* looked at the impact of exercise training on physical fitness, fatigue, and quality of life in people with MS.

The authors analyzed 54 studies and found strong evidence that doing moderate exercise two times per week increased aerobic fitness and muscular strength in people with MS. There was also some evidence that exercise can improve mobility, decrease fatigue, and increase health related quality of life. Health clubs provide safe, supportive environments for people to build and maintain good aerobic and muscular fitness.

EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY DOES NOT INCREASE RISK OF PRETERM DELIVERY

There is a good deal of research on exercise during pregnancy, but there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of the unique effects of different types and durations of exercise through pregnancy. Now, a study in the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health* has looked at the effect of aerobic exercise during pregnancy on delivery time.



During the study, 320 pregnant women completed 85 exercise sessions – usually three 60-minute general fitness classes per week – between weeks 8-10 and 38-39 of pregnancy. Results showed that women who exercised during their pregnancy were not at higher risk of

delivering prematurely than women who did not exercise.

There are actually many benefits to exercising while pregnant, for both mom and baby, including weight management, less back pain, reduced symptoms of depression. Exercising in a health club adds an extra layer of safety, which is an important factor for expecting moms.

EXERCISE TRAINING BENEFICIAL FOR PEOPLE WITH HEAD AND NECK CANCERS

People undergoing treatment for head and neck cancers often experience fatigue, which leads to decreases in functional capacity – such as fitness and mobility - and overall quality of life. Now, a study in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research* followed people undergoing treatment for head and neck cancers during a 6-week, tailored exercise program, to see if there are benefits to exercising while undergoing treatment for head or neck cancer.

Results showed that participants in the exercise group improved their physical fitness and quality of life, while the non-exercise group experienced decreases in both. These findings suggest that supervised exercise programs can help improve or maintain physical function and quality of life in people undergoing cancer treatment.

This newsletter has been brought to you by your health club, a member of the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association. To learn more about the health benefits of exercise, visit HealthClubs.com today



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