

## Healthy Lifestyle

### The benefits of exercise on mental health

Besides the physical effects that exercise has on the body including lowering blood pressure, improving cardiovascular fitness, promoting weight loss and preventing chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, obesity and osteoporosis, many research studies have shown that exercise has a positive effect on mental health as well.

#### Benefits of Exercise on Mental Health:

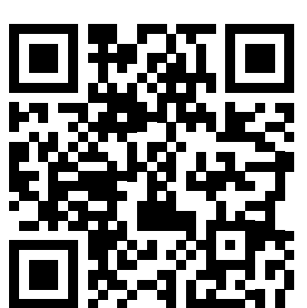
- Decreases symptoms of depression, anxiety & stress
- Improves fitness, physical function, cognitive function & behaviour in elderly with cognitive impairment & dementia
- Improves subjective wellbeing and mood
- Increases engagement with treatment
- Improves sleep quality
- Reduces cravings and withdrawal in substance use disorder and alcohol addiction
- Improves self esteem
- Improves quality of life
- Decreases social isolation

### How does exercise improve mental health?

Increases in body temperature experienced during exercise can improve mood and reduce symptoms of anxiety. More specifically, an increase in the temperature of certain regions of the brain, such as the brain stem, may influence muscle tension and feelings of relaxation.

### What kind of exercise helps mental health?

Aerobic/cardio-respiratory exercise (e.g. brisk walking, cycling, running) at moderate intensity can assist in reducing depression and increasing the response to treatment among elderly patients with Alzheimer's disease or neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia. People with mood disorders will benefit from either supervised, individual or group aerobic exercise – this exercise is generally at a low to moderate intensity, for 30–40 minutes, 3 to 4 times a week. Just 20–40 minutes of cardiovascular exercise can reduce anxiety and improve mood for several hours - people suffering from acute anxiety seem to respond better than those suffering from chronic (long-term) anxiety.



#### 24/7 Support Available:

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