

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY MAKES JACK A DULL BOY: THE SLOGAN FOR A SPARKLING TODAY

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Living in an era of “Parho ge likho ge bano ge nawab, khelo ge kudo ge tau hogay kharab” (Literacy make a person a leader while sports spoils a person) it is learnt with experience that sports spoils a person's comfort zone, opens a person up to challenges, challenging a person to meet them. A person engaged in sports is not only physically healthy but is mentally sound too. Sports mentally engage a person into positivity, distracting all physically active competitors away from conflict and negativity. Whatever negativity does exist, exists when the players fail to accept defeat until evidence based conflict resolution again strengthens bonds.¹ A person engaged in sports is psychologically motivated by dopamine based reactions which is further converted to peace and comfort based on the serotonin synthesized in the brain.

The blood flow increases to the brain by sports, increasing the frequency of neuronal impulses and hence brain functions. The best aspect of sports is the enhancement of problem-solving skills. The prefrontal cortex and the dopamine channels are regulated majorly with sports. Enhanced perception and awareness is displayed by individuals who are physically active regularly.^{2,3} Achieving milestones as victories at various levels creates a homeostatic milieu that is a mixture of dopamine, adrenalin and endorphins, creating a feeling of euphoria. Regular physical activity improves the cognitive capacity due to its effect on hippocampal activity promoting memory, the most needed impact in old age against dementia. Regular aerobic exercises is one of the best blessings one can get for a healthy brain and body including walking, jogging, dancing, pedalling regularly accompanied with a healthy diet, mental training activities and social interaction. The changes in the cortical volume and thickness throughout the lifespan are an evidence of the influence of exercise in different healthy populations.⁴

Neurotransmitters released as a result of exercise and physical activities may have effects as potential antidepressants. The physical benefits of sports are obvious, but the effects on mental health because of physical activity are now a matter much discussed and researched.

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