



STRONG

How can you improve your mental and physical strength to increase your overall wellness?

We all admire people who are strong, both physically and mentally. When someone is strong, they take care of themselves, show confidence and proactivity, and serve as an inspiration to others. Staying fit and having emotional strength are also important components of your overall health. Maintaining physical activity through the decades will keep your muscles, bones and joints strong, which is important in keeping your health in check. And studies show that people that are mentally strong are physically healthier and have stronger immune systems, which can help you fight chronic disease.



STRONG STATEMENT

You're Only One Workout Away from a Good Mood

There's never a time when we can simply throw in the towel when it comes to keeping active as we age. Maintaining physical activity through the decades will keep your muscles, bones and joints strong. There are also many other mental and physical health benefits of staying physically fit, including:

- Preventing muscle and bone loss
- Reducing the risk of falling and breaking bones
- Helping prevent or delay conditions like diabetes and heart disease
- Reducing the joint swelling and pain of arthritis
- Reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Helping you stay independent longer
- Improving your sleep
- Helping you feel better and enjoy life more

How Much Exercise Should You Get Each Week?

- 2 hours and 30 minutes (150 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity
Your heart is beating faster but you can still carry on a conversation.
- 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) of vigorous intensity aerobic activity
You are breathing hard and it is difficult to have a conversation.
- Muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days

Strong Mind, Strong Body

People with inner strength embrace the fact that life has its share of ups and downs, and show resilience in the face of challenges. Having mental strength can not only improve your outlook on life, make you more successful, improve your relationships and make you more confident, but it can also improve your overall wellness. Our mental health is an important part of our overall health. Just like poor physical health can lead to increased mental health problems, the opposite is also true.

How Mental Health Affects Overall Health

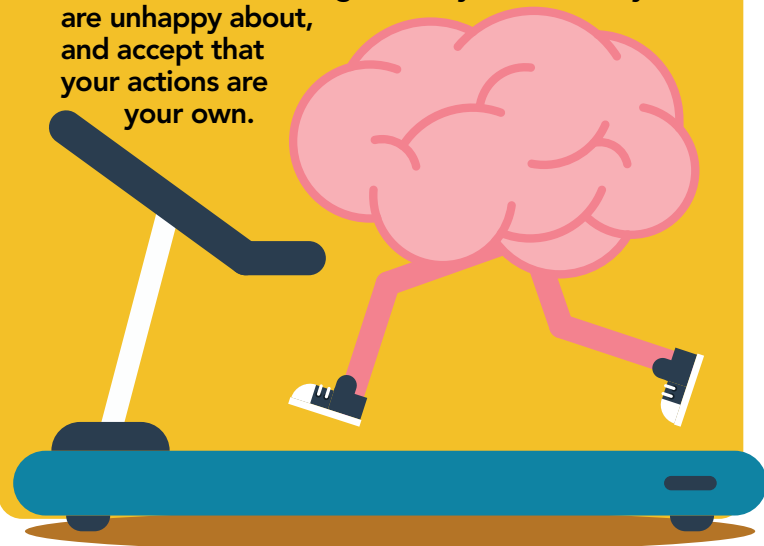
Depression is a real illness, but taking steps to increase your inner strength can make you feel more in control of your life and may make you feel happier and less anxious. People with depression and mental illness have an increased risk of:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Stroke
- Arthritis
- Alzheimer's disease

TOP 7 TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL STRENGTH

You are probably more mentally strong than you realize. But what can you do to improve your mental fitness?

- 1 **Define yourself.** Mentally strong people realize that their opinion of themselves matters more than that of others. Decide for yourself who you are and what is possible for you in your own life.
- 2 **Be open minded and adaptable.** Try not to hold onto long-held beliefs that are no longer relevant. Realize that change is inevitable, and make a concentrated effort to "go with the flow."
- 3 **Think for yourself.** Make an effort to form your own opinions rather than following the crowd.
- 4 **Don't let fear stop you from making progress.** While you can allow yourself to feel fear, make sure it's not irrational, and don't let it impede you from achieving all you are capable of.
- 5 **Be empathetic and understanding.** Avoid being judgmental and try to give everyone the benefit of the doubt.
- 6 **Don't worry, be happy.** Happiness means different things to different people. Embrace what makes you happy and resist the temptation to seek happiness based on what others believe should make you happy.
- 7 **Take full responsibility for your own life.** Try not to blame others for things about your life that you are unhappy about, and accept that your actions are your own.



ACTION ITEMS

DO ONE THING: Improve your overall health by taking steps to increase your physical and mental strength.

SHARED DECISION MAKING: Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can increase your physical strength, and don't hesitate to openly discuss how you are feeling mentally to maximize your wellness and get help if you need it.