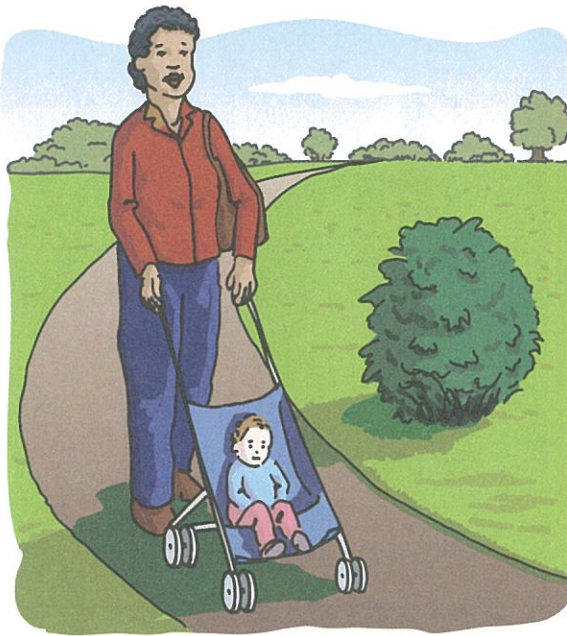


EXERCISE AND DEPRESSION: 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1. Depression is a medical illness.

- ✓ It can cause major feelings of sadness that will not go away.
- ✓ In addition to affecting your mood, it may cause physical symptoms.
- ✓ You may feel sore and achy or overtired.
- ✓ It can change your sleeping patterns.

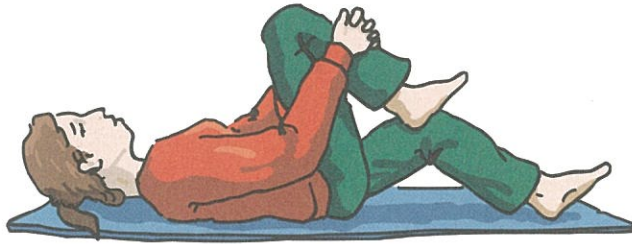


2. Exercise can help.

- ✓ Studies show that for some people, exercise can help relieve symptoms of depression.
- ✓ For others, regular exercise may be part of a treatment plan that also includes talk therapy and medication.

3. Exercise benefits both the body and the mind.

- ✓ When you exercise, your body releases chemicals that affect your mood and make you feel good.
- ✓ Exercise reduces stress.
- ✓ It can help you sleep better.
- ✓ Exercise may give you more energy.



4. Exercise can help you feel better about yourself.

- ✓ Reaching exercise goals may boost your self-confidence.
- ✓ When you exercise regularly, you may notice changes in the way you look. Looking your best can help you feel good about yourself.
- ✓ Use exercise as a break from sad thoughts or feelings.

5. Exercise gets you out and about.

- ✓ Depression can lead to isolation. This can make feelings of sadness and loneliness even worse.
- ✓ A walk around your neighborhood or going to a class, for example, will give you a chance to be around others. Try walking with a friend.

6. Everybody needs a healthy way to cope with feelings.

- ✓ Some people turn to unhealthy habits such as overeating or alcohol when they feel down. But these unhealthy habits often make people feel worse.
- ✓ Exercise is a healthier way to cope.



7. Even small amounts of exercise help.

- ✓ Work up to at least 30 minutes on most days for the best long-term results.
- ✓ Even as little as 10 minutes of exercise may boost your mood in the short term.

8. Getting started may seem hard, but you can do it!

- ✓ If you suffer from depression, there may be days when you feel like you cannot even get out of bed. Exercise may seem too hard.
- ✓ Tell yourself to try it for only 10 minutes. Chances are you will start to feel better and want to do more.
- ✓ Think of exercise as part of your treatment plan. Just like medication and talk therapy, exercise can help you get better.

9. **Pick an activity you are likely to do.**

- ✓ You do not have to join a gym or buy expensive equipment.
- ✓ Walking is a great way to get started. Or try swimming, biking or another activity that you may enjoy.



10. **Talk to your health care provider.**

- ✓ If you have any health problems, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, always check with your health care provider before starting a new exercise program.
- ✓ Exercise may not take the place of talk therapy or medication. But it can be a helpful part of treating depression and helping you feel better.

Exercise can help you feel better if you are depressed. It is a healthy way to cope when you feel sad and overwhelmed. Read the tips inside and remember, *you can do it*. For more information on depression, talk with your health care provider.

This pamphlet is not a substitute for medical care. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with a health care provider.

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