

Can exercise really boost my mood?

The simple answer – **YES!** Working out can definitely help you relax, feel better, and decrease pain. Research on anxiety, depression and exercise has long shown the psychological and physical benefits of exercise are huge!

Not only can sweating and panting help to boost your mood, but it can prevent and improve a number of health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes and arthritis. This happens in a number of ways, which may include: **releasing feel-good brain chemicals** (endorphins and dopamine) that may decrease depression and decrease pain (endorphins are more powerful than morphine), **reducing immune system chemicals** that can worsen depression and anxiety, **increasing body temperature**, which may have calming and relaxing effects.

Exercise also enhances mood with **improved confidence** (meeting exercise goals can boost self-esteem and confidence), **taking your mind off negative thoughts and worry** that may feed anxiety and depression, getting **more social interaction**, and incorporating **positive coping skills** instead of turning to food, alcohol or drugs to feel better.

Research also shows that engaging in regular physical activity decreases health care costs. With today's economic pressures, exercise is a low-cost way for people to cope with stress and put money back into their own pocket books and the economy.

Incorporate regular exercise into your routine and enjoy the many benefits that come along with it. And when you add regular chiropractic care, sufficient sleep and a healthy diet you have all the ingredients of a lifestyle that supports optimal wellness.

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Urbandale Living Magazine
February 2010