

HEALTH CONNECTION



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YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION FOR BETTER HEALTH

MARCH 2022



KEEP MOVING FOR YOUR BRAIN & BODY

All you have to do is turn on the TV or open up a magazine to learn about the importance of exercise. However, if it's not part of your regular routine, it can be difficult to know where to begin...or even *why* you should begin.

Whether you're just considering a new exercise regimen or need an incentive to carry on, you should know that exercise doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. So why not invest a few minutes of your time right now to learn why it's important to keep moving for your brain and your body.

Exercise and Your Brain

You don't have to be a high-stress person to feel stressed living in our pandemic times. The good news is that almost any type of exercise—from walking and practicing yoga to playing tennis and running—has great stress-relieving and health benefits.

When you're physically active, the "feel-good" neurotransmitters in your body called endorphins kick in. The result is a sensation often referred to as a "runner's high," but you don't have to run to get it. Exercise also helps shed the tensions of the day, reduces symptoms of mild depression and anxiety, and improves sleep. The result for most people is a greater ability to focus and remain calmer during stressful situations.

Additionally, researchers believe that regular physical activity benefits the memory by keeping the blood flowing and increasing chemicals that protect the brain, as well as countering the natural reduction in brain connections that occur with age. In fact, studies have shown that physically active people have a lower risk of developing conditions like Alzheimer's disease than those who have sedentary lifestyles.

WHAT'S NEW AT YOUR HOSPITAL

- We earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for chest pain care, recognizing our standards for **heart care with science-backed treatments**.
- Our spacious **new health and fitness center** features exercise equipment, indoor walking track, yoga and more. It's a place of healing for our rehab services, but anyone interested in good health and exercise can join. Learn more at (214) 324-6150.

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Exercise and Your Body

Exercise is one of the best ways to prevent (or manage) many types of diseases and conditions. Below are a few conditions exercise may improve.

- **Heart Disease** – Regardless of your weight, exercise can help increase “good” cholesterol (HDL) and help reduce “bad” cholesterol (LDL) that leads to plaque buildup in the blood vessels. For people with high blood pressure, it also can lower the risk of progressive heart disease.
- **Diabetes** – Regular exercise can help the body’s natural insulin more effectively lower and control blood sugar levels, as well as lower the risk of heart disease and nerve damage.
- **Cancer** – Studies have shown that exercise can reduce the chances of dying from breast, colorectal and prostate cancer. In addition, it can improve the quality of life for people who are going through cancer treatment and those who have had it.
- **Arthritis** – Exercise can help maintain muscle strength and reduce joint stiffness, thus reducing the pain experienced from arthritis. It also can greatly improve overall physical function and quality of life.
- **Back Pain** – Regular low-impact aerobic activities can increase strength and endurance in the back, as well as improve muscle function. In addition, core-strengthening exercises may help reduce back pain symptoms by strengthening the muscles around the spine.

Let’s Get Moving!

If you haven’t exercised for a while, consider this 6-step approach to getting started.

1 GET A CHECKUP

If you haven’t had a routine medical exam in a while or have medical concerns, it’s important to consult with your healthcare provider before beginning a new exercise routine.

2 FIND ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY

Not everyone wants to go for a nature walk or spend time in the gym, so find an activity that excites you. In fact, find several so you can mix it up and not get bored.

3 START SLOWLY

It’s great to be ambitious, but it’s always best to start slowly and gradually build your fitness level. Most people who injure themselves at the beginning of a new exercise program end up quitting before they’ve really even started.

4 SCHEDULE EXERCISE

For most busy people, things don’t happen unless it’s on the calendar. Make exercise a top priority by scheduling this time for you.

5 ENLIST A FRIEND

It’s easy to blow off exercise, unless you know someone is waiting on you to show up. Choose someone you enjoy exercising with and will hold you accountable for being there.

6 BE CONSISTENT

A little exercise is better than none, but consistently making it a part of your lifestyle is where the real value lies. After all, your health and wellbeing are worth your time!

How Much Exercise is Enough?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults should spend at least 150 minutes exercising per week. Any type of moderate-intensity aerobic activity that gets your heart beating faster than usual counts. You can even break it up and exercise 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Also be sure to add muscle-strengthening activities to your routine at least twice a week.



Are you ready?

If you’re physically able to start exercising, don’t put it off any longer. Choose what you’d like to do, then do it for just 10 minutes. Everyone can commit that amount of time. Who knows, you may keep going even longer!

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with “Health Connection” in the subject line.