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Good Health

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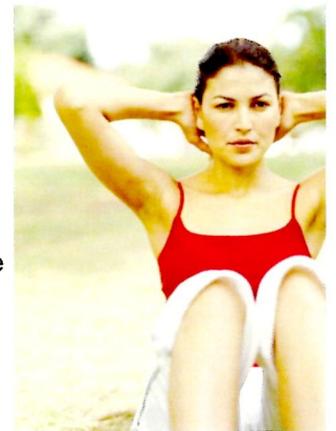
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The Key to Good Health

By Leslie Aldaz

Exercise. It is a word we all know, although some dread the meaning. There are different forms of it, and a million ways to do it. It ranges from simple to rigorous, depending on the person, but can be done by anyone, anytime, and anywhere. It is an activity we should all bring into our lives to help us enjoy life to the fullest by helping us with our health, helping us live longer and more efficiently, and making us feel better about ourselves.

Everyone knows that exercising is healthy, but do we really know how it helps our health? One of the main ways it keeps us healthy, is by making our heart stronger. When we exercise regularly, we strengthen our “cardiovascular function and helps prevent or delay the onset of heart disease,” as well as strokes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol (Crawford). A better cardiovascular function also means more efficient lungs, this being because the heart pumps harder while exercising and trying to deliver blood to the muscles, forcing the lungs to be more efficient with delivering oxygen. It works just as a car does: the engine is more efficient if it’s driven more. If the car just sits in the garage, the engine might need some work later on. Also, do not forget the organ that is making the heart and lungs function properly. Studies show that exercise is also good for the brain, too. Carson Boddick tells us in the article “How Does Exercise Help Your Brain?”, “the brain is improved by exercise is the result of stimulation of the systems in your brain that impact how you pay attention. It stimulates the frontal cortex, a primary location required for analytical thinking and filtering of thoughts.” Not only does it help learning ability and our memory, but also helps reduce the risk of different forms of dementia. For example, Alzheimer’s along with “anxiety and depression by bringing more oxygen to the brain and cells” (Cooke).



Exercise does not only help reduce the risk of illnesses, but also helps people naturally live longer. If people make the healthy choice of exercising, they help fight off health problems before they occur. Oscar H. Franco of the Erasmus M.C. University Medical Center in the Netherlands found that “those who had moderate-to-high levels of activity had a life expectancy of up to four years longer than those who led a sedentary lifestyle” (Cooke). It also strengthens muscles, which keeps people mobile and independent longer. Along with exercise comes healthy eating, which many start to do once they begin to exercise. People start to pick healthier choices in food, because they need certain foods to help keep them going. If someone planned to run two miles a day, it would not be the smartest choice to eat donuts all day long. This just be looked at just as school work, people give their best work to get the best result. The human body needs carbohydrates to make energy, and protein to form muscle. Some people form strict diets, while others follow portion size and try sticking to the food pyramid. Either way, exercising is important to eating well for a longer life span.

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(cont. from page 4)

Along with living longer, exercise helps people enjoy life to the fullest in multiple ways. One of the ways, is that it can help improve the way people think of themselves and their esteem. As Bethany Kochan explains in her article "How Does Exercise Affect Your Self-Esteem?" "Self-esteem refers to how well you prize, value, approve or like yourself. Positive feelings are often associated with a more positive outlook and less depression or anxiety. Body image can relate to self-esteem in that it can be positive or negative. It refers to how you view your own body and what feelings are associated with your personal view." Exercise is almost like everything else in the world, it's a personal goal that one tries to overcome to better him or herself. Once people



reach their goal, they feel accomplished and better about their self-esteem. This gives them more confidence, not only in their body, but also socially, making them more outgoing. Another way it can help people, is by reducing stress, it can help them forget about their problems, or channel their aggression in a healthy way. Letting out stress, helps people to better enjoy their day. Also, it allows them to feel less worried at night, letting their bodies rest and recuperate for the next day.

So why not exercise to live a healthier, happier, and longer life? Any kind of exercise is better than none, and anyone can start at any time. The benefits of exercising can improve a person's life, not only physically, but also mentally. So we should take that thirty minute walk twice a week, take the stairs at work, run a mile or two, and don't be afraid of getting a little sweaty. That little bit of salty sweat can be the factor of living four more years or just living life to the fullest.

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