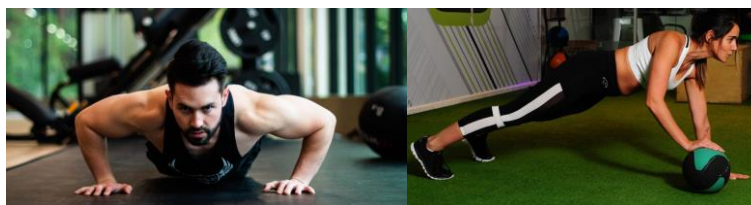




## Why do we need to exercise?



1. Exercise should be a mixture of **aerobic** (e.g. running) and **skill acquisition** (e.g. Rugby or hockey). Do them together (Rugby or hockey) or separately (go for a run, then go climbing or skateboarding). The skills create new pathways in the brain, making it work better. **Vigorous exercise is recommended for 30 minutes, 5 times a week.**
2. **Exercise helps us to learn.**
  - Exercise causes the growth of new brain cells, helping us to think in new ways.
  - Exercise stimulates alertness, attention and motivation, essential for learning.
3. **Exercise makes us more creative.**
  - Research shows that after just 30 minutes on a treadmill, people are able to think up new answers to old problems: they can think outside the box.
4. **Exercise improves decision making.**
  - Exercise releases dopamine, the brain's reward chemical, which helps us to make good decisions, not careless, rash or risky ones.
5. **Exercise combats stress, anxiety and depression and lifts mood.**
  - Exercise releases serotonin, which helps us to remain calm and feel good. Exercise has been shown to be more effective in combating depression than Prozac. **Not** exercising is like taking a depressant.
6. **Exercise strengthens the immune system.**
  - Exercise stimulates the release of T cells which fight disease. It also activates cells that repair damaged tissue.
7. **Exercise strengthens the musculo-skeletal system, making us stronger.**
8. **Exercise lowers the risks of heart disease and some cancers.**
9. **Exercise helps us to sleep.**
  - Exercise develops natural tiredness and also, by releasing serotonin, exercise calms us down ready for rest and sleep.
10. **Exercise helps us maintain a healthy weight.**