Preventing Chronic Disease with Activity

Did You Know?

By being physically active, you can not only reduce your risk for chronic disease, but also improve your mental health and mood!

Photo by: Diabetes Care/Flickr

Physical activity is essential for good health. Conditions such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and arthritis are all chronic diseases and are largely preventable, in part by keeping physically active.

Here are some ways that physical activity has been shown to help prevent chronic disease:

- Physical activity can lower the risk of cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke. It can also help to lower both blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels.

- Being active can reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is the combination of three or more of any of the following five conditions: high blood pressure, a high blood sugar level, excess body fat around the waist, low HDL/"good" cholesterol, and high triglycerides.

- Physical activity may reduce the risk of some cancers, including breast cancer and colon cancer.

- Keeping active strengthens bones and muscles, and in turn can prevent bone loss and osteoporosis, as well as arthritis.

Being active in *any* way is helpful for preventing chronic diseases. Don't feel limited to what you can or cannot do – whether you're gardening or participating in an exercise class, try new things and have fun while doing so!

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