

Benefits of winter exercise



During the winter months most of us start to feel fatigued and drawn to the idea of snuggling up until the cold days have passed. However, it is advisable to get active during those cold months, because not only can an exercise regime improve your health, but it can also go a long way in preventing the onset of several life-threatening conditions.

Strengthens your heart

Regular physical exercise raises your heart rate and reduces hardening of the arteries, a major cause of high blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. It lowers your resting heart rate by allowing your heart to pump more blood per beat, which means your heart will not be working as hard when you are at rest. It also lowers or helps control your blood pressure.

Reduces risk of diabetes

It increases insulin sensitivity to protect against type-2 diabetes (adult-onset diabetes) and reduces your risk of developing colon cancer and breast cancer. It also helps to relieve and prevent migraine attacks, symptoms of PMS and reduces the likelihood of a difficult menopause.

It makes your lungs more efficient

Exercise improves your body's ability to take in oxygen and deliver it to your working muscles. This is generally regarded as the best measure of your physical fitness level. Aerobic exercise improves blood flow and oxygenates the skin so that it maintains a healthy glow, stays firmer and doesn't age as fast. And the better you look the better you feel.

Stronger muscles and bones

Exercise can help increase muscular strength and endurance. It improves stamina and your ability to do continuous work. It increases or maintains your bone mineral density to prevent osteoporosis and can ease or eliminates the pain of arthritis. It provides protection against injury and maintains or improves joint integrity. It improves your balance and coordination, which means you are less likely to have an accident and injure yourself. And if you have an accident, a fitter body has a better capacity to heal.

Reduces cholesterol

Exercise increases levels of HDL, good cholesterol and reduces circulating levels of triglycerides, the amount of free fatty acid found in the blood.

It improves your mental health

Regular exercise combats stress and anxiety. It decreases the likelihood that you will suffer from depression or insomnia and improves your overall quality of life. Feeling fitter boosts your self-esteem and confidence. It teaches you about motivation, setting goals and commitment and it can help your efforts to stop smoking, too. Exercise gives you time to think and come up with new ideas. In studies, people who did aerobics exercise scored much higher on creative tests than people who watched a video. And exercise is a good outlet for anger, so you are likely to be calmer in your day to day life.

And it has social benefits too

The fitter you are, the broader your sporting options will be. You can take up a range of challenging activities from hill walking to parachuting and conquering new challenges will give you an enormous sense of achievement. Taking up new activities will inevitably bring you into contact with new people and working out or playing sports with friends transforms the experience into a social event.

Experts recommend that healthy people do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week. However, remember to always speak to your doctor before starting an exercise programme.

