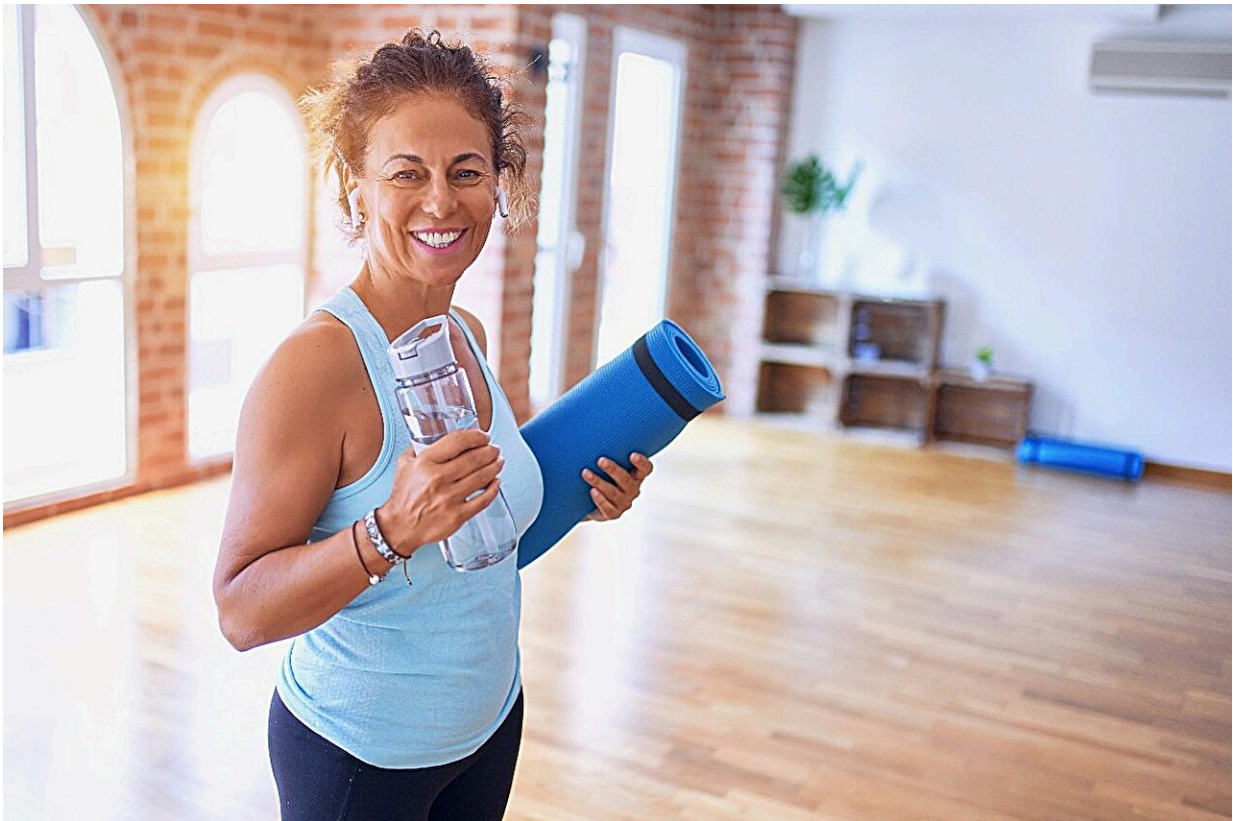


Physical activity found to cut depression in people with arthritis-related pain

July 23 2024, by Lori Solomon



Physical activity may be particularly important to manage depression symptoms in people with greater osteoarthritis-related pain, according to a study [published](#) online July 18 in *PLOS Global Public Health*.

Michaela C. Pascoe, Ph.D., from the Institute for Health and Sport at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, and colleagues assessed whether physical activity is associated with lower symptoms of depression irrespective of pain levels in individuals with osteoarthritis. Analysis included individuals with osteoarthritis who were waiting for an orthopedic consultation.

The researchers found that the inverse association between physical activity and depression depended on the level of pain. The association was stronger in people with greater pain. Participating in physical activity is indirectly and inversely associated with symptoms of depression through lower levels of pain. The highest levels of pain were associated with the most potential benefit from engaging in physical activity in terms of reduction in symptoms of depression.

"This highlights the need for education of both health professionals and patients on the importance of regular physical activity for [pain management](#) and [mental health](#) and access to appropriate self-management or clinical interventions to increase and maintain engagement in [physical activity](#)," the authors write.

More information: Michaela C. Pascoe et al, Physical activity and depression symptoms in people with osteoarthritis-related pain: A cross-sectional study, *PLOS Global Public Health* (2024). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pgph.0003129](#)

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