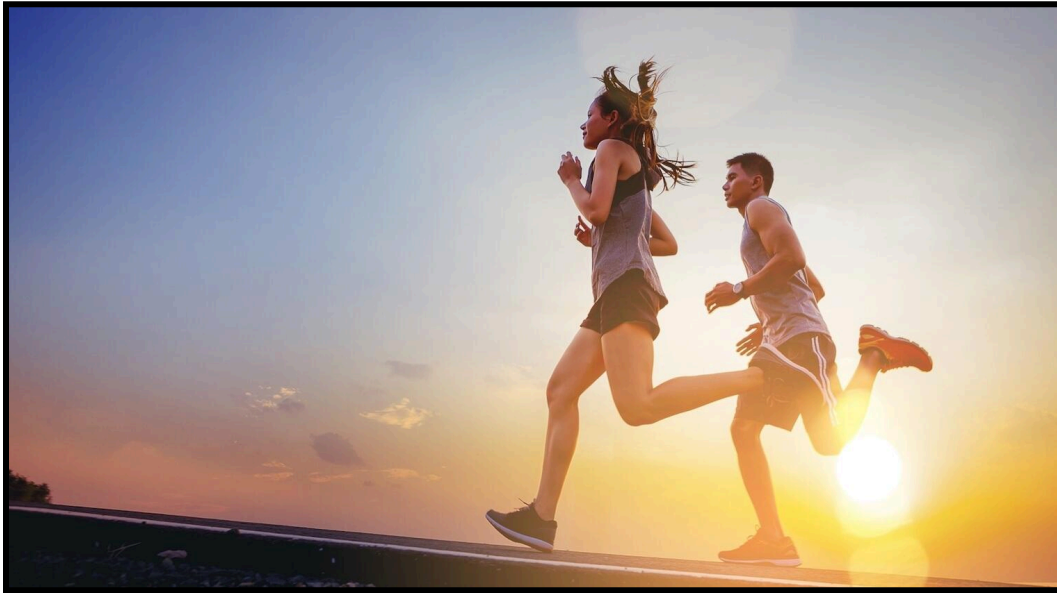




Training to Prevent Disease

Yes, exercise boosts your immune system



Exercise isn't just about shaping your physique or boosting your energy, it's also about disease prevention. It's important to keep in mind that the duration, frequency, and intensity of your training will have different effects on your immune system. **Moderate-intensity exercise is the best option for your immune system.** You only need 45-60 minutes of moderate-intensity training 3-4 times a week to improve your metabolic function. Aerobic training (like swimming or riding a bike) in combination with a few strength training are the way to go.

On the other hand, prolonged and high intensity exercise (without rest) will suppress your immune system. You do not want to run, lift heavy weights, or do any other demanding exercise for long periods of time. That hour and a half that you're spending on the treadmill is doing you more harm than good. When you're

training with little rest and recovery, you are elevating cortisol levels and increasing your physical stress. If you're training intensely everyday, take caution.

So how exactly does exercise boost your immune system?

Exercise activates your cellular immunity. Engaging in moderate-intensity exercise can boost your cellular immunity by increasing the flow of immune cells in your body. This improvement helps your body become more adept at detecting and preparing for potential infections. It enhances the recruitment and circulation of the immune system's most effective defensive cells. This allows your body to handle infectious agents more effectively.

Exercise improves the quality and quantity of your sleep. Aerobic and strength training in particular help to stimulate melatonin production later in the evening. It's best to perform that kind of exercise in the morning. If you can only exercise before bed, it's better to do light resistance movement (like yoga) instead.

Exercise decreases stress and alleviates symptoms of depression and anxiety. When we regularly exercise, we slow down the release of stress hormones and positively influence the neurotransmitters in our brain that affect mood and behavior. [If you haven't already, read our handout on how stress impacts your immune system.](#) Anything you can do to reduce stress will improve your immunity.

Don't just train for a competition, a better body, or to "get toned." Exercise to improve your quality of life and to boost your immune system.