To combat stress, exercise harder

The federal government recommends getting a minimum of 150 minutes of movement a week to maintain good health — roughly 30 minutes of walking on most days.

But to combat stress, you probably need more.

People who do spend more time exercising are less likely to be depressed and have lower rates of anxiety, said Dr. Edward M. Phillips, director of the Institute of Lifestyle Medicine at the Joslin Diabetes Center.

There’s no formula for how much exercise is best for beating stress. And though research suggests that aerobic exercise like running, biking, or swimming is most effective, mixing it up with strength training and mind-body exercises, including yoga and meditation, is also great, he said.

Some research also suggests that getting exercise in nature provides an extra antistress boost. In a study published this year, Stanford University researchers showed that people who walked for 90 minutes in a natural setting were less likely to obsess over negative thoughts than those who walked the same amount in a city.
Exercising in nature is “all-around good for those kinds of negative things in your life,” said Gregory Bratman, a Stanford PhD candidate and environmental psychologist, who led the research.

What if you’re one of those people who hates exercise? Will working out make you more or less unsettled? Animal studies are mixed.

Forcing rats to run on a tiny treadmill — which they hate — doesn’t protect them against stress. But they do show physiological reductions in stress from running on a wheel, even when they aren’t allowed to control the pace. “There is a difference, but we have no idea why,” said Benjamin Greenwood, an assistant professor in the psychology department at the University of Colorado Denver.

Finding an exercise routine that you enjoy and can stick with is probably the best option. Animals that stop exercising lose their stress protection within a few weeks, Greenwood said.

Of course, individual differences probably affect how much exercise someone needs to reduce their stress.

Genes allow some people to get more of a memory boost from exercise than others so the same is probably true of stress, said David Bucci, chairman of the department of psychological and brain science at Dartmouth College.

But, he added, “I’d be hard pressed to believe there’s a group of people out there who get nothing out of it.” KAREN WEINTRAUB
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUNSCREEN

Sunscreens help prevent the sun’s ultraviolet (UV) radiation from reaching the skin. Two types of ultraviolet radiation, UVA and UVB, damage the skin, age it prematurely, and increase your risk of cancer. UVB is the chief culprit behind sunburn, while UVA rays, which penetrate the skin more deeply, are associated with wrinkling, leathering, sagging, and other light-induced effects of aging. UVA rays also exacerbate the carcinogenic effects of UVB rays, and increasingly are being seen as a cause of skin cancer on their own.

WHAT IS SPF?

• SPF – or Sun Protection Factor – is a measure of a sunscreen’s ability to prevent UVB from damaging the skin. Here’s how it works: if it takes 20 minutes for your unprotected skin to start turning red, using an SPF 15 sunscreen theoretically prevents reddening 15 times longer – about five hours.

• SPF 15 filters out approximately 93% of all incoming UVB rays. SPF 30 keeps out 97% and SPF 50 keeps out 98%.

• No sunscreen, regardless of strength, should be expected to stay effective longer than two hours without reapplication. Plenty of damage can be done without the red flag of sunburn being raised.

• Look for Broad-Spectrum sunscreen that offers protection against both UVA and UVB rays. Apply 1 oz. 30 minutes before sun exposure and reapply the same amount every two hours. Sunscreens should also be reapplied immediately after swimming, toweling off, or sweating a great deal.

LOTIONS, SPRAYS, OR STICK SUNSCREENS?

• While using spray sunscreen, be aware of the direction of the wind and avoid inhalation. Spray an adequate amount into your hands and then apply to facial areas. Lotions are great for dry skin and provide a strong and even coat, and sticks are good around the eyes. They all are effective—use the one that you like best!

Sources: Skin Cancer Foundation; WebMD; NYdailynews
EXERCISING IN THE HEAT

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke, dangerous side effects of overdoing summer exercise, come when the body can no longer sustain the pace, the heat, the humidity, or the loss of fluid. Here are 9 ways to keep your summer workouts safe.

1. **ACCLIMATE YOURSELF:** When the weather warms, it can take up to 14 days to adjust to changes.

2. **STAY HYDRATED:** To maintain good hydration for a moderate workout, drink 20 ounces of water 2 hours before exercise, at least 8 ounces of water shortly before getting out into the heat, and then a gulp every 15 to 20 minutes during exercise. To stay better hydrated, drink fluids with your meals throughout the day.

3. **SLOW DOWN:** If it’s hotter than you’re used to, cut the pace and/or exposure back.

4. **WEAR LIGHT, BREATHABLE CLOTHING:** Lightweight fabrics that wick away sweat and light colors are best. If your workout involves wearing a protective helmet, remove it during periods of rest to allow your head to breathe and cool off.

5. **EXERCISE EARLY OR LATE:** If possible, get out before 7 a.m. or after 6 p.m. in the summer months. In the hottest part of summer, consider taking your workout inside.

6. **ASSESS THE PREVIOUS DAY:** Take into account the physical activity, fluid ingestion, and diet of the previous day.

7. **KNOW THE ROUTE AND CLIMATE:** Check the heat index for relative humidity that day and plan accordingly. Contain your exercise to the least hot and humid part of the day.

8. **CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST:** Many medications can intensify the effects of heat-related illnesses.

9. **USE COMMON SENSE:** If you’re not feeling well, get inside where it’s cooler to help get your temperature down.

**Sources:** WebMD
ROASTED CORN WITH BASIL-SHALLOT VINAIGRETTE

Yield: 4 Servings  Total Time: 40 minutes

Nutrition: 165 calories, 8 g fat, 23 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 4 g protein, 163 mg sodium

INGREDIENTS:
- 3 cups fresh corn kernels
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- ¼ tablespoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:
1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Toss corn and oil to coat and spread out on a large baking sheet.
3. Bake, stirring once, until some kernels begin to brown, about 20 minutes.
4. Combine basil, shallot, vinegar, salt and pepper in a medium bowl.
5. Add the corn; toss to coat. Serve warm or cold.

Source: Eating Well
Yes, yes, yes, now seriously what can we do to improve our health?

1. Exercise
2. Exercise
3. Exercise
4. Exercise
5. Exercise
6. Exercise
7. Exercise
8. etc.

News: Exercise - the key

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