

## The Miracle Drug - Part One

*“Two thirds of healthcare costs are driven by our daily choices - WE are in the driver’s seat.” (Institute of Medicine 2006)*

There’s a miracle drug that’s been on the market for a long time that:

- Reduces the risk of heart disease by 40%
- Increases the good cholesterol (HDL)
- Lowers the risk of stroke by 27%
- Improves mental sharpness
- Reduces the incidence of diabetes by almost 50%
- Improves the quality of sleep
- Reduces the incidence of high blood pressure by almost 50%
- Can slow the aging process
- Can reduce mortality and the risk of recurrent breast cancer by almost 50%
- Can relieve stress and anxiety
- Can lower the risk of colon cancer by over 60%
- Enhances your self-image
- Helps maintain a healthy weight and body composition
- Can reduce the risk of developing of Alzheimer’s disease by 33%
- Can decrease mild to moderate depression as effectively as Prozac or behavioral therapy
- Improves the quality of your life

WOW!

I’ll bet you’d like your prescription to this magic pill, wouldn’t you?

Well, the short and sweet version of this prescription is...

### **EXERCISE Daily!**

May is Exercise is Medicine™ month! The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), along with the American Medical Association (AMA) launched the Exercise is Medicine™ program to recognize, emphasize and celebrate the valuable health benefits of exercise on a national scale. Exercise and physical activity are important to health, the prevention & treatment of many chronic diseases, and tremendous health benefits are seen with even low levels of exercise.

This week, I’m going to talk about cardio-respiratory, or aerobic, exercise. And, in next week’s post, I’ll outline the recommendations for strength training, flexibility and neuro-muscular (functional) training.

### **Cardio-respiratory (Aerobic) Exercise**

Cardio-respiratory exercise is all about exercising your heart and lungs to make them more efficient at delivering life-giving oxygen to the cells of your body.

Oh, you thought it was about weight loss? Well, granted, aerobic exercise is known to help your body “burn” excess calories, aiding in losing weight. However, even thin folks need to exercise their heart and lungs!

I will NOT get up on my soapbox to rant about how the dysfunctional marriage of exercise and diet mentality needs to head to divorce court. **I will NOT get up on my soapbox to rant about how the dysfunctional marriage of exercise and diet mentality needs to head to divorce court.** I will NOT get up on my soapbox to rant about how the dysfunctional marriage of exercise and diet mentality needs to head to divorce court.

Oops, sorry...

So, to maintain health and reduce the risk for chronic disease, do moderately intense cardio-respiratory exercise, such as walking or low-impact aerobics, for 30 minutes a day, five days a week (150 minutes), or do vigorously intense cardio-respiratory exercise, such as jogging or running, for 20 minutes a day, three days a week (60 minutes).

\*Note: Now, if you DO want to shed some pounds or you're training for an athletic event, you'll need to increase your time on the track or in the spin class to around 60 minutes, five days a week (300 minutes) of moderate activity or 40 minutes, three times per week (120 minutes) of vigorous activity.

You may want to know how to gauge your intensity level - what's considered moderate and what's considered vigorous?

An easy way to do this is to the “talk test.” If you can carry on a normal conversation while exercising, you're probably working at a moderate pace. If you can only get out a sentence at a time before taking a breath while exercising, then you're probably exercising at a vigorous intensity.

If it's difficult for you to find time to get in 30 or 60 minutes at a time, the research shows that short bouts of exercise throughout the day are just as effective. Check out this article (<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/15/how-1-minute-intervals-can-improve-our-health/>) about HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training), which uses one-minute intervals of exercise!

A great way to work the exercise into your day is to wear a pedometer and aspire to walk 10,000 steps a day or about five miles. The Walking Site (<http://www.thewalkingsite.com/10000steps.html>) has some nice tips on how to get started.

If you're reluctant to join a gym or the weather always seems to thwart your walks, Leslie Sansone (<http://www.walkathome.com/>) offers some neat DVDs so you can walk (and jog) at home.

If you're interested in learning to jog/run, the C25K program is awesome for the novice.

Other forms of cardio-respiratory exercise are things like Zumba, cycling, cross-country skiing, roller skating - anything that elevates your heart rate and sustains it for at least 20 minutes.

What's your favorite Cardio work? Leave it in the comments below and come back next week to learn more about Strength Training, Flexibility and Neuro-muscular training.

Please leave your comments, questions and ideas below. And, remember, "It is never too late to be what you might have been." -George Eliot

Lisa :-)

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And, do eight to 10 strength-training exercises, performing eight to 12 repetitions of

each exercise twice a week.

“Nature is our best teacher. Never in a hurry, always growing or resting.” - Brenda Knowles Golbus