

COVID-19 and Exercise Facts

Keep moving!

Part of COVID weight gain is related to people being more sedentary as they work from home, visit friends and families through a screen, and binge on Netflix every night. Gyms being closed and fear of being in crowded parks may also keep people inside. But regular physical activity should carry on if possible.

Mental health benefits

In addition to improving your waistline, it's well known that exercise is good for our mental health. A large cross sectional study published in Lancet Psychiatry analyzed adults over the age of 18 and their "mental health burden" with or without exercise. Those who exercised reported fewer days of poor mental health with largest associations seen with team sports, cycling, aerobic and gym activities.

Easy Ways to Move More:

1. Put on your shoes and **walk** out your front door. Go around your block a few times or drive to a park and hit some trails. Don't forget the benefits of vitamin D, which also reduce the risk of COVID.
2. Dust off your **bike**. Take advantage of the cooler weather this fall and go for a spin. Bike shortages have been experienced but you may find a bike at a used sports shop or thrift store.
3. Try **pickle ball**. This sport from the 60's is tennis meets ping pong. Set on a smaller court, you and a friend can be physically distanced, but social.
4. Use some free **weights** during your favorite show. While you're killing time watching Netflix, get some weights out and do some curls.
5. Download **exercise videos** on your phone or tablet. If you're strapped for cash or can't get to your gym, get your move on at home. Apps like Sworkit, Imuscle Home, 7-minute workout and more are FREE!

You've got nothing to lose. Or do you?

About belly fat...

Visceral adiposity is the fat around your midsection in the abdominal cavity. Even without weight loss, exercise reduces visceral adiposity by over 6%.

Of course if you add a health diet and reduce calories then the combination of diet and exercise will reduce weight even more.

Visceral adiposity is an important predictor of morbidity and mortality, so the less you have, the better.

Immunity

If you're not convinced that exercise can help during this pandemic, remember that it also boosts immunity. Cardiorespiratory activity such as walking, biking, hiking, rowing and running helps mobilize millions of lymphocytes to fight COVID. It may also reduce the severity of the disease in some people. If you've had COVID already, talk with your doctor about resuming exercise. 4