

Importance of Leisure After Stroke

Following a stroke, many aspects of your life are interrupted including leisure and recreation. However, continuing to participate in leisure activities following a stroke can be a **fun and motivating** way to combat commonly experienced symptoms and issues that impact your **health, well-being, and quality of life** in all domains of your well-being.

Lei-sure (noun):

Free-time participation in any activity that is meaningful to you.

How can leisure help me physically?

Physical activity can:

- Reduce risk for additional cardiovascular diseases
- Improve endurance and strength
- Improve mood, body image and self esteem
- Improve mobility, balance and gait
- Help promote better sleep
- Ex: walking, swimming, exercise classes

How can leisure help me think?

Participating in cognitive activities that challenge you mentally can improve:

- Thinking skills
- Processing speed
- Sequencing steps
- Following directions
- Visual scanning/neglect
- Examples: card and board games, puzzles, reading, following a recipe to cook or bake

How can leisure help me spiritually?

Participating in spiritual or meditative activities can help you:

- Find relaxation
- Decrease anxiety and stress
- Find comfort and support
- Examples: meditation, yoga, listening to music, attending church services

How can leisure help me socially?

Participating in social activities following stroke can:

- Decrease loneliness
- Build relationships
- Open communication
- Help find support and understanding
- Find common interests with others
- Create structure
- Promote healthy relationships
- Ex: interest groups, community activities (restaurants, shopping, community centers), family activities and social events

How can leisure help me emotionally?

Staying emotionally healthy can:

- Improve self-esteem
- Promote positive attitudes
- Decrease depression
- Ex: writing/journaling, self-expression, crafts, music, support groups

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