



Exercise and Immunity

Support your Immune System:

By now, you know how to protect yourself against the novel coronavirus: regular handwashing, social distancing, and maintaining a balanced diet to keep the body as healthy as possible. But there's another important aspect of supporting your overall wellbeing that can also help to boost your immune system: daily exercise.



Exercise benefits your [immune system](#) in a variety of ways. It can increase blood flow, help clear bacteria out of your airways, trigger a brief elevation in body temperature that may be protective, strengthen antibodies to help fight infection, and reduce stress hormones.

Exercise is Medicine, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Even with shelter-in-place and stay-at-home orders set up across the country, top officials like the CDC and WHO still encourage regular exercise—and for good reason. Similar to a balanced diet, exercise can contribute to better overall health and thus a healthier immune system. Understandably, lacing up your shoes for a walk/run may often feel like the last thing you want to do with schedules all over the place, and gyms having restrictions. However, daily physical activity of moderate intensity, such as walking, running, or cycling, is recommended with the goal of achieving 150 minutes per week in order to achieve health benefits. If exercise capacity is limited due to a health condition or impairment, the main message is to move more, because something is better than nothing.

Exercise safely during a pandemic:

COVID-19 closures of parks, gyms, and fitness studios are making it harder to exercise. With a second wave of restrictions among us, it may take some effort to create and adjust to new fitness routines. Here are a few suggestions to help get you moving:

- **Exercise with family:** Exercise is an excellent opportunity for family fun. Walks, bike rides, dance parties, living-room yoga sessions, or backyard soccer games are just a few examples of how you and your household members can exercise together.
- **"Office" breaks:** Make it a best practice to walk away from your desk to do any self-care activity that will reenergize you—stretch your legs, do an exercise routine, meditate, play with your dog, make a healthy lunch, or take a walk to breath in fresh air. Try out these [1-Minute Exercises and Stretches](#).
- **Take a virtual class:** Employee Health and Wellbeing offers a variety of [live virtual fitness classes](#) throughout the week. If you can't attend a class, there are [On-Demand Recordings](#) you can do at any time.
- **Tackle calorie-bringing chores:** Chores such as mowing the lawn, working in the garden, washing the car, or cleaning out the garage provide excellent opportunities to build muscles and burn calories.



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- **Get outdoors:** Walking, cycling, jogging, and hiking can help you get some much-needed fresh air while staying safely away from others. Don't have time for a full-length outdoor exercise session? Consider breaking your workout up into several 10-minute sessions. You'll be surprised at how quickly a few brisk walks around the block can add up to a full workout.

University of Delaware COVID resources:

[UD COVID-19 Updates](#)

[EHW COVID-19 Resources](#)

[UD Community Engagement Initiative](#)

[COVID-19 Support](#)

