



## David Fairlamb

# THE FIT FACTOR

### LIFESTYLE CHANGE

If you suffer from depression, research has proved that exercise can be hugely beneficial, it's time to make it a priority in your weekly routine.

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**R**ESearch has now shown that less than one hour's exercise a week could prevent depression.

Previously it was thought that more exercise and intensity was needed to make a difference but when examining data from almost 34,000 people it was found that this statistic was true, regardless of intensity.

Those who did not exercise were almost twice as likely to suffer from depression compared to those who exercised one to two hours a week, while 12% of depression cases could have been prevented by a small amount of regular exercise. That could be over two million people in the UK.

Millions are impacted by mental illness each year, with new official data revealing that one in three work sickness notes handed out by GPs are now for mental health.

Here are some stats:

■ One in four people in the UK are affected by a mental illness, according to the NHS, with the number of prescriptions being dispensed in England having doubled in the past decade.

■ In England, one in six people report experiencing a common mental health problem (such as anxiety and depression) in any given week.

■ North East England is unfortunately the UK's depression and anxiety hot spot. Some 18.7% of people there had some evidence of depression or anxiety, when last surveyed in 2014-15.

■ It is estimated that in the United States, 16 million adults had at least one major depressive episode in 2012.

■ According to the World Health Organization, 350 million people worldwide suffer from depression and it is one of the most common causes of mental illness.

*The mind and body are not separate, what affects one affects the other*

**Motivational quote of the day**

With sedentary lifestyles becoming more of the norm worldwide, rates of depression are growing. Treatments for depression usually involve medication, psychotherapy, or cognitive behavioural therapy or a combination of these approaches.

However, this new evidence of a small amount of exercise can have a real positive impact is particularly positive and in many

cases easy to apply.

The good news is the type of exercise can be very light - it could be as simple as a 15-minute walk four times a week.

The important thing is to commit to changes that will help you live a happier and more positive life.



➤ Taking a short walk a few times a week can do wonders for your mental health

### FITNESS TIP

Avoid wasting time and energy worrying about what other people are doing - concentrate on what you want to achieve. Focus on getting the most out of your own ability - you can't do any more than that.