



## *Importance of Exercise.*

### *Welcome to this week's discussion.*

***The focus this week relates to how exercise can help mitigate fatigue.***

Around one in four people suffers from general fatigue not associated with a serious medical condition. When a person is fatigued, the last thing they want to do is exercise. But new research shows that regular, low-intensity exercise may help boost energy levels in people suffering from fatigue.

Why exercise helps fatigue isn't clear, but recent scientific findings suggest exercise acts directly on the central nervous system to increase energy and reduce fatigue. Notably, the improvements in energy and fatigue were not related to increases in aerobic fitness.

A lot of people are overworked and not sleeping enough. Exercise is a way for people to feel more energetic. There's a scientific basis for it, and there are advantages to it compared to things like caffeine and energy drinks.

### *Recent Studies*

University of Georgia researchers studied whether exercise can be used to treat fatigue. The research involved 36 volunteers who were not regular exercisers but who complained of persistent fatigue.

One group of fatigued volunteers was prescribed 20 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise three times a week for six weeks. The second group engaged in low-intensity aerobic exercise for the same time period, while a third control group did not exercise.

The study volunteers used exercise bikes that allowed the researchers to control their level of exertion. The low-intensity exercise was equivalent to a leisurely, easy walk. The more intense exercise was similar to a fast-paced walk up hills.

Patients with fatigue due to serious medical conditions, such as those with chronic fatigue syndrome, weren't included in the study.

Both of the exercise groups had a 20 percent increase in energy levels by the end of the study, compared to the control group. However, the researchers found that more intense exercise isn't the best way to reduce fatigue. The low-intensity group reported a 65 percent drop in feelings of fatigue, compared to a 49 percent drop in the group doing more intense exercise.

***Do you regularly take low intensity exercise?***

***Do you know the recommended amount of exercise we should take a week?***



## Importance of Exercise

### *Exercises that can help fight fatigue.*

**Aerobic exercise:** This type of exercise is the most obvious energy-producer. Plus it's heart-healthy, helps your lungs function more efficiently and increases overall energy.

**Resistance exercise:** Also referred to as strength training, resistance exercise builds muscle mass and boosts your metabolism, which in turn increases energy. Strength training also reduces blood sugar. Muscle mass stores excess blood sugar in the form of glycogen. We lose muscle mass as we age, which means we lose some of our capacity to store glucose. Too much glucose in the blood can lead to diabetes. As you build up muscle, you decrease the amount of glucose in the blood.

**Flexibility exercise:** Exercises such as yoga and tai chi are stress relievers - and we all know that stress is an energy sapper. The practice of flexibility exercise helps people to restore their levels of energy, to enhance stamina, relieve anxiety, and reduce fatigue. It gives you a sense of peace, which then allows you to sleep, which in turn gives you energy. People who are more flexible also sustain fewer injuries.

- Running
- Low to moderate intensity walking
- Yoga
- Cycling
- Boxing
- Pilates
- Tai Chi
- Swimming

### *Discuss in your teams:*

- Do you know someone who could increase their exercise? What action can you take to help them?
- Do you lead a sedentary lifestyle but wish you could exercise more? Could you benefit from some of the tips above?
- How can your team support each other to obtain more exercise? Could you instigate walk'n'talk meetings?
- Do you talk about fatigue in your one to ones? Could you make this a regular topic of conversation?