

Exercise and “The Blues”

It’s that time of the year again – time for the rush and excitement of the Holiday season. While the rest of the world seems to be running around from party to party, many seniors may be feeling a bit of “The Blues” during these busy months. Between the pressures of all of the things we “should” be doing, and perhaps missing loved ones and friends who are no longer with us, the holidays can bring on an edge of depression.

Studies by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) estimate that 7 million American adults over the age of 65 experience depression each year. Many of these individuals are at a higher risk as a result of a sedentary lifestyle and medication side effects.

Studies have revealed the positive, mood-altering effects of exercises on seniors, regardless of age or gender. The changes in levels of anxiety, mood and depression after exercise are most often explained by:

1. A rise in endorphin levels. (exercise promotes psychological well-being by increasing the secretion of endorphins, which reduce the sensation of pain and produce a state of euphoria)
2. Exercise leads to an increase in the availability of brain neurotransmitters (e.g., serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine) that are diminished with depression.
3. Exercise also increases body temperature and blood circulation to the brain, both of which help contribute to a rise in an overall feeling of well-being (1).

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/#i1523-5998-8-2-106-b3>

If you or a loved suspect depression, consult a professional to rule out other possible causes, but consider giving group fitness classes a try. In many cases, just getting out among a group with similar interests and being physically active can help alleviate the most troublesome symptoms of depression and put a little extra energy into your day.

The symptoms of depression vary from person to person. In seniors, some of the most common symptoms include:

- ✓ feeling sadness or "emptiness"
- ✓ feeling hopeless, cranky, nervous, or guilty for no reason
- ✓ sudden lack of enjoyment in favorite pastimes
- ✓ fatigue
- ✓ loss of concentration or memory
- ✓ either insomnia or too much sleep
- ✓ eating too much or eating too little
- ✓ suicidal thoughts or attempts
- ✓ aches and pains
- ✓ headaches
- ✓ abdominal cramps
- ✓ digestive issues

<http://www.healthline.com/health/depression/elderly-and-aging#symptoms2>



To locate FREE local senior fitness classes in your area, please visit:

<https://franchise.live2bhealthy.com/class-schedule/>

Enter your zip code to find locations near you.

www.Live2BHealthy.com