

Wellness Newsletter

May/June 2021

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Strength Training May Alleviate Depression

With many people feeling stressed by the pandemic, it has become a priority to boost mental, as well as physical, health. Many studies substantiate the power of cardiovascular training to reduce the likelihood of depression and anxiety. New research shows that strength training, like aerobic exercise, may be an effective way to prevent or alleviate depression.

German and Australian researchers conducted a large, population-based study using data from the 2014 German Health Update. The study included a representative sample of 23,602 German adults and investigated any association between resistance training and depressive symptoms.

Data analysis showed that adults who participated in any type of muscle-strengthening exercises, from body-weight workouts to machine-based training, were less likely to experience depressive symptoms. This finding was the same whether people trained one to two times each week or three to five times weekly. The important take-home message? Lift weights.

Journal of Affective Disorders



Sucrose, Glucose, and Metabolism

An appetite study shows that not all sugars are created equal.

The sweetness in our diets comes in many different forms, and how we get our sugar fix matters. The type of sweet stuff we choose may influence how hungry we feel and, in turn, affect our risk for metabolic conditions and weight gain. A recent study shed light on the different effects of sucrose and glucose on our metabolism.

Study participants produced lower amounts of hunger-suppressing hormones, such as peptide YY, after sipping drinks sweetened with sucrose (table sugar) than they did after drinking liquids spiked with glucose (naturally occurring sweetness), according to a report in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

The findings, based on data from 69 men and women ages 18–35, also revealed that participants with obesity and less insulin sensitivity had a lower increase in hunger-suppressing hormones after consuming a sweet beverage. That may be another reason why it's so hard for people with excess weight to lose it and keep it off.

Sucrose is made up of equal parts glucose and fructose and is often pumped into processed foods like soda, candy and cereal. Glucose occurs naturally in carbohydrate-containing foods like honey and fresh and dried fruits.

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Benefits of Exercise “Bursts”



Here’s some good news for those who prefer short workouts. There are health benefits of training harder through burst training. Harvard Medical School researchers found that approximately 12 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise can positively alter biomarkers linked with heart disease, diabetes and shorter longevity.

The scientists were struck by “the effects a brief bout of exercise can have on the circulating levels of metabolites that govern such key bodily functions as insulin resistance, oxidative stress, vascular reactivity, inflammation and longevity,” said principal investigator and study author Gregory Lewis, MD, head of the Heart Failure section at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Investigators analyzed data from 411 middle-aged women and men enrolled in the Framingham Heart Study. This study began in 1948 and now includes three generations of participants. “We’re starting to better understand the molecular underpinnings of how exercise affects the body and [to] use that knowledge to understand the metabolic architecture around exercise response patterns,” said study author Ravi Shah, MD, in the Division of Cardiology at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Find the research in Circulation (2020; 142 [20], 1905–24).

Yoga and a Good Night’s Sleep

Yoga effectively reduces chronic lower-back pain and associated sleep disturbances, lowering the need for sleep medications, according to a study published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* (2019; 35, 167–76).

Boston University School of Medicine researchers conducted the randomized controlled trial to evaluate whether chronic lower-back pain treatments like yoga and physical therapy could influence sleep quality and potentially address pain issues. The study included 320 adults with chronic lower-back pain who participated in 12 weekly yoga sessions, attended the

same number of one-on-one physical therapy sessions or read an educational book. Participants were evaluated before the intervention, after 12 weeks and 1 year from the study’s start.

Data analysis found significant improvements in sleep quality among both yoga and physical therapy participants. Study authors noted that reducing reliance on medications—especially any combination of sleep and pain medications—is important.

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Running and Mental Health

“Running has important positive implications for mental health, particularly depression and anxiety disorders,” note study authors in a comprehensive study review in which “running” included jogging, sprinting, marathon running, orienteering and treadmill running.

Findings revealed an impact on multiple aspects of mental health, with positive—as well as adverse—outcomes. University of Edinburgh researchers in Scotland reviewed 116 studies to illuminate what’s known about running and mental health and to highlight knowledge gaps and research priorities.

In addition to benefiting multiple physical health markers, running influences depression, anxiety, self-efficacy, stress, well-being, self-concept, self-esteem, mood, eating disorders and addiction. In 16 of 47 studies that compared runners with nonrunners, runners had lower levels of depression, anxiety and stress, greater well-being, and better mood. In studies with runners only, some adverse effects surfaced, including exercise addiction and eating disorders. Habitual or long-term recreational running was linked mostly with positive mental health associations. In contrast, there were associations between high or extreme levels of running and poor health.

In studies that compared different settings and multiple running bouts, findings suggested that running improves mood; that outdoor running benefits mood more than indoor running; and that most running intensities improve mood, except when intensity is markedly above lactate threshold.

Research gaps exist relating to those under 18 or over 45, clinical populations, and diverse demographics. Limitations of the current study included its small sample sizes and unclear mental health outcome measurements. For future trials, study authors recommend clear comparisons of running types, settings and intensities in relation to specific mental health outcomes.

The study is available in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (2020; 17 [21], 8059).



Food Combinations May Affect Brain Health

In recent years, it's become clear that a diet full of nuts, leafy vegetables, seafood and other nutrient-dense edibles can do the brain some good. Now, a study has uncovered evidence that it's not just what we eat, but how we combine foods into a "food network," that may influence our brain health as we age.

A study reported in *Neurology* asked older adults to complete a survey detailing foods they had eaten over the past year. Five years later—with medical checkups in between—the subjects were evaluated again. Those without dementia were more likely to have accompanied their meat intake with more diverse, healthier foods, including fruit, vegetables and seafood. Those with dementia were more likely to have paired processed meat products such as deli meats with packaged snacks like cookies, starchy items like potatoes, and alcohol. Overall, those with dementia placed less emphasis on eating a diversity of healthier foods.

As with most nutrition studies, relying on subjects' accurate recall of diet habits via questionnaire versus

controlled monitoring is a limiting factor. However, the findings lend more support to the notion that nutrition is a modifiable risk factor in relation to brain health and that variety is the spice of life.

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Train Your Feet

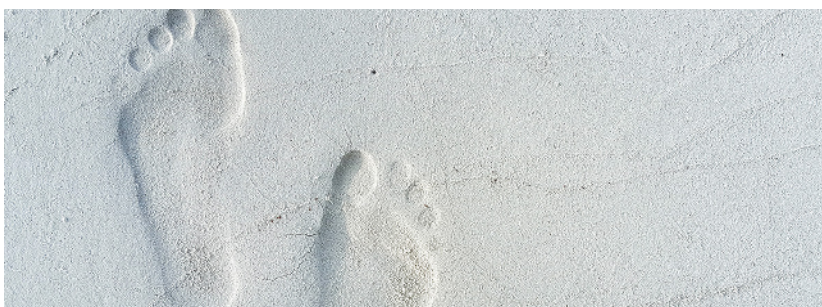
Do you know how critical healthy feet are to a successful training program? Your feet and ankles make up your body's foundation and act as "shock absorbers" when your body interacts with a surface (Price 2006). The feet transmit weight from our body to the ground, allow us to balance in static posture, and propel our body forward, back and laterally in dynamic activities (Lillis 2019).

To improve feet function and help prevent dysfunction in other body parts, perform these foot exercises from Eileen Byrnes, a Connecticut-based registered yoga instructor (RYT 200), fitness instructor, barefoot enthusiast, certified reflexologist and creator of Solely Wellness. Why Exercise Your Feet?

While feet are our base for all movement, it isn't common practice for many exercisers to consider foot function. Nick St. Louis, an Ottawa-based physiotherapist and founder of The Foot Collective, says this needs to change.

"A house will collapse if built on a weak foundation. Many of the problems you see upstream are very much related to the foot," he says, adding that hip, knee and ankle discomfort or pain often starts in foot dysfunction. Being barefoot allows you to increase balance, engage muscles, improve mobility, transfer stability from one side to the other and offer efficient force transfer to the ground (Shaffer 2020).

For exercises and more information visit-
<https://www.ideafit.com/personal-training/>



Get Your Sleep



College athletes who skimp on sleep may be increasing their risk for injury, according to a small study by University of Wisconsin-Madison researchers. Other studies show poorer performance, higher illness risk and impaired well-being in athletes.

Investigators reviewed injuries among 19 male basketball players during two consecutive seasons and collected well-being variables related to sleep, subjective well-being, training load, fatigue, soreness and sleep duration. Data analysis showed that shorter sleep time was associated with more injuries, independent of training load and subjective well-being.

The study appeared in the Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine (2020; 8 [11]).

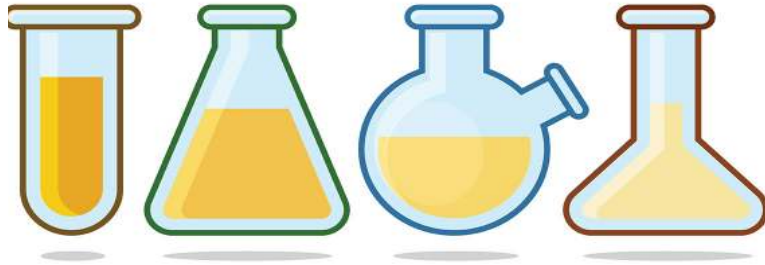
Did You Know? Sleep experts have discovered a direct link between people's favorite sleeping positions and their personalities!

Urine Color Does Reveal Hydration

It's true, your pee color is a good indication of how hydrated you are. An investigation in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition has validated that lighter urine color signifies a lower level of urine osmolality—the number of dissolved particles per unit of water in the urine—and is a reliable way to determine hydration status.

The goal is to have urine color the same as straw or lemonade as opposed to something closer to iced tea. Urinating seven or more times a day for adults or five times a day for children was found to be another good indicator that someone is drinking enough to stay ahead of dehydration.

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Earlham College Athletics & Wellness Center



T: 765-983-1734

W: Earlham.edu/Wellness

For rental information, Group Fitness times, business hours, and more, please visit our website.

AWC Academic Hours

February 1, 2021 – May 14, 2021

Monday – Friday	7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
Saturday	10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Sunday	1:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Our Summer facility and Pool Hours will be available online. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information.

Check out our BeWell page for information and links
<https://bit.ly/3nbFvR3>

Do you have any pictures of yourself in the Wellness Center participating in an activity?

If so, post it on our Facebook page
www.Facebook.com/EarlhamAWC



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8 WAYS

to keep yourself in a good physical and mental condition during the COVID-19 period

1 To stay connected to others, regularly speak with work colleagues, your family and friends.

1

2 To reduce stress, structure your days, take regular breaks and adapt your daily life to the current situation.

2

3 To prevent feelings of helplessness, plan your day as much as possible.

3

4 Separate your private and professional activities to ensure efficiency and to maintain a work-life balance.

4

5 Regularly practice physical exercise and relaxation to ensure your mental and physical wellbeing.

5

6 Be selective and limit the time you spend watching the news to maintain your peace of mind.

6

7 To keep energised, devote time to creative activities and at the end of the day review what you have achieved.

7

8 Eat at regular times, choose a light, balanced and varied diet to maintain energy levels and boost your immune system.

8

