HEALTH BENEFITS OF CYCLING

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IMPROVEMENTS IN CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

Cycling is an excellent source of cardio. Whether it's time spent mountain biking off the beaten path, commuting to work on an ebike, or afternoon's on an aerodynamic road bike, biking can, and will, raise your heart and breathing rates, thus strengthening your heart and lungs over time. In fact, a 2019 review suggests that there is a link between cycling and a lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

STRENGTHENS LOWER BODY AND CORE

It should come as no surprise that cycling is excellent for the lower body - glutes, quads, hamstrings, calves, and all - given these muscle groups are all activated when you pedal. For all non-single speed and fixed-gear bicycles, bumping up the resistance will also increase the strain on these muscles, putting you through a more rigorous, yet controlled, workout. According to a 2015 review, regular cycling can build muscle and increase overall strength. Although the review found that building muscle via cycling was not as apparent as muscle built from traditional resistance training, older adults still demonstrated significant gains in strength due to regular cycling.

DECREASES STRESS LEVELS AND REDUCES ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Some of the mental health benefits of cycling include reduced stress levels and ease in feelings of anxiety and depression. According to the American Psychological Association, ongoing research continues to solidify that spending time in nature has a direct link to cognitive benefits, improvements in mood, and promotes a general sense of mental and emotional well-being.

REDUCES AND PREVENTS THE RISK OF DEVELOPING OTHER DISEASES

As we briefly discussed in Improvements in Cardiovascular Health, regular cycling can help reduce, prevent, or manage other diseases, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. A 2017 study, carried out by Glasgow researchers, discovered groundbreaking evidence that bicycle commuting, similar to recreational commuting, was associated with a lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease, cancer, and even preventing premature death.

WEIGHT LOSS

For those that found this article wondering, ‘Is biking good for weight loss?’, we’re closing out our brief list with the last benefit: biking to lose weight! Cycling is one of the best forms of low-impact cardio; It allows riders to get their heart rate up without as much strain on their knees, ankles, or other joints as they would when running or jogging. Additionally, when they’re pedaling beyond a leisurely pace, cycling is also a great way to lose unwanted or excess weight. Research even suggests that electric bike riders slightly overshine pedal bike cyclists in total amounts of exercise each week! So if you’re someone who’s thought ‘Does biking help you lose weight?’, here are a few strategies to help jumpstart your weight loss through cycling.

TO CLOSE

At the end of the day, regardless of if you're cycling to lose weight, to commute, or to spend time in nature with friends or family, the health benefits of biking are plentiful and apply to everyone, despite their intent. So, consider this your friendly reminder to gear up and get to biking this week! You never know how your actions and efforts in the saddle might impact your physical health and mental wellness and happiness today and later on down the road.

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