

# THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING GOLF

Although considered by many to be more of a pastime than a sport, golf has all of the ingredients that doctors recommend for to achieve your optimal physical and mental health and wellbeing.



## 1

### EXPOSURE TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Being out and about in nature provides health benefits for our mind and body.

Soaking up a few hours of sunlight (don't forget the sunscreen, of course) will help increase your Vitamin D levels. This helps with bone growth, heart health and keeps anxiety levels to a minimum. It also reduces the risk of depression, heart disease and certain cancers.

Golf is great exercise for the mind. Every hole — and every shot — is a puzzle that needs to be solved. Golf keeps the mind sharp as players analyse every shot option and work out the best way to play holes.

## 2

### IT'S A GOOD WORKOUT

Golf burns more calories than you might think. Playing an 18-hole round of golf (while carrying your bag) burns at least 900 calories, as you are walking between five and seven kilometres with a few kilograms strapped to your back.

You will be toning your legs from the walking and strengthening your core muscles from the swinging of the clubs.

## 3

### IT BRINGS PEOPLE CLOSER TOGETHER

Golf is a very social sport and a great way to connect with friends or meet new people – especially if you've recently relocated into a new area. As a sport, it is not as intense or competitive as the likes of cricket, squash or rugby and provides plenty of down time for interacting with your playing partners. There's also the social side of the clubhouse after your round to look forward to.

Finally, studies have shown that many business deals are sealed on the golf course!

## IT ALLEVIATES STRESS

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The enjoyment of spending time in an open and natural environment, and spending time with friends, helps to place golfers into a good mood. This is because playing a round of golf helps to release endorphins – those natural, mood-enhancing chemicals within our brains that make us happier and more relaxed.

## IT HELPS YOU GET A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP

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All of the exercise you get during a round of golf, from walking to swinging your club helps to tire your body out. Golfers will fall asleep faster and sleep more profoundly due to the amount of energy expended. Deeper sleep helps your body regenerate cells and repair any damaged muscles and tissues.



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## IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEART

Any form of physical exercise helps to get your adrenaline going, which in turn gets blood pumping to your heart. Physical exercise helps lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, lose weight and reduces the risk of heart disease and diabetes – especially if combined with a healthy diet and lifestyle.

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## IT CAN HELP YOU LIVE LONGER

A recent study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine concluded that golf's unique combination of outdoor exercise and social interaction can help you live longer – and make those extra years healthier.

"Evidence suggests golfers live longer than non-golfers, enjoying improvements in cholesterol levels, body composition, wellness, self-esteem and self-worth," explained Dr Andrew Murray of the physical activity for health research centre at Edinburgh University.