

Does Exercise Improve Mental Health in College Students?

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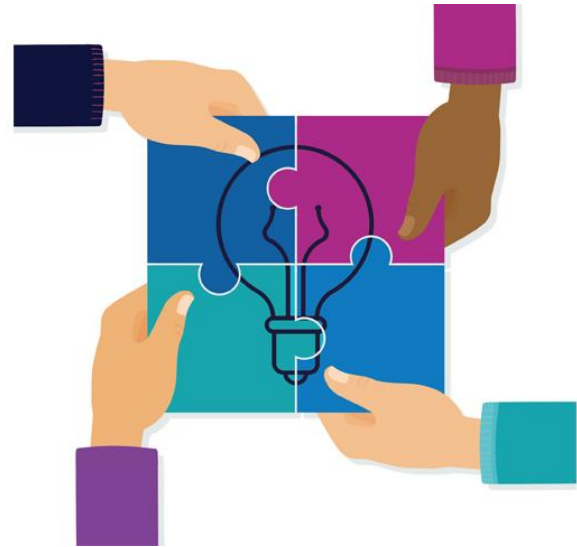


Did You Know?

- One in four young adults (18-24) live with mental illness
 - Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15 to 29-year-olds
 - People with depression are at higher risk for chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, and diabetes
 - 40 percent of college students experienced more than the average amount of stress in the past year
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What is Mental Health?

The WHO defines mental health as “a state of well being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”



Common Mental Health Disorders

Depression- a mood disorder that negatively affects the way a person feels and acts. It causes feelings of sadness and a lack of interest in activities that lasts longer than two weeks.

Generalized anxiety disorder- a disorder that involves “persistent and excessive worry that interferes with daily activities.” Physical symptoms are often accompanied by this such as fatigue, insomnia, restlessness, and feelings of tension.

PICOT Question

How does exercise 3 times per week improve the mental health and sleep of college students age 18-24?

Benefits of exercise

- A session of moderate-to-vigorous physical exercise reduces short-term feelings of anxiety right after the workout
- Participating in moderate-to-vigorous exercise over long durations reduces symptoms of anxiety
- Engaging in regular physical activity reduces the risk of developing depression in adults and can improve many of the symptoms experienced by people with depression.




What is exercise?

- What is considered exercise? Any physical activity that increases heart rate
 - Perceived exertion: how hard you feel your body is working
 - Based on physical sensations experienced during physical activity including increased heart rate, increased respirations, increased sweating, and muscle fatigue



Types of exercise

- Yoga
 - Shown to reduce depression scores
 - Modulates stress response systems by reducing perceived stress and anxiety
 - Is beneficial in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), a type of anxiety
 - Weight-lifting
 - Aerobic exercise
 - Includes aquatic therapy, brisk walking, hiking, swimming laps
 - 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate intensity (brisk walking), or
 - 1 hour and 15 minutes a week of vigorous intensity (jogging), or
 - A mixture of both (1 minute of vigorous intensity is about the same as 2 minutes of moderate intensity)
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Sleep and Mental Health

- Lack of sleep (less than 7 hours), has been shown to affect the mental health of a person negatively. It can cause or worsen depression, hallucinations, paranoia, and other types of symptoms related to mental health.
- Too much sleep (more than 9 hours) can also be an issue and be correlated to negative mental health.
- Being around noisy environments or heavy traffic-prone areas is correlated to negative mental health issues also.



Ways to Improve Sleep and Mental Health

- Get outside and exercise in the sunlight.
 - Studies have shown that people who go outside and exercise get better sleep and have better mental health than those who do not participate in these activities.
- Limit phone usage especially 1-2 hours before sleep time.
 - Studies have shown correlation between high phone usage and mental health disorders and low sleep quality.



Limitations to exercise

- The CDC recommends a variety of activities to keep individuals challenged with new exercises.
 - It is recommended to have at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity a week
- Individuals may feel that they are limited physically and mentally to exercising; these reasons can include:
 - Lack of time, social influences, lack of energy, lack of willpower, fear of injury, lack of skill and lack of resources
- There are many ways to overcome these issues
 - Set a schedule, workout with a friend/trainer, look up online workouts, find the right gym for you, find a gym that is not too expensive, ignore people who discourage you due to your body type or health



**MYTH: “But
people with
health issues
don’t belong in
the gym...”**

TRUTH: Exercise is important for any individual. Mild to vigorous exercise is recommended whether you are a healthy adult or if you have chronic health conditions.



What fitness programs are offered at Wittenberg?

Get Fit Witt is a program that was created to allow students to be able to attend exercise classes and compete in intramural events

The two exercise classes offered include Yoga and Zumba

Club Sports include:

- Basketball, Ice Hockey, Rugby, Soccer, Volleyball, Wrestling
- Cheerleading, Color guard, Fishing, Kayaking, Outdoors
- Swing Dance, Water Polo, Knights of Witt, and Caving



Health, Wellness and Athletics Complex

In 2019, Wittenberg opened its new HWA complex, the “Steemer”.

- Beginning in academic year 2020-2021, the strength and conditioning staff will host group workout classes to instruct students and staff on personal workout routines
- Students and staff have access to all facilities when scheduled events and practices do not conflict
- The Rosencrans Fitness Center is open to all students, faculty, and staff year-round
- Facility hours are available on Wittenberg Tigers website

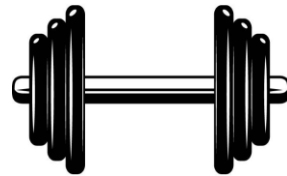


Online Classes

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, all fitness classes and facilities have been closed

Zumba is now being hosted virtually through Zoom

Virtual Yoga and strength training on Zoom is coming soon



Links for Wittenberg fitness programs:

Get Fit Witt:

https://www.wittenbergtigers.com/information/facilities/Get_Fit_Witt

Wittenberg Athletic Facilities:

<https://wittenbergtigers.com/information/facilityhours>

List of Club Sports & Recreation:

<https://www.wittenberg.edu/student-life/studentinvolvement/student-organization-club-directory>



To Conclude:

- Regular exercise and adequate sleep can improve the mental health of college students
- Mental health affects one's physical health
- There are free resources available to improve physical and mental health
- ANYONE can start the journey to a healthier mind and body

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