

Health Benefits of Exercise

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EXERCISE REDUCES STRESS IN KIDS



Many children today trade active, outdoor play for more sedentary activities like video and computer games. Now, research conducted at the Endocrine Society shows that inactive kids are more prone to stress than their active peers.

The research followed 252 eight-year olds and observed their physical activity and levels of cortisol, a hormone commonly used to measure stress, under typically stressful situations like math homework or public speaking. The results showed that more active children appeared less stressed than the less active children in these situations. Children should be active for at least an hour everyday. But with children, the more active they are, the better.

ACTIVE DOCTORS MORE LIKELY TO RECOMMEND EXERCISE

Physically fit doctors are more likely to give their patients exercise advice than their inactive colleagues, according to a study presented at an American Heart Association meeting this week. Researchers looked at 28 studies of physician exercise and counseling habits, and found that active doctors were, as much as 2-5 times more likely to recommend exercise to their patients. Other studies reviewed found that programs to increase doctors' physical activity improved their confidence and ability to recommend exercise to patients.



In addition, medical school students who participated in programs to improve their lifestyles - such as increasing physical activity and eating a healthier diet -

were also more likely to recommend and advise patients about exercise than those who had not. According to study leader and co-author Dr. Felipe Lobelo, an epidemiologist with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "When [exercise] advice is coupled with a referral to community resources, it can be quite effective and this approach should be part of the public health solution to America's inactivity problem."

EXERCISE REDUCES CHRONIC INFLAMMATION



Chronic, whole body inflammation is a well recognized risk factor for several chronic diseases, and obesity – also a risk factor for several conditions – is associated with higher levels of

inflammation. According to an article in the March edition of *Sports Medicine*, the most recent evidence shows that exercise training, such as aerobic and resistance exercise, reduces chronic inflammation, especially in obese individuals with higher levels of inflammation.

Physical activity reduces inflammation in several ways. It causes muscles to produce anti-inflammatory substances, increases oxygen levels in fat tissue (which reduces fat tissue inflammation) and influences the immune system to produce fewer pro-inflammatory cells. Not only can exercise reduce inflammation, it can also promote weight loss, help achieve weight maintenance, and reduce the risk of developing several chronic diseases including diabetes and heart disease.

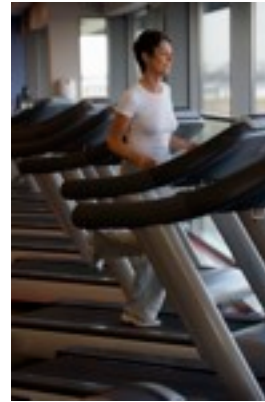
COMMUNITY BASED EXERCISE IMPROVES WELL BEING FOR BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS

Research has shown that exercise can improve quality of life and well being in women with breast cancer. Now, a new study shows that an exercise program provided in a community is both feasible and effective in improving quality of life for breast cancer survivors.

Researchers evaluated twenty-six women who attended supervised, group exercise classes three times per week for four to six months. The classes were held at community fitness centers. As a result of the program, participants saw significant

improvements in physical and emotional well being, social function, decreases in pain, and better mental health. These results show that exercise programs provided in fitness centers can have beneficial effects for health, and exercise should be a part of standard cancer rehabilitation.

EXERCISE MAY HELP PREVENT OR TREAT PARKINSON'S DISEASE



Parkinson's Disease is a degenerative, neurological disease characterized by symptoms including poor balance, slow movement, stiffness, and trembling. Currently there is no cure, however physical exercise has been associated with a lower risk of developing other

neurological diseases. A recent article published in *Reviews in the Neurosciences* looked at the current, published data to summarize the effects of exercise on Parkinson's Disease.

According to the review, physical activity is associated with a lower risk of developing Parkinson's Disease and has been shown to improve symptoms associated with the disease including mobility, balance, and quality of life. According to this review, activities most effective for improving quality of life included tai-chi, tango dancing, and walking.

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