

➤ The pros and cons of having a short haircut. P4

● **Fighting depression**

# Sport the habit

Sports can awaken hope where there was previously only despair.' These words by Nelson Mandela seem to fit perfectly in today's world where people are seen mesmerised by the spell of technology and other materialistic pleasures. So much so that they have no time to spare for any kind of other activities.

The mundane routine of sitting in front of the computer for six to seven hours at work and then getting back home with an additional one to two hours spent in the horrendous traffic takes away most of the time from one's day. By the time one reaches home, it's time to watch the ongoing football match or the favourite television serial. This monotonous lifestyle sets in before one realises and slowly takes a toll on us both physically and mentally.

"I have been into sports since childhood, but as I started working, I somehow lost touch with it and now play only once or twice a week. Sports is an important aspect of life; it keeps one physically fit and relaxed and a physically fit person is always happier and calmer," says Johnson George, an IT professional.

He believes in maintaining a fit physique (which includes playing a game or two of badminton and basketball whenever he finds time and not necessarily hitting the gym.)

Many people are diagnosed



**ADRENALINE RUSH** Jogging or running can help one de-stress.



**Kala Balasubramanian**

are quite high. The constant fight to keep up with or follow deadlines and the pressure to deliver up-to-the-mark work every time is harming the lives of people."

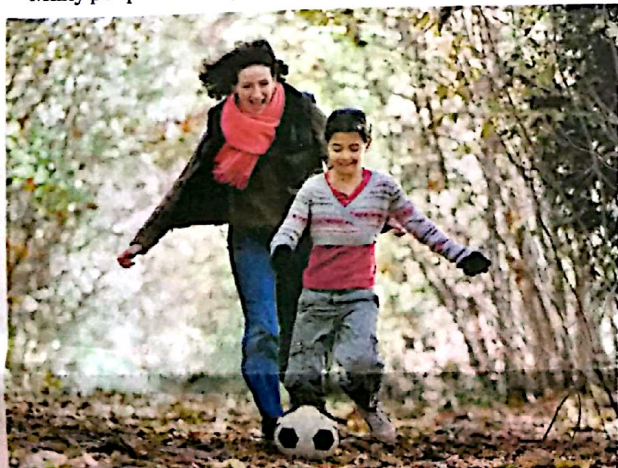
Echoing the thought that sports has a lot of added benefits, especially when someone is diagnosed with mild depression, is Kala Balasubramanian, counselling psychotherapist at 'Inner Dawn'. She says that depression can seep in through different ways; while it can be seen as a clinical condition, there can be certain circumstances that can stimulate the condition.

"There are distorted thinking patterns which are about unhappy thoughts. Engaging in physical activities, especially the ones with cardio exercises like jogging, cycling and running, can contribute greatly in relieving a person's depression."

So how do sports or recreational activities help get through depression? She adds, "Sports and other physical activities release a chemical called endorphin. This chemical is responsible for triggering a positive feeling in the body. It gives an initial boost to fight against depression," she says.

She highlights that meditation is not recommended while someone is suffering from depression; however, outdoor games are much recommended.

**Surupasree Sarmmah**



with depression all round the year and one of the various reasons that might trigger the issue can be the stressful life that one leads.

Though believing it can be a little difficult in the first instance, but it is extremely important that people get out of their seats and smell the coffee before it is late.

Engaging in a lot more physical activities (of any kind) can help reduce the stress levels and at the same time, kill a lot of idle time.

Nalini Raja Reddy, director of Banjara Academy, says, "The stress levels these days