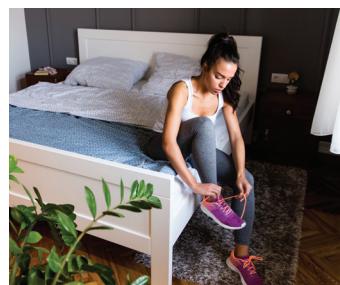




# Move for mental health

Movement doesn't just strengthen your body. Your mental health and well-being benefit from regular exercise, too. When you move your body, every part of you feels better. This includes your thoughts, feelings, and emotions. What's good for the body is good for the brain. While exercise is not a replacement for mental health treatment, it is a tangible way to impact your mind for the better.



## REDUCED STRESS

We all experience stress on a regular basis. It's a normal and unavoidable part of life. But how we manage stress can mean the difference between a peaceful mind or one in turmoil.

Exercise is a great stress management tool. When you get your blood pumping, it releases feel-good hormones called endorphins that counteract the effects of stress. Exercising also reduces tension and fatigue, giving you more energy to manage stressful situations.

## BETTER SLEEP

When you don't sleep well, it's challenging to manage your body's stress response. And when you don't manage stress levels well, your body's stress response makes it difficult to sleep.

Exercise can interrupt this frustrating cycle. By positively influencing your natural circadian rhythm, movement makes it easier to fall asleep and sleep deeply. And a healthy dose of movement helps you feel comfortably tired at the end of the day.



## IMPROVED MOOD

Most people report they feel happier and in a better mood after exercise. And you don't have to be a runner to feel the benefits. Whether you lift weights or take a brisk walk, the benefits are the same. Even getting up to do some chores can shake off the "blahs."

By increasing blood flow and alertness, movement helps you feel more confident, capable, and positive. In turn, this boost in mood supports your overall sense of well-being.



## BRAIN HEALTH

Mental health is directly related to brain health. A well-functioning, healthy brain thinks, feels, and copes better.

Regularly getting your heart pumping is good for the blood vessels in the brain. Exercise also protects against the build-up of plaque in the vessel walls. This helps protect the brain from damage and declining function.