

Exercise Handout 1:

Pros and cons of exercise: Building motivation

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See also [Fact Sheet: Exercise and depression](#)



Regular exercise can be an effective way to reduce symptoms of depression.

However, when you are feeling depressed it can be difficult to motivate yourself to become active. Weighing up the costs and benefits of exercising regularly can help to boost your motivation.

Write down below each of the benefits that you would like to obtain from exercise in the short term, and also in the longer term. Information about the advantages of regular exercise is provided on the following page. Choose which of these benefits is important to you. Also fill in any costs of regular exercise in the short-term and long-term (e.g. will require effort, financial cost). Reading over this can help you to weigh up the 'pros' and 'cons' of exercising.

Often people find that the long-term benefits of regular exercise outweigh any costs involved.

SHORT-TERM COSTS	SHORT-TERM BENEFITS
LONG-TERM COSTS	LONG-TERM BENEFITS

Benefits of regular exercise

Tick the benefits of exercise below that are important to you.

- Lift in mood immediately after exercise
- Reduced depression
- Reduced anxiety and stress
- Distraction from worries and negative thoughts
- Improved sleep
- Increased energy
- Improved fitness
- Opportunities to meet new people and make new friends
- Weight loss or weight maintenance
- Improvement in back and joint stiffness
- Reduced risk of numerous chronic medical conditions, and risk factors to chronic disease, including:
 - heart disease
 - type 2 diabetes
 - osteoporosis
 - strokes
 - some cancers
 - high blood pressure
 - high blood cholesterol