

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH - THE IMPORTANCE

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**ABSTRACT**

For decades, physical education has been a college curricula component. These days, however, a lot of colleges have had to cut back on physical education due to financial constraints. Other colleges have eliminated or shortened their requirements for physical education to raise the test scores of students by spending less time in the gymnasium and more time in the classroom. According to the NASPE or the National Association of Sports and Physical Education, students in colleges need to spend one hundred fifty minutes per week in physical education. Educators need to emphasize the importance of a strong program for physical education and place a priority on children being active at colleges

## **Introduction**

Physical education in India is often a neglected part of education and many schools across the country do not realize the importance of having physical education as a part of the system. There are many benefits that are available from physical education and there are a few schools that have managed to strike the balance between academics and physical fitness.

Some of the benefits of having a physical education in India are

### **Proper Physical Growth**

Schools that provide physical education from an early age have understood the importance of all round growth. Physical education helps in development of muscles and bones and children kept fit from an early age. Obesity is a problem among many children and this can be partly solved by stressing on physical education. Obesity can lead to many problems such as diabetes, heart problems and imbalances in hormones in children. Encouraging physical education in schools will help to contain the problem of obesity to an extent. Children who are enrolled in some form of sport or the other reap the benefits in the long run.

### **Growing Future Sportsmen**

Some children show signs of interest in sports from an early age and these prodigies should be encouraged and given the proper amount of guidance in schools. In India several children are restricted from playing sports, despite showing signs of early excellence. With proper support and systems in place children will be able to bring out the best in themselves and they may even go on to represent the country at some point in the future. Thus, encouraging physical education India is important and schools must realize the potential benefits that can be achieved from just a few hours of activity every day.

### **Escape From Routine**

Physical education in India also serves to distract the children from a set routine and provides an escape from the tedious hours in a classroom. Short periods of physical activity can be a good way to relieve some of the pressure that is bound to build up in a classroom.

### **Stress relief**

Children have to cope with different types of pressure in a classroom and also among their friends, and engaging in some form of physical activity can be a good way to relieve some of

this stress. After a stressful day at school, playing some form of sport is a good way to release some steam.

### **Confidence building**

Excellence in some form of sport or physical activity will provide children with confidence. Introverted children will be able to express themselves through sports and this is one of the main aspects of physical education in India. Children who are allowed to take part in inter schools games and sporting events, meet new people and this builds confidence and also builds a sense of companionship and camaraderie. Children who take part in team sports will be able to visualize themselves as being a part of a group and this will be beneficial when they are a part of work groups in the future. Physical education in India has to be encouraged and schools have to understand the importance of having a separate period for physical activity.

Physical education is important because it provides students with knowledge of how to maintain and live a healthy lifestyle. Dr. Germund Hesslow an internationally renowned cerebellum researcher at Lund University in Sweden, his expertise is in the research of paralysis caused by spinal cord injuries. When posed the question, "does physical activity increase learning?" Dr. Hesslow responded this way, "No. There are too many variables involved in learning: environments, genetics, attitudes, individual learning capacity, curriculum delivery, learning and teaching strengths, etc." Dr. Hesslow was asked what role does physical activity play in the development of learning?" Dr. Hesslow said that all things being equal, a physically active child will have an **ADVANTAGE** in learning and that an inactive child is at a **disadvantage** for learning. Quality physical education provides needed physical activity in the school day and that gives students an advantage for learning, and therefore, may help increase student achievement.

Source:-

[http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/northside.dekeon/physical\\_education\\_is\\_important\\_because](http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/northside.dekeon/physical_education_is_important_because)

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## The Benefits of Physical Activity

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It can help:

- Control your weight
- Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease
- Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Reduce your risk of some cancers
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- Increase your chances of living longer

If you're not sure about becoming active or boosting your level of physical activity because you're afraid of getting hurt, the good news is that **moderate-intensity aerobic activity**, like brisk walking, is generally **safe for most people**.

**Start slowly.** Cardiac events, such as a heart attack, are rare during physical activity. But the risk does go up when you suddenly become much more active than usual. For example, you can put yourself at risk if you don't usually get much physical activity and then all of a sudden do vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, like shoveling snow. That's why it's important to start slowly and gradually increase your level of activity.

**If you have a chronic health condition** such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease, talk with your doctor to find out if your condition limits, in any way, your ability to be active. Then, work with your doctor to come up with a physical activity plan that matches your abilities. If your condition stops you from meeting the minimum *Guidelines*, try to do as much as you can. What's important is that you avoid being inactive. Even 60 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity is good for you.

**The bottom line is** - the health benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks of getting hurt.

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If you want to know more about how physical activity improves your health, the section below gives more detail on what research studies have found.

### **Control Your Weight**

Looking to get to or stay at a healthy weight? Both diet and physical activity play a critical role in controlling your weight. You gain weight when the calories you burn, including those burned during physical activity, are less than the calories you eat or drink. For more information see our section on [balancing calories](#). When it comes to weight management, people vary greatly in how much physical activity they need. You may need to be more active than others to achieve or maintain a healthy weight.

**To maintain your weight:** Work your way up to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, or an equivalent mix of the two each week. Strong scientific evidence shows that physical activity can help you maintain your weight over time. However, the exact amount of physical activity needed to do this is not clear since it varies greatly from person to person. It's possible that you may need to do more than the equivalent of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week to maintain your weight.

**To lose weight and keep it off:** You will need a high amount of physical activity unless you also adjust your diet and reduce the amount of calories you're eating and drinking. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight requires both regular physical activity and a healthy eating plan. The CDC has some great tools and information about nutrition, physical activity and weight loss. For more information, visit [Healthy Weight](#).

### **Reduce Your Risk of Cardiovascular Disease**

Heart disease and stroke are two of the leading causes of death in the United States. But following the Guidelines and getting at least 150 minutes a week (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity can put you at a lower risk for these diseases. You can reduce your risk even further with more physical activity. Regular physical activity can also lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol levels.

### **Reduce your risk of Type 2 Diabetes and Metabolic Syndrome**

Regular physical activity can reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a condition in which you have some combination of too

much fat around the waist, high blood pressure, low HDL cholesterol, high triglycerides, or high blood sugar. Research shows that lower rates of these conditions are seen with 120 to 150 minutes (2 hours to 2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of at least moderate-intensity aerobic activity. And the more physical activity you do, the lower your risk will be.

**Already have type 2 diabetes?** Regular physical activity can help control your blood glucose levels. To find out more, visit [Diabetes and Me](#).

### **Reduce Your Risk of Some Cancers**

Being physically active lowers your risk for two types of cancer: colon and breast. Research shows that:

- Physically active people have a lower risk of colon cancer than do people who are not active.
- Physically active women have a lower risk of breast cancer than do people who are not active.

**Reduce your risk of endometrial and lung cancer.** Although the research is not yet final, some findings suggest that your risk of endometrial cancer and lung cancer may be lower if you get regular physical activity compared to people who are not active.

**Improve your quality of life.** If you are a cancer survivor, research shows that getting regular physical activity not only helps give you a better quality of life, but also improves your physical fitness.

### **Strengthen Your Bones and Muscles**

As you age, it's important to protect your bones, joints and muscles. Not only do they support your body and help you move, but keeping bones, joints and muscles healthy can help ensure that you're able to do your daily activities and be physically active. Research shows that doing **aerobic, muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening physical activity** of at least a moderately-intense level **can slow the loss of bone density** that comes with age.

**Hip fracture** is a serious health condition that can have life-changing negative effects, especially if you're an older adult. But research shows that people who do 120 to 300 minutes of at least moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week have a lower risk of hip fracture.

**Regular physical activity helps with arthritis** and other conditions affecting the joints. If you have arthritis, research shows that doing 130 to 150 (2 hours and 10 minutes to 2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of moderate-intensity, low-impact aerobic activity can not only improve your ability to manage pain and do everyday tasks, but it can also make your quality of life better.

**Build strong, healthy muscles.** Muscle-strengthening activities can help you increase or maintain your muscle mass and strength. Slowly increasing the amount of weight and number of repetitions you do will give you even more benefits, no matter your age.

### **Improve Your Mental Health and Mood**

Regular physical activity can help keep your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp as you age. It can also reduce your risk of depression and may help you sleep better. Research has shown that doing aerobic or a mix of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities 3 to 5 times a week for 30 to 60 minutes can give you these mental health benefits. Some scientific evidence has also shown that even lower levels of physical activity can be beneficial.

### **Improve Your Ability to do Daily Activities and Prevent Falls**

A functional limitation is a loss of the ability to do everyday activities such as climbing stairs, grocery shopping, or playing with your grandchildren.

**How does this relate to physical activity?** If you're a physically active middle-aged or older adult, you have a lower risk of functional limitations than people who are inactive

**Already have trouble doing some of your everyday activities?** Aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities can help improve your ability to do these types of tasks.

**Are you an older adult who is at risk for falls?** Research shows that doing **balance** and **muscle-strengthening activities** each week along with **moderate-intensity aerobic activity**, like brisk walking, can help reduce your risk of falling.

### **Increase Your Chances of Living Longer**

Science shows that physical activity can reduce your risk of dying early from the leading causes of death, like heart disease and some cancers. This is remarkable in two ways:

1. Only a few lifestyle choices have as large an impact on your health as physical activity. People who are physically active for about 7 hours a week have a 40 percent lower risk of dying early than those who are active for less than 30 minutes a week.
2. You don't have to do high amounts of activity or vigorous-intensity activity to reduce your risk of premature death. You can put yourself at lower risk of dying early by doing at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity.

**Everyone can gain the health benefits of physical activity** - age, ethnicity, shape or size do not matter.

### **Get Better Performance in Academics with Physical Education**

A good program of physical education also promotes minds that are healthy. Children who are active physically do better in academics than those who are not active physically. One study done over a thirty-nine year period consisting of 58,000 students revealed that standardized test scores and grades improved for students that participated in school fitness programs. Better behavior in the classroom and sharper concentration are results of physical activity. Schools which sacrificed their time for physical activity for time in the classroom did not see significant student academic performance improvements.

Among students getting more physical activity, one reason for improved academic performance may be because physical activities scattered throughout the day improve the concentration ability of students. These breaks seem to help kids focus more when they are in the classroom. With increased concentration abilities, students have more of a capability of engaging in problem solving activities and focusing on academic tasks. The benefits of more focused concentration indicates that the time quantity lost by letting students get involved in physical education is made up in the improved quality of their overall education due to better focus.

### **Physical Education Promotes a Healthy Lifestyle**

There are substantial amount of stress that high school students go through due to peer pressure, families, part time jobs, homework and curriculum. Involvement in recreational activities and sports as well as other forms of physical fitness offer one way that stress can be relieved. You are never too young to begin a program of physical fitness promoting a



healthier lifestyle. As a matter of fact, children will greatly benefit from a school's physical fitness program. It is recommended by the Surgeon General that kids participate in sixty minutes of physical activity each day. Many children do not follow this recommendation but for their good physical condition, those who do can expect to receive benefits for life.

The importance of physical health is something that physical education teaches students. Eating disorders prevail and the meaning of 'overweight' becomes misinterpreted in high school. Physical education and health informs kids on sound practices of eating and essential nutrition guidelines. Getting moderate physical activity amounts every day will encourage students to make healthier life choices. These days, many students rarely go outdoors to participate in physical activities like sports and lead pretty sedentary lives. This is unlike past decades where a lot of physical activity and sports seemed to be the norm rather than the exception. Students that get involved in physical activity stay healthy and burn calories.

The role that schools play is critical in increasing physical activities by offering daily physical education of high qualities as well as other chances for recreation. Children are not just given opportunities to be active through physical education, but they are also able to learn skills they need for remaining active their entire lives.

The years in high school are when students begin setting personal, long term habits. Physical education lets them understand fully how important it is to take care of their bodies. It also helps them in learning how to go about it. Typically, teachers in gym teach kids various exercises and how to execute these properly. Classes in physical education teach students about healthy routines and health-related fitness. When kids pick up habits of exercise at young ages, there are greater chances of carrying these habits with them into their adulthood years. People who regularly exercise have lower risks of developing colon cancer, high blood pressure and diabetes. They are also less chances of premature death due to heart disease and other similar health problems. Exercise lower feelings of depression and anxiety and provides people with emotional benefits. Often, muscles, joints and bones are stronger in people who regularly exercise.

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