

ADVICE. Start gradually and build up as you go.

Treat chronic disease with regular exercise

Most people suffering from chronic illnesses fear exercising thinking it will worsen their conditions. However, with clear guidance from your doctor and workout instructor, exercising may help reduce effects of the disease on your life as **Zuurah Karungi** writes.

Although exercises are beneficial to everyone, it can also prevent and eliminate several chronic diseases. The following are some of these conditions and how they can be cured through exercise:

Diabetes

Diabetics who exercise regularly build muscle, making them less likely to store extra glucose as fat. Exercising also lowers glucose in the blood and improves insulin sensitivity, important factors in helping diabetics control their glucose levels.

Dr Andrew Bukenya of Naguru Hospital, says working out will reduce diabetes since it reduces the level of glucose in the body through sweating. He says diabetics should exercise most days of the week, alternating medium and high-intensity exercise.

Asthma

Many people think exercise may cause asthma attacks. However, attacks induced by exercise only happen when one does not understand or manage their asthma properly.

Exercise can help to strengthen a person's lungs, preventing attacks from happening often. "On hot days, I make sure I swim for at least an hour. This has not only helped me to stay fit but it has reduced the frequency of attacks. The heaviness I used to feel in the chest is now in the past," says Christine Atuhaire.

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NUMBER OF MINUTES A
PERSON WITH A CHRONIC
ILLNESS SHOULD SPEND ON
EACH WORKOUT

Arthritis

Those suffering from the condition may find movement in arthritic joints difficult. Still, they should make an effort. Regular exercise loosens and flexes the joints stiffened by arthritis, making movement easier over time. It also strengthens the muscles around the joint, helping them to provide adequate support. If these muscles do not stay strong, the poor support will worsen the arthritis.

Experts recommend performing motion exercises and strength training. Those with arthritis may also benefit from gentle exercises such as yoga.

Joint and back pain

These can completely get healed through doing appropriate exercises and eating plenty of calcium. "I have suffered from osteoporosis for

seven years after a fatal accident. I went to the hospital several times and was given treatment that was not helpful until I was advised by my doctor to start exercising which has greatly helped," says Shaban Afusa.

Heart problems

Regular exercise when you have heart disease is important.

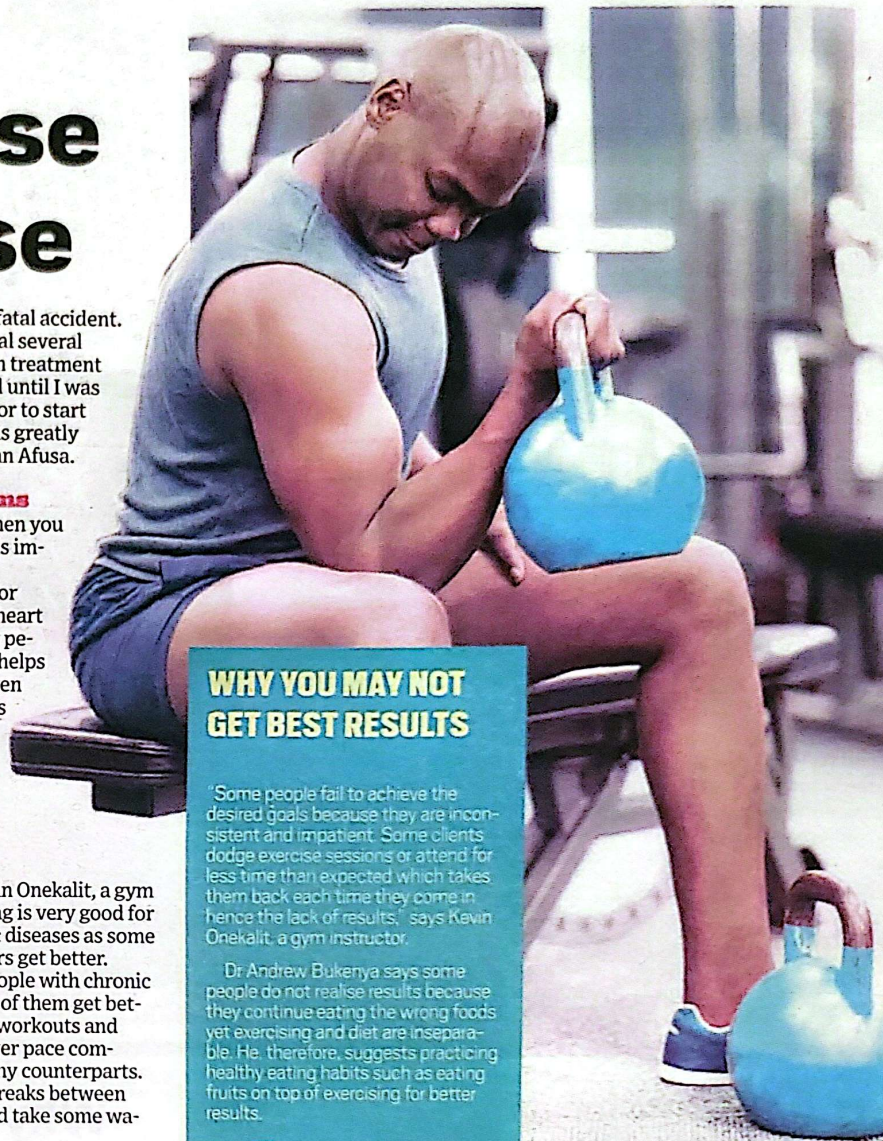
Aerobic activity for example uses your heart and lungs for a long period of time. It also helps your heart use oxygen better and improves blood flow. Make your heart work a little harder every time, but not too hard.

Is it healthy?

According to Kevin Onekalit, a gym instructor, exercising is very good for people with chronic diseases as some normalise and others get better.

"I train a lot of people with chronic disorders and most of them get better. I give them fair workouts and train them at a slower pace compared to their healthy counterparts. I ensure they take breaks between workouts to rest and take some water," he says.

Dr Bukenya says exercising is meant for everyone regardless of their health status because it keeps the body active which makes it hard for diseases to attack you. To him exercising is encouraged by doctors as long as it is done under guidance.



WHY YOU MAY NOT GET BEST RESULTS

Some people fail to achieve the desired goals because they are inconsistent and impatient. Some clients dodge exercise sessions or attend for less time than expected which takes them back each time they come in hence the lack of results," says Kevin Onekalit, a gym instructor.

Dr Andrew Bukenya says some people do not realise results because they continue eating the wrong foods yet exercising and diet are inseparable. He, therefore, suggests practicing healthy eating habits such as eating fruits on top of exercising for better results.



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