



Chiropractic Miracles

Delivering You the Best Word in Wellness and Natural Health Care

Dr. Bennett's Breakthrough Patient Newsletter...

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INTHISISSUE

Page 1 ::
Feeling Young May
Mean A Healthy Brain

Page 2 ::
How Regular Exercise
Improves Your Mind
and Body

Page 3 ::
How Regular Exercise
Improves Your Mind
and Body
(continued from page 2)

Page 4 ::
Hydrate in Hot Weather

Dear Patient and Friend,

A new study out of South Korea examined the brains of 68 healthy seniors, aged 59 to 84, to compare their biological age to their functional age, in other words, the way their brains are currently performing.

As you would expect, there were those who exercised their brains more than others, as part of their lifestyle, with games, creative thinking and artistic endeavors. Others interfered with their best brain function with dietary indiscretion, smoking habits and lack of mental and physical challenges.

But even after correcting for those factors, there was a key characteristic that seemed to show up with the people who had the healthiest brains – people who reported feeling younger than their age tended to have a younger brain physiologically.

And it wasn't just a positive attitude, though of course that helps – those who said they felt younger actually had younger and healthier gray matter in their brains, according to specialized testing they performed.

A “younger” brain gives you a better memory, better comprehension and enhanced use of speech and language.

Neuroscientists have known for decades that spinal health plays a major role in brain health. The spine not only protects the spinal cord and spinal nerves, it helps to bathe the brain in nutrients, and stimulate brain function with its movement.

So many chiropractic patients tell us that they feel younger than their years – that kind of vitality comes from having a healthier brain and a healthier spine, so let your doctor of chiropractic help you get and stay healthy! See your chiropractor – he or she can help you handle the stresses of your life.

How Regular Exercise Improves Your Mind and Body

It's common sense that exercise is good for you, but how does it specifically affect your mind and body? It's fascinating to learn about all the positive benefits of exercise in promoting health, quality of life and longevity.

When you first start to exercise, you'll notice that you feel more alert and energized. This happens because your body makes feel-good chemicals when you exercise, and also because your heart rate increases, which raises the blood flow and oxygen to the brain and produces a sense of vitality.

You may get sore or uncomfortable in the day or days after you begin – this is referred to as “delayed onset muscle soreness” (DOMS). While it's inconvenient, it fades quickly and gets better with each workout until you don't feel it much or not at all.

After a few weeks, your body starts to respond to the new demands being placed on it by changing your cells, the tiny bits of you that form into your body parts like organs, muscles, bones and nerves. The cells have little energy factories inside them, called “mitochondria,” (my-toe-con-dree-uh) which make energy out of the carbohydrates, fats and proteins in your food.

When you exercise, your body innately knows to make more mitochondria to meet the increasing energy demand. This is called “mitochondrial biogenesis,” and as a result of having more mitochondria, you simply have more energy to use.

In fact, after six to eight weeks, the cells can add as many as 50% more mitochondria, which dramatically enhances fitness and endurance.

Over time, the body gets stronger and stronger. After six months of strength and resistance exercise, you'd see measurable growth in the size, shape and power of your muscles – and, you'd be approaching an important emotional crossroads. By about the six-month mark, about half of us will lose momentum and discontinue the exercise program. If you're one of the 50% who does make it past six months, there's a good chance you'll keep going indefinitely, as the habit of exercise becomes part of your lifestyle.

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After nine months of cardio training, your body becomes more efficient, bringing 25% more oxygen to your muscles, increasing fitness and stamina.

Once exercise assimilates into your normal activities, you'll continue to see health benefits. For example, after a year of regular exercise, your bones will increase in density – not only will osteoporosis be arrested, it can even be reversed, as the mechanical load across the bones signals the body to build them up.

While the physical advantages are plentiful, there is a financial benefit as well. Exercising thirty minutes a day, five days a week can save you \$2500/year in costs for heart-related ailments. It also reduces your risk of arthritis, diabetes type 2, dementia and some malignancies, including breast and colon cancer.

And on average, if you develop a regular exercise routine, you'll live longer, too. And during that longer life, you're likely to feel well more of the time, because exercise lowers the risk of anxiety and depression by balancing your hormone chemistry, producing fewer stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline and more feel-good chemicals like endorphins, serotonin, oxytocin and dopamine.

Obviously, the degree of impact you will experience personally will depend on the type, duration and intensity of your exercise and your level of commitment to follow through. Also, diet and nutrition will play a major role – providing the best fuel for energy production and the best internal environment for optimal function depends on including certain nutrients and avoiding toxins and irritants.

Consider your current level of fitness when you begin or change an exercise program. The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends either 150 minutes each week of moderately intense exercise, like walking or biking, or 75 minutes each week of moderate and high intensity exercise, like running or swimming.

In addition, blend some strength or resistance training into two days each week, to build muscle and improve speed and endurance. Work at your own pace, fast enough to get your body fully engaged, but not so vigorous as to injure yourself or overwhelm your current resources. Be patient, get in shape and you'll be able to push harder soon.

There's a cumulative effect – the longer and more consistently you exercise, the better you feel and the more good you do for your brain and body. Make progress, adding time and intensity to your workout gradually, and before you know it, you'll be in excellent condition, looking and feeling your best.

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Page 3::

How Regular Exercise Improves Your Mind and Body (continued from page 2)

Hydrate in Hot Weather

Large swaths of the US have been suffering through a record-breaking heat wave, and the excessive temperatures increase the risk of dehydration, which means not having enough water in your brain and body to function normally.

Severe dehydration leaves the individual feeling incapacitated -- dizzy, foggy and nauseated, even unconscious. But many people are slightly dehydrated – they'll lose focus, they won't sweat easily, and they may experience dry mouth, nose or eyes.

But there's a deeper reason why you should make sure to include enough water intake each day. Depriving your brain of water over time starts to erode thinking, memory, and ability to maintain attention. It happens gradually and may not be noticed until it gets more obvious and can then be mistaken for other illnesses.

Many people will find that just increasing their water intake by a few glasses a day will help. But for most of us, not yet experiencing any harmful effects but still slightly water-deficient, we should aim to drink between six and twelve glasses of water each day to avoid any of the negative consequences of dehydration.

And, the warmer the weather, the more you perspire, and the more you perspire, the more water you lose, and the more water you need to take in to replenish what you've lost.

You might go from your air-conditioned office outside into the warm sunshine, only to get into your car which is overheated from baking in the sun – the variation in conditions dehydrates you, affecting the overall health and function of your brain.

Drink enough water during the hot weather, and be aware of the signs of dehydration, so you can recognize it and respond to it if you see it.

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