

Inova TobaccoNET

The Benefits of Physical Activity

An easy and relatively risk-free form of exercise is walking. When done at a brisk pace, walking will increase your aerobic fitness level. Listed below are the benefits of aerobic exercise:

PHYSICAL BENEFITS:

- Improves functioning of the lung and circulatory system, thereby facilitating the transportation of nutrients and oxygen.
- Increases elasticity of the lungs.
- Strengthens the heart muscle.
- Reduces pulse rate, indicating the heart is working more efficiently.
- Increases muscle mass, metabolism and endurance.
- Decreases low density lipoprotein (associated with heart disease), and increases high-density lipoprotein (protective against heart disease).
- Slows the aging process.
- Decreases the chances of acquiring adult onset diabetes. The pancreas does not have to produce as much insulin for people who exercise regularly because physical activity increases the sensitivity of muscle and other tissues to insulin.
- Helps prevent colon cancer by helping to expedite food through the digestive system, leaving less time for carcinogens to remain in contact with the lining of the colon.
- Increases bone density, warding off osteoporosis.
- Improves the quality of sleep. A person who is physically fit drops into deeper levels of sleep quickly, therefore feeling more rested with less sleep.
- Tones and strengthens muscles which increases metabolic rate.



PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS:

- Improves self-esteem.
- Decreases feelings of depression and anxiety.
- Increases feelings of confidence, power and self-respect.
- Increases ability to manage stress.