“Go Take A Jump” To Improve Your Health

By Dr. Ramona Warren

Chances are when you were a child, you spent plenty of time jumping. Whether jumping rope, playing hopscotch or even jumping on the furniture, jumping is a universal “feel good” activity children enjoy. Unfortunately, most people stop jumping once they reach adulthood. But there are many health benefits we can continue to reap by incorporating jumping into our fitness routines. While I no longer jump rope on the sidewalk or jump on the furniture, I do continue to jump using a rebounder.

Back in the early 1980’s the rebounder, also known as a “mini-trampoline,” became very popular. Many celebrities including well-known fitness guru Jack LaLanne, Tony Robbins, Bob Hope and even President Reagan have been strong proponents of rebound exercise – and with good reason. Numerous studies have shown the many benefits of rebounding. One popular NASA study conducted in 1980 found cardiovascular and respiratory conditioning improved faster through rebounding. The study found the rebounder helped re-condition astronauts returning from space much better than running – and with less stress on the body. The study also found rebounding helped improve bone density, while also improving overall coordination, balance, flexibility, muscle strength and tone.

Rebounding has other health benefits, including detoxification and improved immune function. We live in a toxic world and cannot avoid the multitude of toxins we are exposed to daily. These toxins are stored in our tissues. We are dependent on our lymphatic system to help us naturally detoxify our body. The lymphatic system is like the waste management system within the body, much like the garbage truck that comes and takes away the garbage we leave out each week. Imagine what it would be like around our house if the garbage truck didn’t come every week and the trash continued to build up. The stench would become unbearable. When our lymphatic system is not working efficiently, then the “garbage,” or toxins, don’t get removed properly and our bodies begin to suffer. Our lymphatic system does not have a pump like the circulatory system does. The heart beats to circulate the blood flow, but lymph flow is dependent on muscular contraction for the fluid to circulate and remove the poisons from our body. When we are sedentary, the cells are starved of nutrients and basically sit in a pool of waste products, much like a stagnant pond. These are the conditions that can lead to degenerative diseases such as arthritis and cancer. Rebounding is the perfect exercise to help the lymphatic fluid flow, as it essentially exercises every cell, which allows more nutrients in and more toxins out.

According to Dave Scrivens a Certified Lymphologist, “The rebounding motion stimulates all internal organs, moves the cerebral-spinal fluid and the aqueous fluid within the eyes (many people claim improved eyesight), and does wonders for the intestines. Many immune cells such as T-lymphocytes and macrophages are self-propelled by amoebic action. These cells contain molecules identical to those in muscle tissue. All cells in the body become stronger in response to the increased G-force during rebounding, and this cellular exercise results in the self-propelled immune cells being up to five times more active. The job description of these cells includes eating viruses, bacteria and even cancer cells, so it is good that they be active. This exercise directly strengthens the immune system.”

There are many other claimed health benefits to rebounding including cellulite reduction, weight loss and improved hormonal balance. Rebounding can help improve balance by allowing the brain to respond better over time to the vestibular apparatus inside the inner ear, thereby potentially helping sufferers of benign “vertigo.” Rebounding also helps relieve back, neck and joint pain by helping improve spinal alignment and posture. Another major benefit of rebounding is that it helps re-calibrate peristalsis in the intestinal tract which leads to better elimination and relief of constipation. And, one of the greatest benefits is that rebounding requires less time per session to get all these beneficial results compared to walking, running or cycling…..plus it is FUN!

There are many different rebounders on the market ranging anywhere from $40 to $1,000. Invest in a quality rebounder instead of a cheap one. It is better to spend a little more money and have one that will last longer and give better results. The quality of the springs do make a difference in the results you get, as well as your safety. I use a rebounder from Rebound-Air.com that cost around $300 when I purchased it several years ago and have had no problems with it. I have also used a brand called Cellercise (cellercise.com) with good results.

To begin incorporating rebounding in your fitness routine, start with 10 to 15 minutes of light bouncing 3 days a week, increasing to 20 to 30 minute sessions three to five days a week. YouTube has several videos on rebounding exercises that can help you add variety to your sessions.

So, “go take a jump” and improve your health!