

## The Importance of Fitness

[Fitness]

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What are the benefits of fitness? Is it necessary to exercise? I am sure millions of people have asked these questions. My sister and I were active children who always loved to play outside. I could run, jump and climb trees faster than the neighborhood kids could climb. My mother would always say to my sister's and me, channel your energy into something positive and so we I did. Because I was very quick and agile, I loved to play all types of sports. I taught myself how to play all of my sports including gymnastics. I remember those youthful days as if it was just yesterday watching the 1976 Olympic Games. Nadia Comaneci at the age of 14 became the first gymnast in Olympic history to be awarded the perfect score of 10.0. I wanted to be just like her and so, I started teaching myself in my backyard without any mats or cushions how to do back summersaults with and without hands. I fell a few times on top of my head, but got right back up to try again. So instead, I focused and became a track and field athlete.

Now by no means will I encourage any of you to go into the back yard and do a summersault, I cannot even do these tricks any longer. However, I can encourage all of us to do some type of exercise 30 to 45 minutes a day. Get up and get moving! Physical activity stimulates chemicals (Serotonin, dopamine) in the brain that leave you feeling happy and relaxed. Just a 30 to 45-minute brisk walk is very beneficial for the body. One of the most common mental benefits of exercising is relieving of stress. Working up a sweat can help manage physical and mental stress. It can also make you feel better about your appearance and yourself when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem. Studies suggest that just by improving in

your fitness, for example running a faster mile or increasing in your weight-training program can improve self-esteem and body image.

Please be advised that we do not just exercise for the purpose of weight loss but for the overall wellbeing of a good healthy life. It is important to exercise to improve the quality of life and possibly lower the risk of premature death. Exercising helps reduce specific types of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, hypertension and cholesterol. Research has indicated that regular exercising can not only improve your heart but also do everything from cut cancer, the risk of strokes as well as aid in building stronger muscles and bones to encourage better brain health and digestion. Nevertheless, you must also consider working on your food selections as well because you need more than exercising.

In 2010 a study from the University of California, San Francisco concluded that stressed out women who exercised regularly on average of 45 minutes three days a week had cells that showed fewer signs of aging as compared to women stressed who did not exercise regularly. Even just 10 minutes of daily activity can help to improve one's mood, memory and learning.

Another benefit of exercising is the opportunity to get sunlight when the weather is nice. We are all aware that exposure to sunlight produces vitamin D in your body, but did you realize the ground beneath your feet produces an electrical stimulus that is also beneficial. Remember we are creatures from the earth and ashes -to -ashes and dust- to -dust. The next time you are working-out outside take your shoes off and walk for a few minutes in the grass. You should notice tingling warmth radiating from your feet and a

greater sense of feel good sensation. These are signs that you are tapping into the Earth's energy.

Every morning, I wake up and just stretch my body for about 5 minutes then I do my little personal rituals to start my day. Stretch your body as you brush your teeth, as you cook breakfast or even as you put on your clothes. While at work, if you work in the office, get up and walk around for 5 minutes each hour. After you, arrive back home walk around in your house or apartment for 10 minutes while you are watching your favorite program. Instead of sitting and watching television walk and watch. Lastly, before you go to bed at night, stretch your body for 5 minutes. If you work for 8 hours in the day and you walk for 5 minutes each hour you will have walked for 40 minutes. The point is to make sure you move and do something. Remember Health is Wealth!