

The Mental Benefits of Physical Exercise

Getting enough exercise, spending time outdoors, and adopting healthy habits can boost your mental health. Staying active is also a great way to try new things and socialize. In this guide, you'll learn why physical activity improves mental health and strategies to incorporate more movement into daily life.

Why does exercise make you feel better mentally?

Your body and mind are connected, which means your mental health impacts your physical health and vice versa. There are two main ways that exercise plays a role in your mental health:

Hormones

Exercise produces endorphins and enkephalins, your body's natural feel-good and stress-reducing hormones.

Brain Health

Exercise increases the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to your brain, which promotes neuron growth and health.

What are some health benefits of exercise?

Exercise helps your body look good and perform well, but some of its most important functions are the unseen benefits, including:

- Improved sleep quality
- Better mood
- Increased energy and mental alertness
- Stress relief



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How to add exercise to your daily life

Getting started can feel intimidating if you're new to exercise or have taken a break for a while. But it doesn't have to! Here are some helpful tips to start (or continue) exercising:



Think of getting movement throughout your day as exercise. This way, activities you do naturally, like cleaning your house or doing laundry, fit into the definition. And don't stress about moving for a set amount of time — even 10 minutes helps!



Try making exercise social. Having accountability and people to surround yourself with can help you stay motivated. Consider taking a group exercise class, joining a rec sports team, or asking a family member or friend to take walks with you.



Schedule it! Despite good intentions, it can be easy to find yourself glued to your desk and neglecting your physical activity goals. Try scheduling exercise in advance so you have dedicated time blocked off.



Find an activity you actually enjoy. It may take a while to land on something you truly love, but it will be worth it when you find an activity you can stick with long-term. Explore your options or ask friends for suggestions.

How Modern Health may help



One-On-One Care

Modern Health can match you with a provider who will help you achieve your physical well-being goals, regardless of your starting fitness level. [Get matched with a provider today!](#)



Community Sessions

Join an upcoming [Circle](#), a provider-led group session, on topics like setting goals and getting better sleep.



Digital Resources

This [course](#) guides you through skills and techniques for caring for your body and mind.



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