

## **Surgeon General's 100 Reasons to Exercise**

1. Helps you to more effectively manage stress.
2. Helps you to lose weight - especially fat weight.
3. Improves the functioning of your immune system.
4. Reduces medical and healthcare expenses.
5. Reduces your risk of getting heart disease.
6. Increases your level of muscle strength.
7. Improves athletic performance.
8. Can help relieve the pain of tension headaches – perhaps the most common type of headache.
9. Allows you to consume greater quantities of food and still maintain caloric balance.
10. Helps you sleep easier and better.
11. Enhances sexual desire, performance, and satisfaction.
12. Reduces the risk of developing hypertension (high blood pressure)
13. Increases the density and breaking strength of bones.
14. Improves your physical appearance.
15. Increases circulating levels of HDL (good) cholesterol.
16. Assists in efforts to stop smoking.
17. Helps you to relax.
18. Can help improve short-term memory in older individuals.
19. Helps to maintain weight loss - unlike dieting, alone.
20. Helps relieve many of the common discomforts of pregnancy (backache, heartburn, constipation, etc.).
21. Reduces your anxiety level.
22. Helps control blood pressure in people with hypertension.
23. Protects against "creeping obesity" (the slow, but steady weight gain that occurs as you age).
24. Reduces vulnerability to various cardiac dysrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythms).
25. Improves the likelihood of survival from a myocardial infarction (heart attack).
26. Helps to overcome jet lag.
27. Slows the rate of joint degeneration in people with osteoarthritis.
28. Lowers your resting heart rate.
29. Helps to boost creativity.
30. Reduces circulating levels of triglycerides.
31. Helps the body resist upper respiratory tract infections.
32. Increases your anaerobic threshold, allowing you to work or exercise longer at a higher level, before a significant amount of lactic acid builds up.
33. Helps to preserve lean body tissue.
34. Improves ability to recover from physical exertion.
35. Helps speed recovery from chemotherapy treatments.
36. Increases ability to supply blood to the skin for cooling.
37. Increases the thickness of the cartilage in your joints.
38. Gives you more energy to meet the demands of daily life, and provides you with a reserve to meet the demands of unexpected emergencies.
39. Increases your level of muscle endurance.
40. Helps prevent intestinal ulcers.
41. Increases the density and breaking strength of ligaments and tendons.
42. Improves posture.
43. Increases your maximal oxygen uptake (VO<sub>2</sub> max-perhaps the best measure of your physical working capacity).

44. Helps you to maintain your resting metabolic rate.
45. Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer.
46. Increases your tissues' responsiveness to the actions of insulin (i.e., improves tissue sensitivity for insulin) helping to better control blood sugar, particularly if you are a Type II diabetic.
47. Helps to relieve constipation.
48. Expands blood plasma volume.
49. Reduces the risk of developing prostate cancer.
50. Helps to combat substance abuse.
51. Helps to alleviate depression.
52. Increases your ability to adapt to cold environments.
53. Helps you maintain proper muscle balance.
54. Reduces the rate and severity of medical complications associated with hypertension.
55. Helps to alleviate certain menstrual symptoms.
56. Lowers your heart rate response to submaximal physical exertion.
57. Helps to alleviate low-back pain.
58. Helps to reduce the amount of insulin required to control blood sugar levels in Type I (insulin-dependent) diabetics.
59. Improves mental alertness.
60. Improves respiratory muscle strength and muscle endurance - particularly important for asthmatics.
61. Reduces your risk of having a stroke.
62. Helps you to burn excess calories.
63. Increases your cardiac reserve.
64. Improves coronary (heart) circulation.
65. Offsets some of the negative side effects of certain antihypertensive drugs.
66. Increases your stroke volume (the amount of blood the heart pumps with each beat).
67. Improves your self-esteem.
68. Reduces your susceptibility for coronary thrombosis (a clot in an artery that supplies the heart with blood).
69. Reduces your risk of developing Type II (non-insulin-dependent) diabetes.
70. Reduces the risk of developing breast cancer.
71. Improves mental cognition (a short-term effect only).
72. Maintains or improves joint flexibility.
73. Improves your glucose tolerance.
74. Reduces workdays missed due to illness.
75. Reduces the viscosity of your blood.
76. Enhances your muscles' abilities to extract oxygen from your blood.
77. Increases your productivity at work.
78. Reduces your likelihood of developing low-back problems.
79. Improves your balance and coordination.
80. Improves your body's ability to use fat for energy during physical activity.
81. Provides protection against injury.
82. Decreases (by 20 to 30 percent) the need for antihypertensive medication, if you are hypertensive.
83. Improves your decision-making abilities.
84. Helps reduce and prevent the immediate symptoms of menopause (hot flashes, sleep disturbances, irritability) and decrease the long-term risks of cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and obesity.
85. Helps to relieve and prevent "migraine headache attacks."
86. Reduces the risk of endometriosis (a common cause of infertility).
87. Helps to retard bone loss as you age, thereby reducing your risk of developing osteoporosis.

88. Helps decrease your appetite (a short-term effect only).
89. Improves pain tolerance and mood if you suffer from osteoarthritis.
90. Helps prevent and relieve the stresses that cause carpal tunnel syndrome.
91. Makes your heart a more efficient pump.
92. Helps to decrease left ventricular hypertrophy (a thickening of the walls of the left ventricle) in people with hypertension.
93. May be protective against the development of Alzheimer's disease.
94. Improves your mood.
95. Helps to increase your overall health awareness.
96. Reduces the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding.
97. Helps you to maintain an independent lifestyle.
98. Reduces the level of abdominal obesity - a significant health-risk factor.
99. Increases the diffusion capacity of the lungs, enhancing the exchange of oxygen from your lungs to your blood.
100. Improves heat tolerance.

**Bonus Reason:** Improves your overall quality of life!