

Chapter 1 : Exercise helps you think better – Karen Postal Ph.D., ABPP-CN

Regular exercise is also thought to help ease stress, anxiety, and mild depression. This book presents new and important research from around the world dealing with various aspects and impacts of exercise as related to health.

Sign up now Exercise: From boosting your mood to improving your sex life, find out how exercise can improve your life. By Mayo Clinic Staff Want to feel better, have more energy and even add years to your life? The health benefits of regular exercise and physical activity are hard to ignore. Everyone benefits from exercise, regardless of age, sex or physical ability. Need more convincing to get moving? Check out these seven ways exercise can lead to a happier, healthier you. Exercise controls weight Exercise can help prevent excess weight gain or help maintain weight loss. When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn. To reap the benefits of exercise, just get more active throughout your day – take the stairs instead of the elevator or rev up your household chores. Exercise combats health conditions and diseases Worried about heart disease? Hoping to prevent high blood pressure? No matter what your current weight, being active boosts high-density lipoprotein HDL , or "good," cholesterol and decreases unhealthy triglycerides. This one-two punch keeps your blood flowing smoothly, which decreases your risk of cardiovascular diseases. Regular exercise helps prevent or manage a wide range of health problems and concerns, including stroke, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, depression, a number of types of cancer, arthritis and falls. Exercise improves mood Need an emotional lift? Or need to blow off some steam after a stressful day? A gym session or brisk minute walk can help. Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed. You may also feel better about your appearance and yourself when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem. Exercise boosts energy Winded by grocery shopping or household chores? Regular physical activity can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance. Exercise delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardiovascular system work more efficiently. And when your heart and lung health improve, you have more energy to tackle daily chores. Exercise promotes better sleep Struggling to snooze? Regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster and deepen your sleep. Exercise puts the spark back into your sex life Do you feel too tired or too out of shape to enjoy physical intimacy? Regular physical activity can improve energy levels and physical appearance, which may boost your sex life. Regular physical activity may enhance arousal for women. Exercise can be fun – and social! Exercise and physical activity can be enjoyable. It gives you a chance to unwind, enjoy the outdoors or simply engage in activities that make you happy. Physical activity can also help you connect with family or friends in a fun social setting. So, take a dance class, hit the hiking trails or join a soccer team. Find a physical activity you enjoy, and just do it. Try something new, or do something with friends. The bottom line on exercise Exercise and physical activity are a great way to feel better, boost your health and have fun. Aim for at least minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise, or 75 minutes per week of vigorous exercise. Try to engage in a combination of vigorous and moderate aerobic exercises, such as running, walking or swimming. Squeeze in strength training at least twice per week by lifting free weights, using weight machines or doing body weight exercises. Space out your activities throughout the week. If you want to lose weight or meet specific fitness goals, you may need to ramp up your exercise efforts.

Chapter 2 : Stretching: Focus on flexibility - Mayo Clinic

Exercise & Fitness Exercising regularly, every day if possible, is the single most important thing you can do for your health. In the short term, exercise helps to control appetite, boost mood, and improve sleep.

Patient Handouts Summary Regular exercise is one of the best things you can do for your health. It has many benefits , including improving your overall health and fitness, and reducing your risk for many chronic diseases. There are many different types of exercise; it is important that you pick the right types for you. Most people benefit from a combination of them: Endurance, or aerobic, activities increase your breathing and heart rate. They keep your heart, lungs, and circulatory system healthy and improve your overall fitness. Examples include brisk walking, jogging, swimming, and biking. Strength, or resistance training, exercises make your muscles stronger. Some examples are lifting weights and using a resistance band. Balance exercises can make it easier to walk on uneven surfaces and help prevent falls. To improve your balance, try tai chi or exercises like standing on one leg. Flexibility exercises stretch your muscles and can help your body stay limber. Yoga and doing various stretches can make you more flexible. Fitting regular exercise into your daily schedule may seem difficult at first. But you can start slowly, and break your exercise time into chunks. Even doing ten minutes at a time is fine. You can work your way up to doing the recommended amount of exercise. How much exercise you need depends on your age and health. Other things that you can do to make the most of your workouts include Choosing activities that work all the different parts of the body, including your core muscles around your back, abdomen, and pelvis. Good core strength improves balance and stability and helps to prevent lower back injury. Choosing activities that you enjoy. Exercising safely , with proper equipment, to prevent injuries. The goals should challenge you, but also be realistic. The rewards could be something big, like new workout gear, or something smaller, such as movie tickets.

Chapter 3 : Home - Focus Health and Fitness

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But exercise is also one of the most effective ways to improve your mental health. Regular exercise can have a profoundly positive impact on depression, anxiety, ADHD, and more. It also relieves stress, improves memory, helps you sleep better, and boosts overall mood. Research indicates that modest amounts of exercise can make a difference. No matter your age or fitness level, you can learn to use exercise as a powerful tool to feel better. What are the mental health benefits of exercise? Exercise is not just about aerobic capacity and muscle size. Sure, exercise can improve your physical health and your physique, trim your waistline, improve your sex life, and even add years to your life. People who exercise regularly tend to do so because it gives them an enormous sense of well-being. They feel more energetic throughout the day, sleep better at night, have sharper memories, and feel more relaxed and positive about themselves and their lives. Exercise and depression Studies show that exercise can treat mild to moderate depression as effectively as antidepressant medication—but without the side-effects, of course. In addition to relieving depression symptoms, research also shows that maintaining an exercise schedule can prevent you from relapsing. Exercise is a powerful depression fighter for several reasons. Most importantly, it promotes all kinds of changes in the brain, including neural growth, reduced inflammation, and new activity patterns that promote feelings of calm and well-being. It also releases endorphins, powerful chemicals in your brain that energize your spirits and make you feel good. Finally, exercise can also serve as a distraction, allowing you to find some quiet time to break out of the cycle of negative thoughts that feed depression. Exercise and anxiety Exercise is a natural and effective anti-anxiety treatment. It relieves tension and stress, boosts physical and mental energy, and enhances well-being through the release of endorphins. Try to notice the sensation of your feet hitting the ground, for example, or the rhythm of your breathing, or the feeling of the wind on your skin. Your muscles may be tense, especially in your face, neck, and shoulders, leaving you with back or neck pain, or painful headaches. You may feel a tightness in your chest, a pounding pulse, or muscle cramps. You may also experience problems such as insomnia, heartburn, stomachache, diarrhea, or frequent urination. The worry and discomfort of all these physical symptoms can in turn lead to even more stress, creating a vicious cycle between your mind and body. Exercising is an effective way to break this cycle. As well as releasing endorphins in the brain, physical activity helps to relax the muscles and relieve tension in the body. Since the body and mind are so closely linked, when your body feels better so, too, will your mind. Exercise and ADHD Exercising regularly is one of the easiest and most effective ways to reduce the symptoms of ADHD and improve concentration, motivation, memory, and mood. Instead of thinking about other things, pay close attention to the physical sensations in your joints and muscles, even your insides as your body moves. Exercises that involve cross movement and that engage both arms and legs—such as walking especially in sand, running, swimming, weight training, or dancing—are some of your best choices. Outdoor activities like hiking, sailing, mountain biking, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, and skiing downhill and cross-country have also been shown to reduce the symptoms of PTSD. Other mental and emotional benefits of exercise Sharper memory and thinking. The same endorphins that make you feel better also help you concentrate and feel mentally sharp for tasks at hand. Exercise also stimulates the growth of new brain cells and helps prevent age-related decline. Regular activity is an investment in your mind, body, and soul. When it becomes habit, it can foster your sense of self-worth and make you feel strong and powerful. Even short bursts of exercise in the morning or afternoon can help regulate your sleep patterns. If you prefer to exercise at night, relaxing exercises such as yoga or gentle stretching can help promote sleep. Increasing your heart rate several times a week will give you more get-up-and-go. Start off with just a few minutes of exercise a day, and increase your workout as you feel more energized. When faced with mental or emotional challenges in life, exercise can help you cope in a healthy way, instead of resorting to alcohol, drugs, or other negative behaviors that

ultimately only make your symptoms worse. Regular exercise can also help boost your immune system and reduce the impact of stress. Reaping the mental health benefits of exercise is easier than you think. Wondering just how active you need to be to get a mental health boost? You can reap all the physical and mental health benefits of exercise with minutes of moderate exercise five times a week. Two minute or even three minute exercise sessions can also work just as well. Even just a few minutes of physical activity are better than none at all. Start with 5- or minute sessions and slowly increase your time. The key is to commit to do some moderate physical activity—however little—on most days. As exercising becomes habit, you can slowly add extra minutes or try different types of activities. If you keep at it, the benefits of exercise will begin to pay off.

Be a weekend warrior A recent study in the UK found that people who squeeze their exercise routines into one or two sessions at the weekend experience almost as many health benefits as those who work out more often. Get moving whenever you can find the time—your mind and body will thank you! That you breathe a little heavier than normal, but are not out of breath. For example, you should be able to chat with your walking partner, but not easily sing a song. That your body feels warmer as you move, but not overheated or very sweaty. But taking that first step is still easier said than done. Here are some common barriers and what you can do to get past them. But the truth is that physical activity is a powerful energizer. Studies show that regular exercise can dramatically reduce fatigue and increase your energy levels. If you are really feeling tired, promise yourself a 5-minute walk. If you have children, managing childcare while you exercise can be a big hurdle. Just remember that physical activity helps us do everything else better. If you begin thinking of physical activity as a priority, you will soon find ways to fit small amounts in a busy schedule. Exercise helps you get in shape. If you have no experience exercising, start slow with low-impact movement a few minutes each day. Feeling bad about yourself. Are you your own worst critic? No matter what your weight, age or fitness level, there are others like you with the goals of getting fit. Try surrounding yourself with people in your shoes. Take a class with people at a variety of fitness levels. Accomplishing even the smallest fitness goals will help you gain body confidence.

Chair Exercises and Fitness Tips Feeling pain. If you have a disability, severe weight problem, arthritis, or any injury or illness that limits your mobility, talk to your healthcare provider about ways to safely exercise. Divide your exercise into shorter, more frequent chunks of time if that helps, or try exercising in water to reduce joint or muscle discomfort. When we feel depressed, anxious, stressed or have other mental or emotional problems, it can be doubly difficult. This is especially true of depression and anxiety, and it can leave you feeling trapped in a catch situation. So, what can you do? Better to set yourself achievable goals and build up from there. Schedule your workout at the time of day when your energy is highest That may be first thing in the morning before work or school, or at lunchtime before the mid-afternoon lull hits, or in longer sessions at the weekend. If depression or anxiety has you feeling tired and unmotivated all day long, try dancing to some music or simply going for a walk. Even a short, minute walk can help clear your mind, improve your mood, and boost your energy level. You may even feel energized enough to exercise more vigorously—by walking further, breaking into a run, or adding a bike ride, for example. Any activity that gets you moving counts. That could include throwing a Frisbee with a dog or friend, walking laps of a mall window shopping, or cycling to the grocery store. Activities such as gardening or tackling a home improvement project can be great ways to start moving more when you have a mood disorder—as well as helping you become more active, they can also leave you with a sense of purpose and accomplishment. That may be a quiet corner of your home, a scenic path, or your favorite city park. Reward yourself with a hot bubble bath after a workout, a delicious smoothie, or with an extra episode of your favorite TV show. Make exercise a social activity. Exercising with a friend or loved one, or even your kids will not only make exercising more fun and enjoyable, it can also help to motivate you to stick to a workout routine. Think about physical activity as a lifestyle rather than just a single task to check off. Look at your daily routine and consider ways to sneak in activity here, there, and everywhere. In and around your home. Clean the house, wash the car, tend to the yard and garden, mow the lawn with a push mower, sweep the sidewalk or patio with a broom. At work and on the go. Bike or walk to an appointment rather than drive, banish all elevators and get to know every staircase possible, briskly walk to the bus stop then get off one stop early, park at the back of the lot and walk into the store or office, take a vigorous walk during your coffee

break. Pick fruit at an orchard, boogie to music, go to the beach or take a hike, gently stretch while watching television, organize an office bowling team, take a class in martial arts, dance, or yoga. These tips can help you find activities you enjoy and start to feel better, look better, and get more out of life. Recommended reading Physical Activity and Mental Health â€” Details how being active can help depression and other mental health issues. Royal College of Psychiatrists The Exercise Effect â€” Discusses the mental health benefits of exercise and why it should be used more frequently in mental health treatment. American Psychological Association Exercising to Relax â€” How physical activity and autoregulation exercises can help reduce stress.

Chapter 4 : 8 Ways to Focus on Getting Fit - Fitness Center - Everyday Health

Exercise turns out to be an [Subscribe to Harvard Health Online](#) *for immediate access to health news and information from Harvard Medical School. Research health.*

Now we know one reason why: When we exercise- and it has to be enough to really sweat, neurogenesis- or the birth of new cells- is the result. Use it or lose it: When you both exercise and use your memory, the cells become permanent. So in order to improve memory function, It makes sense that we should BOTH exercise and engage in activities that challenge us to think and remember. Get the brain cells multiplying, then make sure those new cells stay around. In addition to stimulating new brain cells, exercise also increases BDNF brain derived neurotrophic factor which leads directly to brain cells binding to one another. Synapses, or connections between cells become more dense. We think better because our capacity to make connections is literally improved. BDNF stimulated connections are an important factor in creating long term memories. What you eat may influence how DBNF and exercise effect your thinking. High fat diets have been shown to block new brain cell growth. Eating foods high in Omega-3 fatty acid, like salmon, encourages new cell growth and connectivity. Aerobic exercise- and you need to get your heart rate up- also leads directly, and immediately to improved focus and concentration. Following a half hour of strenuous exercise, the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex works harder to resist distracters and performance on tests of attention improves. Studies also show that immediately following exercise, problem solving, memory, and attention improve. The research is compelling. Regular, sweaty exercise helps us think better by stimulating new brain cell growth, increasing connections between cells, and improving attention. Why not give these advantages to our children? An hour of vigorous exercise per day will allow your children to focus better in school and while studying. Exercise allows them to retain more information. And, as a great side effect, exercise will even out their moods, improve sleep patterns, and build self confidence. Children with attention deficit disorder significantly benefit from daily intense exercise- and not just because they are too tired to be hyperactive! Exercise directly stimulates the dorsolateral prefrontal cortices- the brain regions in the frontal executive network responsible for focus, concentration, organization, and planning. When this area of the brain works harder, your ADHD child focuses better. This is the same area of the brain effected by Ritalin based medications. If your child is on medication for ADHD a regular exercise program could improve its effectiveness. If you are looking for a treatment for ADHD that does not involve medication, exercise is a clear and powerful choice. For schools and coaches: There are several online organizations and foundations with the goal of spreading the word about the benefits of youth fitness. For families and individuals: If you would like assistance setting up an effective exercise program, consider hiring a personal trainer for several sessions. Getting and staying moving is a habit. Like any habit, the first several weeks are the most difficult. Having a professional come to your home at a scheduled time is a great motivator. And then, just like brushing ones teeth, exercise becomes a necessary part of everyday life. Jennelle Nadeau is a good choice in the greater Boston area. For a wonderful summary of the research connecting exercise to improved memory, attention, and mood, I highly recommend the book *Spark* By John Ratey, MD Powered by Squarespace. Home background image by jakeliefer. Background image by Kuba Bozanowski.

Chapter 5 : Focus on exercise and health research (Book,) [blog.quintoapp.com]

What are the mental health benefits of exercise? Exercise is not just about aerobic capacity and muscle size. Sure, exercise can improve your physical health and your physique, trim your waistline, improve your sex life, and even add years to your life.

Stretching may take a back seat to your exercise routine. The main concern is exercising, not stretching, right? Stretching may help you: Improve your joint range of motion Improve your athletic performance Decrease your risk of injury Understand why stretching can help and how to stretch correctly. Benefits of stretching Studies about the benefits of stretching have had mixed results. Some show that stretching helps. Other studies show that stretching before or after exercise has little to no benefit. Stretching can help improve flexibility, and, consequently, range of motion about your joints. Improve your performance in physical activities Decrease your risk of injuries Help your joints move through their full range of motion Enable your muscles to work most effectively Stretching also increases blood flow to the muscle. You may learn to enjoy the ritual of stretching before or after hitting the trail, ballet floor or soccer field. Stretching essentials Before you plunge into stretching, make sure you do it safely and effectively. While you can stretch anytime, anywhere, be sure to use proper technique. Stretching incorrectly can actually do more harm than good. Use these tips to keep stretching safe: You may hurt yourself if you stretch cold muscles. Before stretching, warm up with light walking, jogging or biking at low intensity for five to 10 minutes. Even better, stretch after your workout when your muscles are warm. Consider skipping stretching before an intense activity, such as sprinting or track and field activities. Some research suggests that pre-event stretching may actually decrease performance. Research has also shown that stretching immediately before an event weakens hamstring strength. Instead of static stretching, try performing a "dynamic warmup. Rather than striving for the flexibility of a dancer or gymnast, focus on having equal flexibility side to side especially if you have a history of a previous injury. Flexibility that is not equal on both sides may be a risk factor for injury. Focus on major muscle groups. Concentrate your stretches on major muscle groups such as your calves, thighs, hips, lower back, neck and shoulders. Make sure that you stretch both sides. Also stretch muscles and joints that you routinely use. Stretch in a smooth movement, without bouncing. Bouncing as you stretch can injure your muscle and actually contribute to muscle tightness. Breathe normally and hold each stretch for about 30 seconds; in problem areas, you may need to hold for around 60 seconds. Make stretches sport specific. So opt for stretches that help your hamstrings. Keep up with your stretching. Stretching can be time-consuming. But you can achieve the most benefits by stretching regularly, at least two to three times a week. Skipping regular stretching means you risk losing the potential benefits. For instance, if stretching helped you increase your range of motion, your range of motion may decrease again if you stop stretching. Bring movement into your stretching. Gentle movements, such as those in tai chi or yoga, can help you be more flexible in specific movements. These types of exercises can also help reduce falls in seniors. Remember the "dynamic warmup: Then speed up gradually. Know when to exercise caution You might need to approach stretching with caution. If you have a chronic condition or an injury, you might need to adjust your stretching techniques. For example, if you already have a strained muscle, stretching it may cause further harm. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist about the most appropriate way to stretch if you have any health concerns.

Chapter 6 : Exercise & Fitness - Harvard Health

Past and current research projects have explored the effect of a diagnosis of breast cancer on lifestyle and mental health and adherence to lifestyle-based (i.e. nutrition and exercise) and drug therapy treatment programs.

Share via Email New scientific research can help you choose the best ways to prepare physically for mental challenges. Sophie Wolfson for the Guardian. We judge literacy and numeracy exercises as more beneficial for your brain than running, playing and learning on the move. When it comes to your brain, an oblique approach can be surprisingly effective. Moreover, specific physical activities can markedly alter its structure in precise ways. A wave of studies exploring the unexpected links between mental and bodily fitness is emerging from labs. This research might give you the impetus to get more active. It can also help you choose the best ways to prepare physically for mental challenges such as exams, interviews and creative projects.

Boost your memory The part of the brain that responds strongly to aerobic exercise is the hippocampus. Well-controlled experiments in children, adults and the elderly show that this brain structure grows as people get fitter. As well as slowly improving your memory hardware, exercise can have a more immediate impact on memory formation. German researchers showed that walking or cycling during, but not before, learning helped new foreign language vocabulary to stick. So exercise while you revise. Improve your concentration Besides making memories stickier, exercise can help you focus and stay on task. The best scientific evidence comes from testing school children, but the same most likely applies to us all. Interspersing lessons with minute bouts of aerobics-style exercise improved the attention spans of Dutch school pupils. Meanwhile, a large randomised controlled trial in the US looked at the effects of daily after-school sports classes over a school year. The children, of course, got fitter. Less predictably, their executive control improved. They became more adept at ignoring distractions, multitasking, and holding and manipulating information in their minds. And if that all sounds like hard work, you may not have to get out of breath to reap the attention-honing effects of exercise. Just 10 minutes of playful coordination skills, like bouncing two balls at the same time, improved the attention of a large group of German teenagers.

Improve your mental health Love it or hate it, bouts of physical activity can have potent effects on your mood. Even mice get it. Instead, recent evidence points to a pleasurable and pain-killing firing of the endocannabinoid system: How anxiety scrambles your brain and makes it hard to learn Read more What about yoga? Does it really help with stress? When anxiety levels rise, you tense up, your heart races and your attention narrows to a slit. Science increasingly backs this claim. For example, a study put participants through eight weeks of daily yoga and meditation practice. In parallel with self-reported stress-reduction, brain scans showed shrinkage of part of their amygdala, a deep-brain structure strongly implicated in processing stress, fear and anxiety. Exercise is also emerging as a promising way to overcome depression. Strikingly, exercise seemed as effective as antidepressant drugs and psychological treatments.

Enhance your creativity Thoreau, Nietzsche and many other creative types have claimed that walking gives wings to the imagination. Last year, psychologists gave this empirical support. Slowing cognitive decline The evidence that staying physically fit keeps your brain healthy into old age is especially compelling. Most concrete is the link between aerobic fitness and cognitive preservation. It pays to get used to regular exercise early, though. The protective effects are clearest before the cognitive signs of old age kick in. Nor is it all about your heart and lungs. Exercises to improve balance, coordination and agility made a clear impact on the brain structure and cognitive function of a large group of German elderly people. Twice weekly sessions of weightlifting can have a visible neurological impact. Dancing may also be restorative for ageing brains. Researchers are still teasing out the critical factors that make exercise such a potent brain tonic. Until recently, few believed this could happen in adult human brains. What you do with your body impinges on your mental faculties. Sitting still all day, every day, is dangerous. Find something you enjoy, then get up and do it. Ben Martynoga is a neuroscientist and science writer. He tweets at mountainogre. Get involved with the Use your head series by joining the discussion on useyourhead Topics.

Chapter 7 : Does Exercise Improve Concentration? | Healthfully

New research shows why physical exercise is essential to mental health. New research shows why physical exercise is essential to mental health. social isolation, poor diets, a focus on.

You might also like these other newsletters: Please enter a valid email address Sign up Oops! Please enter a valid email address Oops! Please select a newsletter We respect your privacy. Forty percent of all chronic diseases can be prevented through a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating a healthy diet and working out regularly. Yet Americans have become increasingly obese and sedentary. They believe that many people would exercise more and lose weight if they knew how to fit working out into their busy schedules. Personalizing Your Exercise Goals Burrton says the chance of starting and sticking to an exercise regime increases if people personalize their decisions. I have to be a good example so that I am believable and people will follow my lead. Never expect to lose 20 pounds in two weeks or even three. Set goals that are realistic with the effort and commitment that you can give to them, Burrton says. Also, make sure you have the resources available to achieve your goals. Post sticky notes where you will see them, reminding yourself of the benefits of exercise and sticking to your goals. Put it in writing. Keep a journal with your goals for the week along with your results. After working out, write down what you did and for how long. When you look at the numbers and see progress, it will encourage you to keep going. Think about what might get in the way of your going for a brisk walk or biking at least three times a week. Weather getting you down? Find a fitness center with child care or create a home exercise routine that you can do when the kids are napping or at school. Talk to a trainer. Making lifestyle changes is similar to remodeling your house, Burrton says.

Chapter 8 : Fitness Topics -

The researchers, led by Vicki Conn, PhD, RN, FAAN, associate dean for research and Potter-Brinton professor in the MU Sinclair School of Nursing, also concluded that rather than focus on why.

Chapter 9 : No motivation to exercise? Focus less on intensity, and more on happiness

Other hypotheses that have been proposed to explain the beneficial effects of physical activity on mental health include distraction, self-efficacy, and social interaction. 4 While structured group programs can be effective for individuals with serious mental illness, lifestyle changes that focus on the accumulation and increase of moderate.