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CROSSROADS

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Physical Therapy/Exercise for Mental Health



Regular exercise can have a profoundly positive impact on depression, anxiety, ADHD, and more. Exercise relieves stress, improves memory, helps you sleep better, and boosts your overall mood. Research indicates that modest amounts of exercise can make a difference. No matter your age or fitness level, you can learn to use exercise as a powerful tool to feel better.

Exercise is influential in combating depression. Most importantly, it promotes changes in the brain, including neural growth, reduced inflammation, and new activity patterns that promote feelings of calm and well-being. It also releases endorphins, powerful chemicals in your brain that energize your spirits and make you feel good. Finally, exercise can also serve as a distraction, allowing you to find some quiet time to break out of the cycle of negative thoughts that feed depression. Physical activity immediately boosts the brain's dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin levels—all of which affect focus and attention.

Researchers found that participants who benefited most in terms of mental health were those who exercised for 30–60 minutes three to five times per week. From the Lancet, August, 2018, “exercising for 45 minutes three to five times a week was associated with the biggest benefits.”

Known benefits of exercise:

- ◉ Decreased risk of chronic disease including: hypertension, diabetes, stroke, heart attack, cholesterol
- ◉ Increased muscle strength
- ◉ Increased bone density
- ◉ Improved sleep
- ◉ Increased energy, elevated mood
- ◉ Decreased anxiety, depression
- ◉ Increased self esteem

Chronic and/or nagging pain can exacerbate mental health issues. Need help getting started on an exercise program? Or maybe you have an existing injury to your shoulder, knee, ankle, neck or back and need the guidance of a physical therapist to get you moving safely in the right direction.

Contact LaRae at Crossroads Physical Therapy to get you started on your fitness journey to improved health.

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