



12 Amazing Exercise Benefits That Aren't About Weight Loss

While most of us are aiming to burn calories and lose weight by exercising, there are numerous other physical and psychological benefits of exercise. First, it's important to understand how much exercise is needed. The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least:

- 150 minutes per week of moderate **aerobic activity** (brisk walking, swimming, mowing the lawn) OR 75 minutes per week of vigorous activity (running, aerobic dancing), **and**
- At least two sessions per week of **strength training** (heavy gardening, rock climbing, lifting weights).

Now let's get to the benefits of exercise that go beyond calories burned and pounds dropped:

1. Relieves Stress & Anxiety. Exercise releases norepinephrine, which can regulate and reduce your stress response. It can also improve overall mood and alleviate depression.

2. Improves Learning & Memory. Working out stimulates new neural growth patterns in the brain. Exercise causes the brain to release chemicals that may prevent the breakdown of the hippocampus, which is thought to prevent the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

3. Improves Self-Esteem & Body Image. The endorphin boost and sense of accomplishment attained after a workout improves self-worth. A combination of our physical gains and improved mood helps us feel better about ourselves.

4. Strengthens the Heart. Exercise improves the heart's overall function and efficacy providing more oxygen, nutrients, and energy to your body throughout the day.

5. Builds Stronger Bones. Weight-bearing (high or low-impact) and muscle-strengthening exercises build and strengthen the bones as well as the muscles that surround them.

6. Promotes Quality Zzz's. After a workout, the body's internal temperature returns to baseline and signals the brain that it's time for sleep. Try to give yourself at least an hour or two to wind down after exercise; otherwise those endorphins can keep you going!

7. Provides a Bonding Experience with Loved Ones. With everyone buried in technology these days, it's nice to have a reason to get out and enjoy the real world with friends and family. Take a class, play a sport, or go for a brisk walk or jog with your workout partner.

8. Improves Mood. Exercising outdoors can help ensure adequate production of vitamin D. This vitamin has been linked to cognitive function, and inadequate levels have been linked to mood swings.

9. Increases Metabolism. We know that working out burns calories, but did you know it can also help burn them while you're sleeping? Muscle cells require more energy (calories) in comparison to fat cells. The more muscle mass you have, the more calories you'll burn.

10. Improves Digestion. Exercise can relieve constipation and help those with digestive disorders like inflammatory bowel disease and liver disease. It can also decrease the risk for colon cancer and ulcers.

11. Reduces Disease Risk. Exercise can actually help prevent diseases like Type 2 diabetes, stroke, metabolic syndrome, and even some forms of cancer. As exercise burns calories, it makes the body more efficient at using glucose (a type of sugar) and clearing it from the blood.

12. Decreases Appetite. For many, exercise can be an appetite suppressant. While this may be a physical result for some, it can also be mental. After burning all those calories exercising, one may actually make smarter food choices.

***Before beginning any exercise program, please consult your physician or health-care professional.*

Brown Bag Lunch & Learn in the Claiborne Building, Iowa Room 1-153

Topic: Employee Health & Fitness

Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Time: 11:30 - noon

If you cannot attend at the Claiborne Building, click the following link to [Join WebEx meeting](#)

Meeting number: **804 581 113**

Meeting password: **ZFE3pWCY**

Join by phone

+1-855-797-9485 US Toll free

Access code: 804 581 113

Low Carbohydrate Zesty Shrimp Lettuce Wraps

Make a light and flavorful meal with this lettuce wrap recipe featuring shrimp with carrots, bell peppers, black beans and lemon juice. This meal can be prepared in 20 minutes and has only 10 grams of carbs per serving. Fresh shrimp takes very little time to cook, but you can shave even more time off preparation by buying pre-cooked shrimp. Want to heat up your colorful meal? Stir in ½ to 1 minced fresh jalapeno.

Ingredients

- ¾ pound cooked, peeled, and deveined small or medium shrimp
- 1 large carrot peeled and shaved with vegetable peeler or grated
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, finely chopped
- ½ cup rinsed and drained no-salt added canned black beans
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ teaspoon grated lime rind
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon salt

- 12 to 24 large Boston or butter lettuce leaves, rinsed and patted dry*
1. Combine all ingredients except lettuce in a medium bowl. Mixture may be chilled until ready to serve.
 2. Spoon 1/3 cup shrimp salad into each lettuce leaf. Serve immediately. (Serving size 3 filled lettuce wraps.) *If lettuce leaves are small, stack two together before filling.

Makes approximately 4 servings

Live Better Louisiana Clinics

The second year of Live Better Louisiana kicked off September 1st and clinics are being scheduled through August 2016. All participants who earned the premium discount for 2016 will need to complete a wellness checkup and Personal Health Assessment (PHA) to earn the discount again in 2017.

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. You have until August 31, 2016 to complete your online PHA www.bcbsla.com/MYPHA and get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2017 wellness credit! To sign up for one of these clinics, or find a date and location that works best for you, visit www.timeconfirm.com/ogb or call 1-877-841-3058. **Clinic dates and locations are added frequently, so check back if you don't see a convenient time or place.**

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
05/02-06/2016	Natchitoches-NSULA (175 Sam Sibley Dr.)
05/04/2016	Alexandria-LA Special Education Center (5400 Coliseum Blvd.)
05/05/2016	Franklinton-Washington Parish-Franklinton Elementary School Gym (Jaguar Dr.)
05/06/2016	Franklinton-Washington Parish-Franklinton Primary School (610 Barker Dr.)
05/09/2016	Woodworth-Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry (515 Forestry Rd.)
05/10/2016	Baton Rouge-Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (450 Laurel St., Ste. 1501)
05/10-11/2016	Harvey-State Office Building-Probation & Parole (2150 Westbank Expressway)
05/11/2016	Leesville-West Leesville & Optional School (1100 Abe Allen Memorial Dr.)
05/11/2016	Baton Rouge-Probation & Parole (2715 Wooddale Blvd., Ste. 400)
05/11/2016	Leesville-Vernon Middle School (1410 Nona St.)
05/11/2016	Monroe-Probation and Parole (24 Accent Dr. Suite 101)
05/12/2016	Livingston-DCFS (28446 Charlie Watts Road)
05/13/2016	Pineville-Central LA State Hospital (242 West Shamrock St.)
05/16-18/2016	Baton Rouge-BRCC Acadian (3250 N. Acadian Thruway E)
05/16-18/2016	Baton Rouge-Baton Rouge Community College (201 Community College Dr.)
05/16-18/2016	New Orleans-University New Orleans (2000 Lakeshore Dr.)
05/16-18/2016	Ruston-LA Tech University (331 Keeny Circle LA Tech Campus)
05/19/2016	Evans- Evans HS (18829 LA-111)
05/20/2016	Fort Polk-North Polk Elementary School (4978 University Pkwy.)
05/19-21/2016	Harvey-Jefferson Parish School Board (501 Manhattan Blvd.)
05/21/2016	Bastrop-Morehouse Parish School Board-Student Service Ctr (1607 ML King South)
05/23-24/2016	Jackson-Villa Feliciana Medical Complex (5002 Hwy 10)
05/23-24/2016	Alexandria-Probation & Parole (2800 South MacArthur Dr.)
05/23-24/2016	Lake Charles-Child Support Enforcement Office (1417 Gadwall Street)
05/25/2016	Franklinton-Washington Parish School Board Central Offc. Media Ctr (800 Main St.)

05/26-27/ 2016	Pineville-Central LA State Hospital (242 West Shamrock St.) Bogalusa-DCFS (1017 Ontario Avenue)
06/01-02/ 2016	Shreveport-LSU Shreveport (1 University Place)
06/06-07/ 2016	Chalmette-St. Bernard Administration Building (200 E. St. Bernard Hwy.) Alexandria-DOTD District 08 (3300 Mac Arthur Drive) Amite-DCFS (606 South 1 st St.)
06/08/2016	Covington-DCFS (351 Holiday Blvd.)
06/09-10/ 2016	Chalmette-St. Bernard Admin Building (200 E. St. Bernard Hwy)
06/14/2016	Covington-DCFS (351 Holiday Blvd.)
06/16-18/ 2016	Harvey-Jefferson Parish School Board (501 Manhattan Blvd.) Shreveport-Probation and Parole (2525 Youree Dr.)
06/20-21/ 2016	Alexandria-DOTD District 08 (3300 MacArthur Drive)
06/22-23/ 2016	New Orleans-Supreme Court of LA Pineville-Central LA State Hospital (242 West Shamrock St.)

For more information, visit us at www.bcbsla.com/ogb
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