

Too busy or stressed out to workout?

By Richard Landman PTS

Actually you are too busy or stressed out to not workout. As many of my regular clients and myself have noticed over the years, we always feel better after a workout. This is no coincidence. Many people are unaware that from a benefit standpoint, exercise programs have many more benefits than just fitness and fat loss. I will discuss just a few in detail here:

Destressing: If you've had a stressful day and the last thing on your mind is your workout, think again. Working out helps you forget the things that stressed you out during the day. Also, the release of certain hormones and chemicals during exercise (endorphins, serotonin) help us feel more relaxed and content. These chemicals naturally elevate mood and create an anti-depressant effect (MK McGovern 2005).

The effects of work stress on our health are also contributable to many serious illnesses and severely weaken our immune systems, leaving us more prone to viruses and infections. Stress is a risk factor that we must control if we want to have good health in the long-term.

Depression: Moderate, consistent exercise programs have been shown to decrease symptoms of depression by 50%. This again relates to the release of the brain chemicals and the general feelings of well-being associated with exercise.

Increased work performance and efficiency: If you think that you are too busy at work to find time for fitness, you may want to solve this problem by **scheduling time for your fitness**, just like any other appointment.

In a study done by NASA on 80 office workers, exercisers were found to be 12.5% more efficient. In a 40 hour work week, the exercisers got 5 more hours of work done! If the exercisers worked out an average of 30 minutes a day, **this indicates that they would still have done approximately 21/2 hours extra work per week, even if they took time out of their work day to exercise** (assuming a 5 day/8hrs per day work week).

Workers who have been involved in fitness programs have been shown in study after study to be more efficient, make better decisions, get along better with their peers and have fewer sick days.

Anti-aging / Anti-disease: Moderate exercise has shown to have an anti-aging effect on nearly all areas of the body, including the brain. There are indications that physical exercise helps the brain regenerate neurons and actually elevates cognitive functioning.

The health benefits of exercise are well documented. In North America, we have an epidemic of cancer, diabetes and heart disease. All of these diseases have been shown to be influenced heavily on poor lifestyle factors (including stress and sedentary lifestyles).

Conclusion: If you combine the obvious health benefits with the information given in the above article, there should be no reason not to incorporate moderate exercise into your daily schedule (treat it just like brushing your teeth or getting dressed in the morning).