



# Exercise and Mental Health

“In a Nutshell”

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**Exercise has many benefits, not only for your physical but also your mental health.**

**In your brain, exercise stimulates chemicals that improve your mood and the parts of the brain responsible for memory and learning.**



## Benefits of exercise

- Exercise can make you feel better, even if you're feeling okay.
- It can reduce the risk of illnesses like heart and lung disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity,
- Exercise also helps you to lose weight if you want to, which is good for your health overall and might be good for your self-esteem.

## Mental health benefits of exercise

- Exercise makes you feel good because it releases chemicals like endorphins and serotonin that improve your mood. It can also get you out in the world and put you in touch with other people.
- If you exercise regularly, it can reduce your stress and symptoms of mental health conditions like depression and anxiety, and help with recovery from mental health issues.
- Exercise also helps improve your sleep, which is important in many ways.

## Exercise and the mind

- ✓ Exercise pumps blood to the brain, which should make you think more clearly.
- ✓ It increases the size of the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for memory.
- ✓ It also increases the connections between the nerve cells in the brain. This improves your memory

## How much exercise do you need?

Government guidelines recommend adults do at least 30 minutes of moderate to intensive physical activity on most or all days of the week. You can make up 30 minutes over the day by combining shorter 10 to 15-minute sessions.

Practising mindfulness\* while doing exercise also reduces your stress and improves your mental health.

You may struggle finding motivation, or staying motivated, for exercise. Think about ways you can make exercise part of your daily routine and lifestyle.....Choose something you enjoy, and ask your friends or family to help motivate you and to keep you on track.

e.g. if you own a dog, take them for walks in your local area.

Combine your exercise routine with a healthy diet to boost your motivation and energy for exercise.

Please go to <https://www.noss.uk.com> for other support documents for you to download including *Mindfulness\**, *Sleep*, *Hydration*