

## The Health Benefits of Golf

The evidence shows that playing golf regularly is associated with longevity and reducing the risk factors for heart disease/stroke. And it can boost older people's strength and balance. The sport is also associated with good mental health and improving the overall health of those with disabilities. Below are a few suggestions of how golf maximizes your health.

### Benefits of Being Outdoors

Being outdoors is fun, but even more importantly, it's good for the brain, body, and soul. Having exposure to green areas relaxes the body and reduces stress and anxiety. The benefit of sunlight soaks up vitamin D, promotes bone growth in the young, and reduces the risk of depression, heart disease and a few cancers.

### Social Enjoyment

Learning to play golf is one of the greatest things you can do professionally and personally. Golf is a game for life and when you consider the joy through relationships that are developed in golf you can begin to see why. Golf has bridged communication gaps between parents and adolescent children, it has introduced and forged lifelong friendships and yes, it has led to new business opportunities. The relationships are not forced and contrived, because a passionate golfer can appreciate another who shares his or her zeal for the game.

### Healthy Exercise

For many, golf is both an enjoyable game, and a way to get in some healthy exercise. Whether it's played by walking the course, taking a cart or practicing at the range, golf is a relaxing way to burn off extra calories, even if it's just a nine-hole outing. Walking, carrying clubs, and swinging can burn up to 1000 calories in a single round.

### Heart health

Any form of physical exercise helps get the blood pumping to your heart. Walking, carrying your bag and swinging all increase your heart rate and blood flow. Your risk of a stroke and diabetes are reduced, and there can be positive effects on reducing blood pressure and harmful cholesterol, especially if combined with a healthy diet and lifestyle. The Norwegian Golf Federation (NGF) found that during an 18-hole round, a player will have an average heart rate of 100 beats per minute, over a two-to-five-hour period.

### Brain Stimulation

Clive Ballard, director of research at the Alzheimer's Society, says... "Whether it is going for a jog or walking the golf course, keeping physically active is a great way to keep your heart and your brain healthy. By keeping active you make sure your brain has a good, strong blood supply, which is essential to help it function better now and in future." The challenge of the game boosts confidence and self-esteem while the mental willingness involved in tallying scores, improve strategy and the hand-eye coordination will keep the brain active in logical functions.

### Improved sleep

Exercise and fresh air are a powerful combination for improved sleep. Walking the course will give you a good workout. Regular exercise helps you sleep faster and remain in a deep sleep for longer. Sleep helps your muscles rest and repair

### Improved Vision

The eyes are a muscle like everything else. We need to look after them and train them, just like the rest of our body we can protect it and train it. Once we do, we have better vision. Golf requires good vision to zoom in on that round little white ball that may be yards away.

### Reduces Stress

Walk out of the house, leave the cell phone by your bed and hit the golf course. Breathe in the fresh air and soak up the sunshine. Your body immediately begins to produce endorphins, the feel-good hormones that boost your mood naturally in a way no anti-depressant ever could. Golf reduces stress and increases mental capacity, creativity and ability to solve problems, all of which are undoubted positives.