



The Link Between Mental Health and Physical Health

Not only does exercise help improve your physical health, it also has numerous benefits for your mental health! Exercise can help you sleep better at night, feel more energetic during the day, and boost your mood. It can even help alleviate symptoms of mental illness.

Exercise releases endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin—chemicals that work together to keep you feeling happy. One study found that running for 15 minutes a day or walking for an hour can even help reduce the risk of depression! Working out also serves as a good distraction from the thoughts in your head, helping you release stress and tension to be in the moment.

But don't worry, you don't need to be an exercise fiend to reap these benefits. Although the general consensus is it's best to get 30 minutes of exercise about five times a week, any amount of time spent exercising will still help your mind and body. Nor should you feel like every workout has to be strenuous. Moderate exercise, in which you are warm and have an elevated heart/breathing rate, is often best. No need to sweat buckets or feel out of breath!

Although many people know the benefits of exercise, it can still be difficult to actually commit to doing it once, let alone making it a habit. Remember, it's better to exercise a little than not at all! If you're too exhausted to do your usual fitness routine, try a five minute walk around the block. Or, work on incorporating physical activity into the routine you already have. Try taking the stairs instead of the elevator, taking a short stretch break at lunch, or putting on your favorite song and jamming out in your room. Whatever gets you moving and feeling good, big or small, is so worth it.

References

Robinson, Lawrence, et al. "How Does Exercise Improve Mental Health?" HelpGuide.Org, 13 Mar. 2025, www.helpguide.org/wellness/fitness/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.