

## Online Articles on Exercise and Depression:



<http://www.depression-guide.com/depression-and-exercise.htm>

### **Exercise and Depression**

(Many studies have shown the benefits of exercise in overcoming depression. A list of benefits is provided, as well as some tips to help you get started.)

-----



<http://www.ahealthyme.com/topic/exdepression>

### **Exercise and Depression**

(Studies have shown that all forms of exercise, at all intensity levels, help reduce depression – but intense vigorous exercise helps the most. Tips are given for starting an exercise program to fight depression – even if you feel you can hardly even get out of bed.)

-----



<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/depression-and-exercise/MH00043>

### **Depression and anxiety: Exercise eases symptoms**

*Depression symptoms often improve with exercise. Here are some realistic tips to help get you started and stay motivated*

(The Mayo Clinic offers observations and recommendations for incorporating exercise into an anti-depression regime.)

-----

<http://hdlighthouse.org/see/diet/triad/exercise/duke.htm>



### **Exercise Fights Depression :**

*Exercise May Match Drugs for Treating Major Depression*

(A study performed at Duke University, directed by James Blumenthal, compared 3 groups of depressed patients. 1 group received a standard dose of Zoloft; 1 was put on a moderate exercise regimen; and the third group received both the Zoloft and the exercise program. The improvement in the 3 groups was comparable over 16 weeks; but the exercise group showed much more long-term progress. )

-----



<http://news.duke.edu/2000/09/exercise922.html>

## **Study: Exercise Has Long-Lasting Effect on Depression : Friday, Sept. 22, 2000, Duke University**

(A follow-up study at Duke University, headed by James Blumenthal, showed exercise to be the form of intervention with the most long-lasting benefit. The 3 groups from the prior Duke study were evaluated again 6 months later. It was found in this time that 38% of the Prozac group had relapsed; 31% of the combination group had relapsed; but only 8% of the exercise group had relapsed. Blumenthal surmised that this difference was largely due to psychological factors – the exercisers knew that they alone were responsible for their improvement, and knew how to maintain it over time – whereas the 2 medication group remained dependent on an outside resource for success, which limited their sense of self-efficacy in comparison with the exercise-only group.)



[http://www.dukehealth.org/health\\_library/news/119](http://www.dukehealth.org/health_library/news/119)

## **Effect of Exercise on Reducing Major Depression Appears to Be Long-Lasting**

(A more comprehensive review of this follow-up study at Duke University)

-----



<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200405/depression-good-workout>

## **Depression: A Good Workout (Psychology Today)** *It all comes down to lifestyle. Exercise may be especially critical for those with depression.*

(Citing the Duke studies and others, Psychology Today affirms that exercise is helpful in fighting depression – as well as heart disease, which it often accompanies.)

-----



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical\\_exercise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical_exercise)

## **Physical Exercise (Wikipedia)**

(This comprehensive and well-referenced Wikipedia article reviews the benefits of exercise, especially for those suffering from various “diseases of civilization.” The article notes that “Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the [immune system](#), and helps prevent the “[diseases of affluence](#)” such as [heart disease](#), [cardiovascular disease](#), [Type 2 diabetes](#) and [obesity](#).<sup>[1][2]</sup> It also improves mental health, helps prevent depression, helps to promote or maintain positive self-esteem, and can even augment an individual's sex appeal or body image<sup>[3]</sup> [Childhood obesity](#) is a growing global concern<sup>[4]</sup> and physical exercise may help decrease the effects of childhood obesity in developed countries.”

-----  
 <http://www.healthhabits.ca/tag/depression/>

## An Exercise Prescription to Cure Depression

(A bad mood doesn't have to be an impediment to exercise – it is THE REASON to exercise. This author suggests that when exercise therapy is prescribed, that the immediate behaviors and benefits are emphasized – “exercise 20 minutes today, and feel better now” rather than “exercise 5 times a week for the next year.”)

-----  
 <http://exercise.about.com/cs/exercisehealth/a/depression.htm>

## Exercise and Depression : How to Get Up and Get Moving

(Exercise helps depression. The research is clear, the recommendations are consistent. So – how do you get started? This article offers some great practical advice.)

-----  
 **Compiler's Note:** *Many additional articles and books are available on this topic – articles represented here are just a small percentage of resources available. These were found by searching in Google with the search terms “Exercise and Depression”*

 **Exercise provides many powerful benefits that help fight and prevent depression.** These include:

- **Increase in endorphins**, the natural pleasure-inducing, pain-reducing brain chemicals – producing immediate improvement in mood and energy, even after short episodes of exercise.
- **Decrease in cortisol**, the stress hormone. Cortisol has a high correlation not just with depression, but also with anxiety, heart disease, obesity (especially the accumulation of visceral fat/belly fat), and other ailments. Reducing cortisol naturally through moderate exercise helps relieve and prevent all these conditions – simultaneously!
- **Reduction of body fat, and improved appearance**, resulting in improved self-confidence.
- **Increase in energy, appetite, and effective sleep** – all areas commonly affected by depression.
- **Increased exposure to sunlight, nature, fresh air, and association with other people** – all factors that have been shown to help relieve depression.
- **Reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, obesity, and other ailments.** All of these, and more, have been closely associated with depression. Reducing risk of one helps reduce risk of the others.

 - ***So – the lifestyle changes that can help prevent or reverse depression are the same changes that can improve general health and wellness. This can be a powerful component in a depression-fighting regime.***

Compiled by Carrie Maxwell Wrigley, LCSW, for <http://morninglightcounseling.org/>