

# SPORT is health!

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## THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF SPORT

### WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY :

Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires the expenditure of energy. Physical activity of moderate or sustained intensity has beneficial effects on health.

### BEWARE OF INJURIES



- ✓ Warm up, as it helps to irrigate the muscles and prepare them for exertion
- ✓ Stretch (not necessarily after sport, but as soon as possible)
- ✓ Girdle up (exercises to strengthen abdominal and back muscles)
- ✓ Dose your training load and vary your activities
- ✓ Learning to coordinate the body in space through proprioception (awareness of the position of different parts of the body)
- ✓ Eat well and sleep well

### ADVICE FROM MÉLISSA MONGIS, PHYSICAL TRAINER AND MASSEUSE

#### What to do when your back hurts ?

Warmth can be applied locally to relax muscles and avoid painful movements at first.

Once the pain has subsided a little, it's important to get moving again quickly, mobilizing and stretching the area and surrounding muscles. Movement is the enemy of pain! Restoring movement is essential.

That's why, in the event of pain, it's important to :  
Strengthen your abdominal, lumbar and pelvic muscles, mobilize the entire spine and pelvis, stretch the muscles around the painful area: hamstrings, glutes, quadriceps and hip flexors, adductors, quadratus lumborum, etc.

Instagram account : [\\_melissamongis](#)

#### Reduce cardiovascular risks (hypertension, diabetes)

Physical activity strengthens the heart. Heart rate and blood pressure gradually decrease. Vessel walls also become more flexible.

#### Reduce mental health problems and improve well-being

Hormones secreted during physical activity are a source of well-being. These include endorphin (the so-called "anti-stress" hormone), serotonin (which increases nerve connections), dopamine (involved in the reward circuit) and adrenalin (the hormone of strong sensations).

#### Prevent cancer

Sport has direct effects on circulating levels of certain hormones, and indirect effects through the reduction of obesity, which can lead to cancer.

#### Improving bone health

Sport promotes the accumulation of minerals in the bones of children and adolescents. In adults, physical activity maintains bone mass.

#### Do's

- ✓ The French Ministry of Sports recommends 30 minutes of sporting activity a day, i.e. around 3 sessions a week, and walking or cycling
- ✓ Encourage toddlers' mobility by avoiding leaving them in a stroller or high chair for too long, and by offering them interactive games on the floor
- ✓ For people aged 70 and over, practising an adapted sporting activity will improve functional capacities and prevent falls
- ✓ Practice a variety of endurance and muscle-strengthening activities when pregnant, up to and including childbirth and post-partum

#### Don'ts

- ✗ Do not engage in strenuous physical activity when you have a fever
- ✗ Don't take part in sports at outdoor temperatures below -5°C or above +30°C, or during pollution peaks
- ✗ Do not smoke for 2 hours before or after taking part in sporting activities
- ✗ Don't do sport because of back pain: back problems are often caused by a lack of physical activity

## BEST PRACTICES FROM EUROPEAN PARTNERS

The Swedish Sports Confederation and CAR Sant Cugat (Spain) are partners with INSEP in a project called "MENTIS". This project aims to promote the mental health of top-level athletes through their entourage (family, sports staff, medical staff). The aim is to create resources and educational tools for athletes and their entourage, so that they can detect any signs of psychological distress. Elite athletes are at high risk of developing mental health disorders, and INSEP is committed to helping athletes achieve wellbeing. The project is funded by Erasmus+.

The Kuortane center (Finland) applies the so-called "dual-career" system, which enables athletes to train while anticipating their post-sport career. This system is particularly effective in preventing depression and other mental health problems that can affect athletes undergoing retraining.

Finally, the Olympic Center in Berlin (Germany) gives very young athletes access to the same services (nutritionist, physical trainer, etc.) as adult athletes. The aim is to reduce the risk of injury, which can be detrimental to a sporting career and prevent them from enjoying good physical health.