

[IMAGE]

Exercise for the Mind

The physical benefits of exercise in elderly people are well-established. More recently, investigators have examined the benefits of exercise on the mental health of elderly people. A new study suggests that aerobically fit individuals tend to perform better on measures of the mind.

Building on evidence that many heart-healthy habits do the brain good, a study of 84 men and women (aged 50-77) with clinical depression were randomly assigned exercise plans for a period of four months.

Investigators found that four months of regular aerobic exercise appeared to sharpen study participants' memory and certain other mental abilities. This finding suggests exercise could counter the mental decline that comes with aging, according to the report.

The new findings, published in the *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, suggest that the mental health benefits of exercise go beyond depression. The researchers suggest that the implications are that exercise might be able to offset some of the mental declines that we often associate with the aging process.

For more information on senior health, visit <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/senior.html>.

Reference:

Khatri P, Blumenthal JA, Babyak MA, et al. Effects of exercise training on cognitive functioning among depressed older men and women. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, January 2001:9, pp. 43-47.

For additional information on sports and fitness, go to
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