The Relationship Between Your Mental Health and Physical Health- National Mind-Body Wellness Day (January 3)

January 3 is National Mind-Body Wellness Day. What better day to learn about the relationship between your mental and physical health? Your physical and mental health are a lot more connected to each other than you may realize. In today’s article, we will be covering just how connected the two are.

# **Poor Mental Health Can Put One at Risk for Poor Physical Health**

Research suggests that those experiencing a mental health condition are more likely to experience physical health conditions. This could be because [poor mental health](https://d.docs.live.net/983b2fdf4b398891/Documents/Academic%20Research%20on%20Meditation.docx) tends to impact a person’s decision-making skills. Many mental health conditions can cause one’s cognitive functioning to weaken, their motivation levels to drop, and, due to the stigma still surrounding mental health conditions in many communities, induce feelings of fear around speaking to a health professional.

Because of this, a person experiencing a mental illness will be less likely to make good lifestyle choices. They may find themselves eating unhealthy foods if they choose to eat at all, exercise can quickly become a thing of the past, and many may turn to substance use to cope with their illness.

These lifestyle habits and choices can begin to take a toll on a person’s physical health, putting them at risk of developing preventable illnesses and poor physical health.

# **Poor Physical Health Can Put One at Risk for Poor Mental Health**

Poor physical health has also been linked to an increased risk for poor mental health. When one is ill, the habits needed to optimize mental health, such as eating healthy, socializing, exercising, and getting enough sleep, can become difficult. Pain, a weakened immune system, quarantine, and many other physical illness symptoms can make taking care of one’s mental health harder.

On top of the fact that poor physical health often makes it difficult to care for one’s mental health, many health conditions can induce immense stress. These feelings of stress can be activated by a fear of mortality, expensive medical bills, and the suffering one endures throughout their illness. Stress is a significant predictor for many mental health conditions, such as [anxiety disorders](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet).

# **Self-Care Tips for the Mind and Body**

Your mental health and physical health both depend on healthy habits to thrive. Taking care of yourself is crucial to experiencing your happiest, healthiest life. A few ways you can begin taking care of your health include:

* Exercising: exercise has been associated with both [mind](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/) and [body](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8397487/#:~:text=Any%20form%20of%20physical%20activity,%2C%20cancer%2C%20and%20mood%20disorders.) health benefits, such as boosting one’s mood, increasing self-confidence, stress relief, improved heart health, and a lower risk of metabolic disorders.
* Getting enough sleep: Sleep is crucial for both the mind and body. Research has suggested that poor sleep can be associated with a higher risk of developing many [mental and physical health disorders](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK19961/#:~:text=The%20cumulative%20effects%20of%20sleep,%2C%20heart%20attack%2C%20and%20stroke.), such as increased hypertension, stress, heart attack, diabetes, and depression.
* Eating well. Food impacts both our physical and mental wellbeing. [Poor eating habits](https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2017/05/how-your-eating-habits-affect-your-health) are associated with many illnesses, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, stress, and depression.
* Socializing. Social health plays a critical role in a healthy mind and body. Those who spend more time socializing have been found to have lower risks of mortality and mental illness.
* Talking to health professionals. When your mental health or physical wellbeing is beginning to suffer, the best thing you can do is talk to a health professional to find the best treatment plan for you. We all get sick from time to time, whether from a mental health condition or physical illness. Getting the help you need as soon as possible aids you in feeling better quicker. If you need mental health help, our therapists are here for you. [Contact](http://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today.

**References**

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