

Love Your Heart: Work It Out

An inactive lifestyle is one of the top risk factors for heart disease. Fortunately, it's a risk factor that you can do something about. Regular exercise, especially aerobic (cardio) exercise such as brisk walking, running, biking, and swimming strengthens your heart and decreases your risk of heart disease. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity **or** 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity every week, 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week is a great way to reach this goal. Get up and get moving to show your heart some love!

Aerobic Exercise Benefits:

1. Keep excess pounds at bay

Combined with a healthy diet, aerobic exercise helps you lose weight.

2. Increase your stamina

Aerobic exercise may make you tired in the short term. But over the long term, you'll enjoy increased stamina and reduced fatigue.

3. Ward off viral illnesses

Aerobic exercise activates your immune system and helps prevent you viral illnesses, such as colds and flu.

4. Reduce your health risks

Aerobic exercise reduces the risk of many conditions, including obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, stroke, osteoporosis, and certain types of cancer.

5. Manage chronic conditions

Aerobic exercise helps lower high blood pressure and control blood sugar.

6. Strengthen your heart

A stronger heart doesn't need to beat as fast. A stronger heart also pumps blood more efficiently, which improves blood flow to all parts of your body.

7. Keep your arteries clear

Aerobic exercise boosts your high-density lipoprotein (HDL or "good") cholesterol and lowers your low-density lipoprotein (LDL or "bad") cholesterol. The potential result? Less buildup of plaques in your arteries.

8. Boost your mood

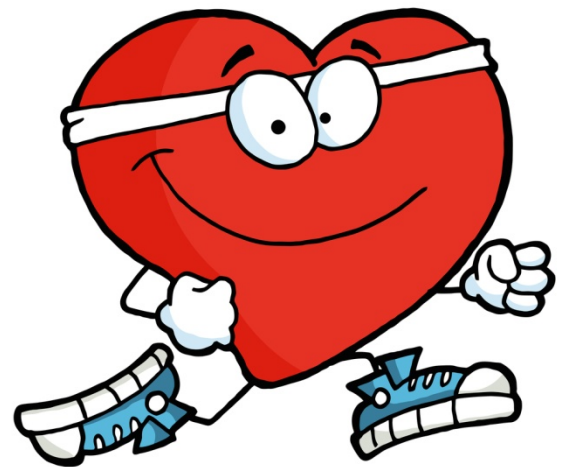
Aerobic exercise can ease the gloominess of depression, reduce the tension associated with anxiety and promote relaxation.

9. Stay active and independent as you age

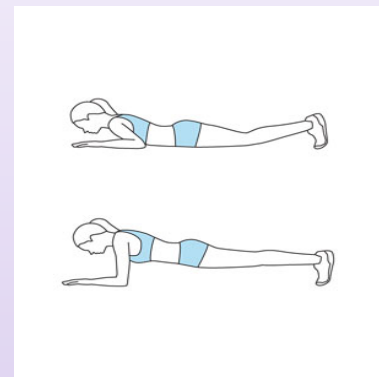
Aerobic exercise keeps your muscles strong, which can help you maintain mobility as you get older. Aerobic exercise also keeps your mind sharp. At least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise three days a week seems to reduce cognitive decline in older adults.

10. Live longer

Studies show that people who participate in regular aerobic exercise live longer than those who don't exercise regularly.



Weekly Challenge: Start with a 10 second plank. Add 5-10 seconds every day to your plank time. Work your way up to a 60 second plank.



Plank form: Start laying on stomach with toes tucked, forearms flat on the ground with elbows close to your side. Lift chest, hips, and thighs off the ground and engage abs. Hold plank and maintain a straight, strong line in this position. Don't hold your breath, focus on full inhales and exhales.

