



# VitaMin

Vital health information in a minute

## CHASE AWAY THE BLUES WITH EXERCISE

Do you gravitate toward the couch when you're feeling sad, worried or stressed out? It's normal to just want to veg out when you're feeling down. But if you do something active instead, you'll get the physical benefits of exercise – plus a natural boost to your mood. Getting motivated is the hard part, but you'll be glad you did.

Regular exercise can help combat depression, anxiety and everyday stress.<sup>1</sup> It doesn't have to be something strenuous like sweating it out in a 60-minute aerobics class. Any form of activity can give you a boost – think washing the car or walking the dog.

Here are some ways exercise can help your mental health and well-being.

### Release feel-good endorphins

Working out can trigger a positive feeling in the body, also called a runner's high. And you don't have to be a runner to experience it. Any activity that gets your muscles moving and your heart pumping helps you release chemicals called endorphins.<sup>1</sup>

*Try this:* Walk at a brisk pace for 30 minutes.

### Clear your mind

Physical activity can also help you feel better simply by shifting your focus. Doing something active with your body can take your mind off negative thoughts and worries that fuel depression and anxiety.<sup>1</sup>

*Try this:* Tackle a cleaning project at home like vacuuming or washing windows.

### Source:

1. Mayo Clinic. "Depression and anxiety: Exercise eases symptoms." Web (last reviewed/updated September 27, 2017).

This is general health information and not medical advice or services. You should consult your doctor for medical advice or services, including seeking advice prior to undertaking a new diet or exercise program.

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