



GYM DOCTOR #1

Use your gym to cure your ills. This month: stress gets worked over

Work, money, kids, your team's performance – sometimes the things that make life worth living can also tear it down. Fortunately, you hold the antidote: sweat. A survey by the Mental Health Foundation found one in five GPs prescribe exercise to treat stress, and you don't have to exhaust yourself to reap the benefits. Low-intensity exercise lifts mood better than medium- to high-intensity, found research at the University of Wisconsin in the US. "Cardio training is the best stress buster because it releases the most endorphins – body chemicals responsible for positive feelings," says Mark Raynsford, a strength trainer and hormone specialist. The circuit from Raynsford, below, is designed to elicit the biggest possible endorphin kick in less than 40 minutes. It'll cannibalise your worries while improving your fitness – so you can return to work refreshed and be able to find a solution to the stressor thanks to a clear head.

EXERCISE	TIME	INTENSITY
Stationary bike	10 mins	80 revs per min at resistance level 6

Repeat these mini intervals for 15 minutes

Treadmill	90 secs	6 out of 10, you can hold a conversation in full sentences
Treadmill	30 secs	8 out of 10, so talking is limited to one word at a time

Cover at least 1500 metres on your row

Rower	10 mins	Set the resistance level at 5
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EXERCISE	TIME	INTENSITY
Stationary bike	4 mins	60 revs per min at resistance level 4