

# The Benefits of EXERCISE



A balanced diet is essential for a happy and healthy life, but without regular exercise no amount of kale or kidney beans will make up for a lack of locomotion. Just like certain foods protect us from heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, regular physical activity has its own list of health enhancement. Without exercise, it's hard to reach your full physical and mental potential and achieve overall well-being.

Controls weight

Lowers blood pressure and arterial stiffness

Enhances quality of sleep

Delays loss of muscle mass and strength

Improves balance and coordination

Improves flexibility

Improves digestion transit

Reduces osteoporosis

Reduces joint stress and back pain

Decreases incidence of heart disease

Reduces existing myocardial damage  
(Translation: it's never too late to start exercising)

Decreases inflammation

Improves immune function

Decreases liver steatosis and fatty liver disease

Improves insulin sensitivity and reduced risk of type 2 diabetes

Increases energy and reduces risk of depression, anxiety, and stress

Improves cognitive function

**“The body heals eight times faster when you exercise regularly.”**  
- Kris Carr

It's important to keep it in mind when it comes to exercise – how much, and which types, will benefit you most? Some people do better with more gentle, centering exercises, while others require vigorous activity. Experiment with walking, running, biking, swimming, yoga, Pilates, dancing, and simple strength exercises like planks and squats – your options are endless. When you find what works for you, you'll be more likely to do it consistently and reap the benefits, including increased energy, improved mental clarity, optimal digestive health, and enhanced mood.

Exercise also produces the feel good hormone serotonin, which has an uplifting effect on your entire body. Discover what you love, and stick with it.

So what's the secret to a successful and consistent exercise routine? Accountability! Whether you rely on a friend, family member,

trainer, or simply your own willpower to keep you in check, having a goal system to track your progress is crucial. Keep a note of your exercises, and check in with yourself once a week. Don't forget to honor your great work with self-care – a massage, long walk, or watching your favorite TV show guilt-free during your rest day.

Acknowledge all the types of exercise you do. Don't feel like yoga is a work-out? Your body says differently. Feel like you need to run 10 miles to make it count? Actually, less than a mile in, your endorphins are already soaring. Once you find what works for you, and start noticing all the benefits you're gaining, exercise will be like second nature and your body will thank you for it.