

Feel Down? Get Up—Emotional Benefits of Exercise

Research has shown that the benefits of exercise go beyond just physical wellbeing. Exercise helps support emotional and mental health. So next time you're feeling down, anxious, or stressed, try to get up and start moving!

Physical activity can help:

- Reduce feelings of depression and stress, while improving your mood and overall emotional well-being.
- Increase your energy level.
- Improve sleep.
- Empower you to feel more in control.

In addition, exercise and physical activity may possibly improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function, such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity, and ignore irrelevant information.

Exercise ideas to help you lift your mood:

- **Walking, bicycling, or dancing.** Endurance activities increase your breathing, get your heart pumping, and also boost chemicals in your body that may improve mood.
- **Yoga.** A mind and body practice that typically combines physical postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation.
- **Tai Chi.** A “moving meditation” that involves shifting the body slowly, gently, and precisely, while breathing deeply.
- **Activities you enjoy.** Whether it's gardening, playing tennis, kicking around a soccer ball with your grandchildren, or something else, choose an activity you want to do, not have to do.



Quick Tip

Exercise with a friend and get the added benefit of emotional support.

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- Read more tips about the benefits of exercise and physical activity
- Print useful tools.
- Order a free exercise guide or DVD.
- Share your exercise story.

