

Does regular exercise help protect against viruses?

Are you wondering if exercise helps your immune system protect you from catching cold and flu viruses? On one hand, it makes sense that exercising may provide added protection, given all that we know about its health benefits, like lowering risk for chronic diseases, reducing stress, improving sleep, etc.



The Truth Is...

We don't know for sure. But there is evidence to suggest there is a link between getting regular exercise and having a healthy immune system. Here's how a regular exercise habit may help keep your immune system in balance:

- Improves the ability of immune cells to circulate throughout the body which enhances immune activity. On the other hand, over-exercising may decrease immune capacity.
- Reduces inflammation when it is not otherwise needed to fight infections.
- Diversifies the kinds of healthy microorganisms found in your gut.
- Reduces the loss of immune function as we age.

The Bottom Line

Getting regular exercise helps strengthen your body, calms your mind, and helps build social connections when done with others. Boosting your immune system may be one more health benefit to add to the long list of reasons why being physical active is good for you.