

Surprising Signs You're Not Moving Enough

Your Joints are Stiff

Achy, hard-to-move joints can sometimes be a sign of inflammatory conditions like arthritis or an autoimmune disease. But joints can also stiffen when you don't use them enough. Put them to work so they don't lock up and cause you pain.

You're Always Out of Breath

Just like biceps get weaker when you don't use them, the muscles that help your lungs move in and out as you breathe lose strength if you don't work them out regularly. The less activity you do, the more breathless you get, even during easy daily tasks.

You're Moody

A lack of movement hurts more than just your physical health. It can also increase feelings of anxiety and depression. Get your blood pumping on the regular. Cardio exercises like walking, biking, swimming, or running, will boost and steady your mood, and even improve your self-esteem.

Your Tank's Always Low

Feel sluggish and tired most of the time? Exercise helps deliver oxygen and nutrients to your tissues. If you spend most of your time sitting, they aren't getting the same amount of fuel they need to keep you going.

Your Metabolism's Slower

People with "fast" metabolism may just move more -- even if that movement is fidgeting. The more active you are, the more calories you burn each time you move.

Your Sleep's Shot

If you're tired of counting sheep at night, get up and get moving during the day. When you keep a regular exercise routine, you fall asleep faster, and you sleep deeper once you drift off.

You're Forgetting Things

Regular exercise tells your body to make more chemicals called growth factors. They boost blood vessel production in your brain. The more blood that gets to your brain, the better you can think, remember, and make decisions.

Your Blood Pressure's Up

Spending most of your time sitting raises your risk of heart disease. That's partly because you're more likely to have high blood pressure, a big risk factor for heart issues like coronary artery disease and heart attack.

You Have Prediabetes

When physical activity is a regular part of your life, your body has an easier time keeping your blood glucose under control. Stable blood sugar levels keep you out of the type 2 diabetes danger zone.

Your Back Hurts

When your core muscles are weak from lack of use, they can't support your back the way they should. This makes it much easier to tweak your back muscles during everyday movements like standing or reaching. Pilates, yoga, and other exercises that use stretching are good for building a stronger back.

You Always Want to Nosh

Seems like you'd be hungry more often if you exercised more, but the opposite is usually true. Aerobic exercise like biking, swimming, walking, and running can actually decrease your appetite because it changes the levels of certain "hunger hormones" in your body.

You're Sick A lot

Studies show the more moderate activity you get, the lower your chance of catching a cold or other germs. When you make exercise a habit, your immune system gets stronger.

Your Skin has Lost Its Shine If your skin looks duller than usual, a lack of movement may be to blame. Some studies show that moderate exercise boosts your circulation and your immune system, which helps your skin keep that youthful glow.

