News that's not fake!

Welcome to PhysioBiz, with healthcare advice and information you can trust and rely on, brought to you by the South African Society of Physiotherapy!

Fish oil supplements may not help the heart: Study

(Healthday News 1 February 2018)

Most popular vitamin and mineral supplements provide no health benefit, study finds

(ScienceDaily, 28 May 2018)

Low-dose aspirin offers no overall benefit for healthy older people, research says

(Washington Post, 16 September 2018)

Are you taking any supplements? (Costly stuff it can be, too.) Daily aspirin, just in case, like two of my relatives? Well, you might want to think again, if these headlines are anything to go by.

The barrage of headlines is constant, relentless, and all too often these days we are seeing trusted beliefs overturned by science. (Sometimes the belief is restored a few years later with another published paper; and then that, too, is knocked down. Never trust just one piece of research; wait until it has been replicated, several times by preference.)

Google "study shows no benefit 2018" and these three headlines will not be the only ones to surface on the first pages.

So what health advice can you trust?

Google "study shows no benefit from exercise" (leave the date out of it to dredge for the widest result) and what do you get?

In the top ten results; this:

Study shows benefits of exercise can outweigh health effects of severe obesity

(ScienceDaily 12 February 2018)

Greater health benefit from exercise than previously reported

(The Harvard Gazette, 6 November 2017)

Health benefits of physical activity: the evidence

(Canadian Medical Association Journal, 14 March 2006)

In fact, it's quite difficult to find any research that shows anything other than **benefits** to exercise.

"The human body was designed to move," says Dr Ina Diener, deputy president of the South African Society of Physiotherapy. "It's hardly surprising, therefore, that every facet of a human being benefits from getting some basic exercise in most days of the week. The results can be surprising – not just improved cardiovascular health or reduced risk of cancers and Type 2 diabetes, a whole lot more."

Some of those surprises include:

- In November 2005, "a report in the Journal of Dentistry shows that physical activity may also reduce the risk of contracting periodontitis [gum disease]".
- It increases sexual libido in women who have lost it due to taking certain anti-depressants or as a result of menopause, probably by increasing sympathetic nervous system activity and critical endocrine factors.
- A paper published in the journal *Sleep* in April this year concluded that "Moderate-intensity resistance exercise or stretching decreased insomnia severity and improved objective and subjective sleep in patients with chronic insomnia."
- Regular exercise helps to fix constipation.
- It keeps your skin younger: Mark Tarnopolsky, a professor of paediatrics and exercise science at McMasters University, found that people over the age of 40 who exercise regularly have healthier skin. Their skin was found to be closer in composition to that of 20- and 30-year-olds.

"These are all desirable outcomes – glowing skin, happy tummy, strong teeth – but how much exercise should a person do?" asks Dr Diener. The answer is surprisingly little. "… low-intensity physical activity, such as standing, walking or doing household chores, can be more health beneficial than once thought. According to a study from Karolinska Institutet published in the journal Clinical Epidemiology, replacing half an hour's sedentariness a day with everyday activity reduces the risk of fatal cardiovascular disease by 24 per cent." (ScienceDaily, 25 January 2018)

"You'll often find a minimum of 150 minutes a week being touted," says Dr Diener. "But every person is different and has unique needs. Consult your physiotherapist, who is an expert in tailor-making a programme of exercises specifically for you."

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