



Exercise your mood - The survey results are in!

We had an awesome response to our recent survey about exercise and mental health so we thought we'd share some of the results with you.

The purpose of the survey was for us to gain an understanding of whether people were aware of the benefits of exercise on mental health and how they use it to improve their mood.

The good news is most of you agreed that exercise was beneficial to both mental and physical health. We were also pretty happy to see that many of you were already getting moving, with more than 80% of respondents doing moderate to vigorous exercise at least once a week.

What kind of exercise were people doing? Mainly aerobic exercise like swimming or running, but there were also lots of people who flagged the incidental exercise associated with day-to-day activities like gardening or cleaning.

Interestingly, only around one third of respondents engaged in weight/resistance training. Research shows that this is a highly effective way to reduce the impact of poor mental health.

According to Black Dog Institute researcher and practising Exercise Physiologist Dr Simon Rosenbaum, the aim of an effective exercise program is to slowly build intensity and/or volume to maximise benefits.

“Whilst incidental exercise is certainly a good way to start moving, there are other simple and cost effective options that can be more helpful and won't take up too much of your time.”

“If you're starting from scratch, dedicate 5 minutes a day to simple resistance exercises. These include stretching an elastic resistance band or doing push-ups against a wall.”

“It's important to keep track of what you're doing and when. When things start feeling easier, it's time to step up the intensity – either by incorporating some new exercises or increasing the amount of time you spend exercising.”

“You might like to link this to a mood diary as well so you can see the positive effects it's having on your mental health.”

“Most importantly, be realistic about what you can achieve. It's better to do a small amount and feel positive about achieving it than overexerting yourself and giving up.”

Find out how you can exercise your mood and support the Black Dog Institute at the same time here <http://teamblackdog.gofundraise.com.au/cms/exerciseyourmood>

You can also read more about the science behind exercising to improve mental health at <http://exerciseright.com.au/mental-health/>