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EXERCISE *is* MEDICINE

by *Laura Simoncini*

Physical inactivity is a fast-growing public health problem and contributes to a variety of chronic diseases and health complications, including obesity, diabetes, and cancer. In addition to improving a patient's overall health, increasing physical activity has proven effective in the treatment and prevention of chronic disease. Even now with all the benefits of physical activity in the United States and other countries, the levels of inactivity are alarming. We are facing what is now referred to as an "inactivity epidemic" with tremendous costs.

Exercise is still the best medicine and it is good for you. According to a Harvard health article published October 2014, "regular exercise can slow down the aging process and may be able to offset the disease-causing cellular damage." We are doing all these great things to keep people living longer, but when people hit their 60s, 70s, and 80s they are more likely to have more chronic disease said Dr. Daniel Forman, head of Geriatric Cardiology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

In a nutshell, the more exercise you get the better off you will be. Exercise has a cumulative benefit. People who exercise regularly have very different outcomes than people who give it up after 10 years Dr. Forman emphasizes.

Mountains of research attest to the fact that exercise can fight off disease. On the external side of things, studies show that regular exercise can combat depression, even in people who do not respond well to antidepressants. Exercise is such a



powerful tonic for our emotional state that some experts consider it

a legitimate treatment option for people with mild depression. As for "runner's high," it's real. German scientists have shown that the rush is not related to endorphins but to an increase in the level of endocannabinoids in the bloodstream. Working out spikes the body's naturally occurring cannabis, triggering a state of euphoria and relaxation.

In 2015 The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges put out a report calling exercise a "miracle cure."

There are many different workout options. Swimming, brisk walking, and weight training are all great ways to get the heart pumping. Another workout option is Pilates. Pilate's popularity has greatly increased because it exercises your body and your mind. The mind/body connection is so pronounced in the Pilates method that a student must use imagery and concentration to make sure they are initiating the moves from the right place.

With that being said let's get moving. The key is to find a pattern of exercise you can stick with.

Laura Simoncini is a Certified Pilates instructor and owner of Laura's Ultimate Pilates. 📍

