

Get Moving!

Give Your Mind a Workout

By Claire Blankemeier, M.S., James Oelschlager, Psy.D., and Robyn Coombs, Psy.D.

EXERCISE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

You'll be surprised to learn what exercise and fitness can do for you!

Exercise provides a wide range of health benefits including cardiovascular and respiratory health, strong bones and muscles, weight management, diabetes prevention, cancer prevention and healthy sleeping patterns. Physical exercise is not only an activity to keep yourself healthy and in shape, it also has many benefits for your mental health.

DID YOU KNOW?

Adults who exercise regularly report lower levels of depressive and anxiety disorders than those who don't.

There is a growing body of research that suggests physical exercise promotes wellness and mental health.

Most research available regarding the benefits of exercise on mental health has been conducted on populations with depression or anxiety. Research from Duke University found 60% of patients who had been suffering from depression for more than four months overcame their depression after exercising for 30 minutes three times per week.

But, you don't have to be suffering from a diagnosed psychological condition to obtain the mental health benefits exercise can provide. Exercise can be used to boost confidence and reduce tension, anger and sadness. Exercise can also be viewed as a preventative measure to prevent physical and emotional conditions.

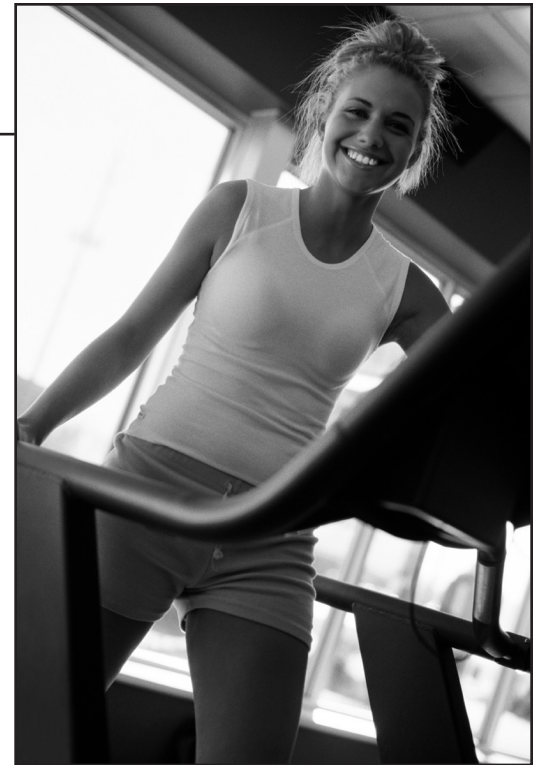
Biological Influences of Exercise:

- *Exercise increases steroid reserves that work to counteract stress.*
- *Exercise reduces tension by lowering resting muscle activity potential.*
- *Exercise increases body temperature which is associated with sedative effects.*
- *Exercise releases endorphins: neuropeptides that bind to special receptors in the brain that create euphoric sensations.*
- *Exercise increases energy levels.*
- *Exercise can promote healthy sleeping patterns.*

Psychological Influences of Exercise:

- *Exercise increases self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-sufficiency: become successful and confident!*
- *Exercise can induce a meditative, relaxed state: feel good because you're relaxed!*
- *Exercise distracts from daily stress and anxiety: clear your mind and your body!*
- *Exercise promotes positive interactions with people and nature: get out there!*

ARE YOU CONVINCED YET?



HOW TO GET MOVING

Standard public health guidelines suggest 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical exercise most days of the week is considered necessary and healthy (recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention). Sixty minutes of moderate intensity physical activity daily is recommended for weight loss and maintenance (recommended by the Institute of Medicine).

30 MINUTES OF WHAT?

Moderate intensity exercise could include walking briskly, jogging, aerobic classes, bike riding, elliptical machines, hiking and water sports.

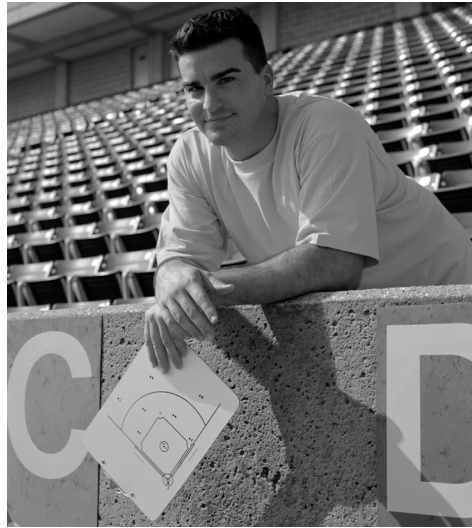
Other physical activities such as yoga and pilates are beneficial forms of exercise for your mental health and can also provide relaxing effects.

WHERE TO START

Getting started is not always easy, but the benefits make it worth it and the rewards come quickly. Here are some tips to help you get started and maintain an exercise plan.

1. **Identify what is preventing you from getting started**—Lack of money? Don't have time? Not motivated? Several factors can prevent you from starting an exercise plan. Exercise does not have to cost money. The outdoors is free of cost and provides a great environment for exercise. Just 30 minutes a day can make a difference and can be accomplished before work, during a lunch break or at the end of the day. Remember make yourself get moving. Once you get there, you will feel good!
2. **Form a plan**—Develop an exercise plan including goals and steps you can take to reach these goals. Be specific and flexible in revising your plan as needed. A journal is a good place to track your progress and plan.
3. **Start small**—Set realistic goals so you are setting yourself up for success, not disappointment. For example, a goal of walking two miles three times per week is more realistic than a goal of running a marathon in one month.
4. **Get motivated**—Lack of energy and drive can be difficult to overcome, so find the right incentive to keep yourself motivated. If you find boredom creeping in, change up your routine, which can lead to more motivation. Once you feel the results on your mental health and physical wellness, your motivation will increase.
5. **Get support**—Ask friends and family to help support you in achieving your goals. Invite them to get involved in your exercise plan with you.
6. **Use moderation**—Don't wear yourself out and overdo it. As with anything, too much exercise can be unhealthy or lead to unhealthy patterns.
7. **Don't give up!**—Monitor yourself along the way to keep on track and reward yourself! It may take some time to feel the results on your mental health, but once you do, it will be worth it.

And remember, any activity is better than no activity. Exercise does not have to be very strenuous to be effective.



MAKE EXERCISE ENJOYABLE!

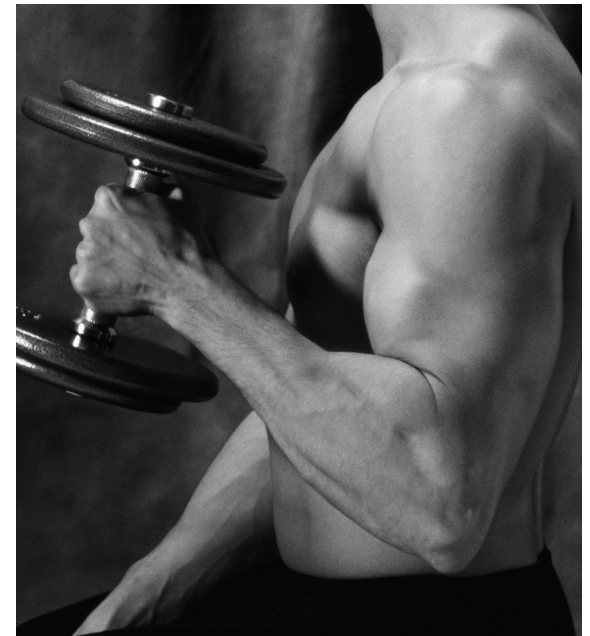
- *Exercise with friends.*
- *Integrate sports or games into your physical activity.*
- *Add variety to your workout routine. Switch it up every few days to prevent boredom and don't be afraid to try something new.*
- *Get outside! Try brisk outdoor walking, jogging or swimming.*
- *Explore what the Clemente Center has to offer.*
- *Add your favorite music.*
- *Purchase exercise videos or DVDs and you can workout at home.*
- *Involve your pets, take your dog for a jog!*

Florida Institute of Technology

Counseling and Psychological Services
150 W. University Blvd. • Melbourne, FL 32901-6975
(321) 674-8050

PY-455-707

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