



Benefits of physical activity for women

Physical inactivity is the leading contributor to disease in women; therefore physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of women as it provides a range of physical, social and mental health benefits. Practical, personal, social and cultural barriers can be some of the many causes of women not participating in sport and active recreation.



The top 10 physical activities for women are walking for exercise, aerobics/fitness, swimming, netball, tennis, cycling, bush walking, running, yoga and golf.¹

Physical benefits to women

- ▶ Weight control.
- ▶ Lower levels of blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure.
- ▶ Increase in bone mass and prevention of osteoporosis.
- ▶ Increased stamina and strength.
- ▶ Less likely to smoke, and those that are trying to quit are twice as likely to kick the habit.
- ▶ Reduction in the risk of breast cancer.
- ▶ Faster weight loss after pregnancy and improved mood and sleep patterns.

Did you know ... During pregnancy, those that do strength conditioning exercise tend to have a shorter labour time and fewer delivery complications.²

Social benefits to women

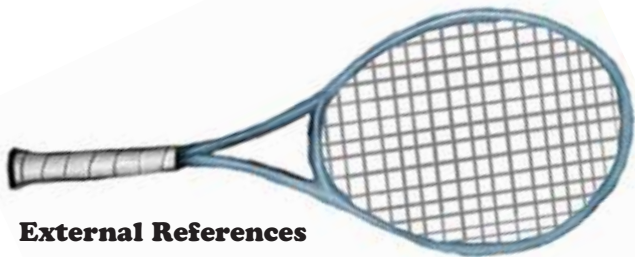
- ▶ Sport and active recreation is fun!
- ▶ Team sport develops leadership skills and teaches teamwork.
- ▶ Produces positive role models.
- ▶ Opportunity to meet new people and make some new friends.
- ▶ Women who exercise miss fewer days of work.

Emotional benefits to women

- ▶ Reduced levels of anxiety and stress.
- ▶ Half of all women who participate in some kind of sport have higher than average levels of self-esteem and lower levels of depression.
- ▶ Mothers who participate in sport and physical activity have a positive effect in sustaining girls' participation through their teenage years.
- ▶ Regular exercise improves overall quality of life.

Physical activity ideas

- ▶ Joining a local sporting club
- ▶ Walking, jogging or running with a friend or your dog.
- ▶ Dancing.
- ▶ Going to the gym.
- ▶ Aerobics.
- ▶ Rollerblading.
- ▶ Cycling.
- ▶ Swimming.
- ▶ Playing frisbee with some friends.



External References

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics – Women in Sport
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4156.0.55.001Feature%20Article3May%202009?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4156.0.55.001&issue=May%202009&num=&view>
2. Sport Scotland – The health benefits of an active lifestyle for women
http://www.isrm.co.uk/technical/docs/200812051019364_-_The_health_benefits_of_an_active_lifestyle_for_women.pdf



Further information

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