

[IMAGE]

Get With the Program - and Stay on It!

The phrase "use it or lose it" can apply to almost anything. And Researchers in Ohio have found that this phrase rings especially true when it comes to maintaining good exercise habits. Simply put, if you start exercising and then stop, or only exercise sporadically, you'll lose the physical gains you've made along the way - and you could lose some of the accrued psychological benefits as well.

Scientists looked at the exercise habits of 28 people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a lung disorder. Participants completed a 10-week exercise rehabilitation program and were given a home exercise program to continue on their own. A year later, the researchers contacted the participants to see if they had continued exercising.

At the end of the initial program, all of the participants showed gains in physical endurance, as well as in cognitive and psychological functioning. Subjects who continued to exercise during the following year maintained these benefits, but those who had stopped exercising regularly showed "significant declines" on all physical and mental tests.

The message here is simple: If you want to improve yourself, physically, mentally and emotionally, start an exercise program and stick with it. Your doctor of chiropractic can help design an exercise program that will help you get your mind and body in better shape over the long haul.

Reference:

Emery CF, Shermer RL, Hauck ER, et al. Cognitive and psychological outcomes of exercise in a 1-year follow-up study of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. *Health Psychology* November 2003;22(6).

For more information on the benefits of exercise, visit
www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/sports/exercise/index.html.

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