Online Articles on Exercise and Depression:


Exercise and Depression

(Many studies have shown the benefits of exercise in overcoming depression. A list of benefits is provided, as well as some tips to help you get started.)

http://www.ahealthyme.com/topic/exdepression

Exercise and Depression

(Studies have shown that all forms of exercise, at all intensity levels, help reduce depression – but intense vigorous exercise helps the most. Tips are given for starting an exercise program to fight depression – even if you feel you can hardly even get out of bed.)


Depression and anxiety: Exercise eases symptoms

Depression symptoms often improve with exercise. Here are some realistic tips to help get you started and stay motivated

(The Mayo Clinic offers observations and recommendations for incorporating exercise into an anti-depression regime.)

http://hdlighthouse.org/see/diet/triad/exercise/duke.htm

Exercise Fights Depression:

Exercise May Match Drugs for Treating Major Depression

(A study performed at Duke University, directed by James Blumenthal, compared 3 groups of depressed patients. 1 group received a standard dose of Zoloft; 1 was put on a moderate exercise regimen; and the third group received both the Zoloft and the exercise program. The improvement in the 3 groups was comparable over 16 weeks; but the exercise group showed much more long-term progress.)
Study: Exercise Has Long-Lasting Effect on Depression :
Friday, Sept. 22, 2000, Duke University

(A follow-up study at Duke University, headed by James Blumenthal, showed exercise to be the form of intervention with the most long-lasting benefit. The 3 groups from the prior Duke study were evaluated again 6 months later. It was found in this time that 38% of the Prozac group had relapsed; 31% of the combination group had relapsed; but only 8% of the exercise group had relapsed. Blumenthal surmised that this difference was largely due to psychological factors – the exercisers knew that they alone were responsible for their improvement, and knew how to maintain it over time – whereas the 2 medication group remained dependent on an outside resource for success, which limited their sense of self-efficacy in comparison with the exercise-only group.)

Effect of Exercise on Reducing Major Depression Appears to Be Long-Lasting

(A more comprehensive review of this follow-up study at Duke University)

Depression: A Good Workout (Psychology Today)

It all comes down to lifestyle. Exercise may be especially critical for those with depression.

(Citing the Duke studies and others, Psychology Today affirms that exercise is helpful in fighting depression – as well as heart disease, which it often accompanies.)

Physical Exercise (Wikipedia)

(This comprehensive and well-referenced Wikipedia article reviews the benefits of exercise, especially for those suffering from various “diseases of civilization.” The articles notes that “Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the immune system, and helps prevent the "diseases of affluence" such as heart disease, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity. It also improves mental health, helps prevent depression, helps to promote or maintain positive self-esteem, and can even augment an individual's sex appeal or body image. Childhood obesity is a growing global concern and physical exercise may help decrease the effects of childhood obesity in developed countries.”)
An Exercise Prescription to Cure Depression

(A bad mood doesn’t have to be an impediment to exercise – it is THE REASON to exercise. This author suggests that when exercise therapy is prescribed, that the immediate behaviors and benefits are emphasized – “exercise 20 minutes today, and feel better now” rather than “exercise 5 times a week for the next year.”)

Exercise and Depression : How to Get Up and Get Moving

(Exercise helps depression. The research is clear, the recommendations are consistent. So – how do you get started? This article offers some great practical advice.)

Compiler’s Note: Many additional articles and books are available on this topic – articles represented here are just a small percentage of resources available. These were found by searching in Google with the search terms “Exercise and Depression”

Exercise provides many powerful benefits that help fight and prevent depression. These include:

- **Increase in endorphins**, the natural pleasure-inducing, pain-reducing brain chemicals – producing immediate improvement in mood and energy, even after short episodes of exercise.
- **Decrease in cortisol**, the stress hormone. Cortisol has a high correlation not just with depression, but also with anxiety, heart disease, obesity (especially the accumulation of visceral fat/belly fat), and other ailments. Reducing cortisol naturally through moderate exercise helps relieve and prevent all these conditions – simultaneously!
- **Reduction of body fat, and improved appearance**, resulting in improved self-confidence.
- **Increase in energy, appetite, and effective sleep** – all areas commonly affected by depression.
- **Increased exposure to sunlight, nature, fresh air, and association with other people** – all factors that have been shown to help relieve depression.
- **Reduced risk of heart disease, diabetis, arthritis, hypertension, obesity, and other ailments.**

All of these, and more, have been closely associated with depression. Reducing risk of one helps reduce risk of the others.

- **So – the lifestyle changes that can help prevent or reverse depression are the same changes that can improve general health and wellness. This can be a powerful component in a depression-fighting regime.**

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