



We are all familiar with the term '**exercise is medicine**', whereby exercise is prescribed to alleviate symptoms, or prevent the onset of a vast array of physical health issues such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.

There is also a growing body of peer reviewed research promoting the benefits of physical activity for prevention and improvements related to mental health.



There are many ways that **exercise is a positive influence on mental health** such as;

- The release of endorphin hormones in the brain (the body's feel good juice) increasing feelings of wellbeing and reducing anxiety and stress. Endorphins also improve your concentration and mental sharpness to perform daily tasks;
- The sense of achievement as fitness increases, energy levels rise and body composition changes;
- Increased social interaction with others participating in physical activities;
- Improvements in both the duration and the quality of sleep;
- As a coping strategy to deal with mental or emotional challenges rather than turning to alcohol, drugs or poor food choices.



The evidence is irrefutable as to the benefits of physical activity improving mental health and the below exercise modules are designed to help you to **take the first steps** towards increasing physical activity.



To help you **start your exercise journey** or, when returning to exercise after a period away, HealthStart have put together 3 stages of exercise programs to gradually build your balance, strength and mobility.

1. **KICKSTART** - For those who need help to get started, setting the foundations of movement at a low level.
2. **FLOW** – Flowing on from the foundations of KICKSTART, exercises gradually increase in their load on the body.
3. **BOOST** – Building on the FLOW program exercises are prescribed to increase their volume and intensity.



SCAN ME

1. Before starting any exercise program, you should consult your doctor.
2. These programs are general in nature, for advice on exercises specific to your situation, **contact HealthStart** at S&W.HealthStart@police.qld.gov.au