

# REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR MANAGING SOCIAL ANXIETY

## INFORMATION SHEET

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Regular physical activity has been shown to have numerous benefits for people with social anxiety, including reducing stress and anxiety levels, boosting mood, improving self-esteem, and promoting better sleep. Exercise releases endorphins, which are natural mood enhancers, and lowers cortisol levels, the hormone associated with stress.

To incorporate physical activity into your routine and see the benefits for your social anxiety, it's important to start small and find an activity that you enjoy. This could be anything from a simple daily walk, to an organized sport or workout. Aim to engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes, most days of the week. You can also set achievable fitness goals and track your progress to gain a sense of accomplishment and improve your self-image.

Remember, everyone is different and it may take time to find the right type and amount of physical activity that works for you. It's important to listen to your body and make adjustments as needed. It's also a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise program, especially if you have any medical conditions.

- Aerobic exercise, such as jogging, cycling, or swimming, can be a great way to improve cardiovascular health and release endorphins. Aim for 30-60 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, 3-5 times a week.
- Anaerobic exercise, such as weightlifting, can help build muscle and improve self-esteem. Aim for 2-3 sets of 8-12 reps of each exercise, 2-3 times a week.
- Incorporating both types of exercise into your routine can provide a balanced approach to physical activity.
- Remember, it's important to start slowly and gradually increase intensity and duration over time to reduce the risk of injury.
- Listen to your body and avoid over-exercising, which can increase stress and anxiety levels.
- Find physical activities that you enjoy, whether it be a sport, dance class, or outdoor activity, to make exercise more enjoyable and sustainable in the long term.

Please keep in mind that these guidelines are general suggestions and may not be appropriate for everyone. It's important to talk to a doctor before starting any new exercise routine, especially if you have a medical condition or injury.