

**2020 Bell Let's Talk – Mental Health**  
**Kinesiologists encourage Canadians to be active!**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**Professionals support evidence that exercise can boost mood**

**OTTAWA, January 29, 2020** – Million of Canadians are affected by mental health illness and more are diagnosed each year. It is therefore important to make every effort to reduce stigma, talk about it and provide solutions to those struggling. To help and support them, research studies recommend getting professional support with aerobic and resistance exercise training.

In conjunction with Bell Let's Talk Day, January 29, Kinesiologists across Canada will begin a conversation about Canada's mental health. Millions of Canadians, including Kinesiologists, engaged in an open discussion about mental illness, offering new ideas through physical activities and exercises for those struggling.

The Canadian Kinesiology Alliance is reminding Canadians affected by mental illness, that kinesiologists, as part of a professional health team, can help them to move better, live better. Kinesiologist can help! Start now in January with Bell Let's Talk and join us from November 23 to 29th with National Kinesiology Week in support of Mental Health. Canadians are invited to take on the [MoveBetterChallenge](#) to find strategies and opportunities to lead a more active lifestyle.



**The healing power of physical activity**

People are still mainly relying on medication for the management of mental health such as depression or anxiety, etc. However, several studies show a 26% decrease in odds for becoming depressed for each major increase in objectively measured physical activity. This increase in physical activity is what you might see on your activity tracker if you replaced 15 minutes of sitting with 15 minutes of running, or one hour of sitting with one hour of moderate activity like brisk walking. (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health)

More evidence that exercise can boost mood: Running for 15 minutes a day or walking for an hour reduces the risk of major depression, according to a recent study. If you do love a good, hearty gym workout, keep going. But if you don't, just getting off the couch and moving for a little while can help. Ideally, to prevent depression you should do at least 15 minutes a day of higher-intensity exercise, such as running, or at least an hour of lower-intensity exercise, such as walking or housework. (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health).

With an additional 35 minutes of physical activity each day, those at risk for depression may be protected against future episodes. "Our findings strongly suggest that, when it comes to depression, genes are not destiny and that being physically active has the potential to neutralize the added risk of future episodes in individuals who are genetically



vulnerable. On average, about 35 additional minutes of physical activity each day may help people to reduce their risk and protect against future depression episodes.” (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health)

The researchers found that both high-intensity forms of activity, such as aerobic exercise, dance, and exercise machines, and lower-intensity forms, including yoga and stretching, were linked to decreased odds of depression. Overall, individuals could see a 17 percent reduction in odds of a new episode of depression for each added four-hour block of activity per week. (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health)

Mental health is about more than being happy all the time. It’s about feeling good about who you are, having balance in your life, and managing life’s highs and lows. (Canadian Mental Health Association)

### Where to turn for help

*“Lack of time, obligations to others, lack of perception of obesity as a health issue, shame and physical restrictions are all factors that act as barriers to meeting the recommended level of physical activity,”* continues Hardip Jhaj. *“In our practice, we see that getting help from a kinesiologist can make a tremendous positive difference. With a personalized approach and ongoing motivational support, clients affected by mental illness can see how physical activities can drastically improve their quality of life.”*

Kinesiologists are the only specialists in human movement who use science and research to offer movement as a medicine to anyone with a health goal, who wants a practical and personalized approach.

### A challenge to kick-start a new healthier life

The *2020 National Kinesiology Week*, presented by Hexfit, to be held November 23 to 29, is the perfect time to be more active and discover how a kinesiologist can help people meet the recommended guidelines. With its [MoveBetterChallenge](#), kinesiologists from across the country want Canadians suffering from mental health, and other chronic diseases, to move better. During that week, people are invited to log their exercise minutes and/or kilometres to be part of a national cumulative challenge. Visit [www.nationalkinweek.ca](http://www.nationalkinweek.ca) to record walks, runs, rides, encourage others to move better to live better and so much more. Log your exercise minutes and kilometres to participate in the contest.

### About the Canadian Kinesiology Alliance

Kinesiologists are human movement specialists. As trained health professionals, kinesiologists apply the science of exercise and movement to promote health and well-being; prevent, manage and rehabilitate chronic conditions; restore function and optimize human performance in the workplace, clinical settings, sport and fitness. They work with people of all ages and with physical abilities, in many settings, to improve the quality of life by often using interventions that include physical activity.



The Canadian Kinesiology Alliance (CKA) is a non-profit corporation that advocates and promotes the advancement of the profession of kinesiology in Canada. The CKA strives to be recognized as the unifying voice for the profession of kinesiology in Canada, and to have a positive impact on Canadians. On a national level, the CKA represents nine provincial kinesiology associations (PKAs) that are member associations and over 4,000 affiliated kinesiologists by developing progressive partnerships with other national organizations, providing support to effect positive change within government and public policy, and by promoting the science of Kinesiology. The CKA establishes and promotes the standards of the profession across Canada. To find a kinesiologist, visit [www.cka.ca](http://www.cka.ca).

**To follow the Canadian Kinesiology Alliance on Facebook and Twitter: @CdnKinesiology**

**Sources:**

- [More evidence that exercise can boost mood](#), *Harvard Women's Health Watch*, May, 2019
- [Lower risk of depression with elevated exercise](#), *Health & Medecine*, Harvard Gazette, MGH News and Public Affairs, November 5, 2019

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