



Bowling has one of the longest and richest histories of all sports, dating back approximately 4,000 years ago to Greece and Rome. If you love to play the game, you're not alone. According to The Bowling Foundation, more than 25 percent of Americans bowl each year, making it the nation's largest participation sport.

Besides being a fun and competitive game, bowling also offers you numerous health benefits.

Here are the Top 10 from Health Benefits from Bowling:

1 Muscle toning and strengthening: Bowling helps promote muscle exercise of the lower body, as you are doing a lot of walking with the extra weight of a bowling ball in your hands. Further, when you are swinging your arm to throw the bowling ball, the stretching and flexing that occurs provides enough exercise for the tendons, ligaments, muscles and joints in your arms.

2 Weight loss: Bowling helps you slim down by speeding up your metabolism. Although the game is restricted to a small area, your constant movement while playing helps burn excess fat. You're exercising your legs while walking back and forth, and working the rest of your body as you lift and swing the bowling ball down the lane. The average bowler walks approximately 3/5ths of a mile during a three-game series. Depending on your weight and amount of effort you put into the game, bowling can burn anywhere from 170 to 300 calories per game. An adult who weighs 200 pounds can burn up to 275 calories per hour while bowling, according to MayoClinic.com.

3 Improve social life: Approximately 2 million bowlers socialize and bowl together each week in leagues throughout America, according to The Bowling Foundation. Bowling leagues and teams allow you to meet fellow players and spend time with old friends. Finding companionship through bowling leagues and teams can ease loneliness in the elderly and others who live alone, reducing stress and depression. Social relationships around shared interests can increase longevity.

4 Reduce risk of disease: A sedentary lifestyle is one of the leading risk factors for heart disease, according to WebMD. Exercise, including bowling, lowers your risk of stroke, heart attacks, diabetes, increases bone density, improves circulation, lowers cholesterol levels and blood pressure, and helps your body utilize oxygen better. Try to bowl once or more each week for optimum benefits.

5 Can be enjoyed at any age: Bowling is one of the few sports that allows you to compete at any age and become a pro. The game is enjoyed by everyone from preschoolers to senior citizens and is currently the fastest growing high school varsity sport. There's a low risk of injury, which makes it a popular game for older individuals. Many bowling alleys can accommodate those in wheelchairs and bowlers who are blind.

6 Stress relief: By engaging in physical activity, bowling allows us to relieve daily stress. Socializing with people during the game also acts as a mental stress reliever.

7 Easy to learn: It encourages easy adjustment methods, which is why it is liked by most children and adults. In the opinion of 95% bowlers, it can be played for recreation, relaxation, competitively and socially. The simplicity of this game is making it a favorite sport of people all over the world.

8 Healthy heart: Relationships and friendships built during this sport helps in better performance of heart muscles. Also, the adrenaline that is felt during a match also increases heart rate. Bowling thus promotes a healthy heart.

9 Fun for the whole family: A large contributing factor to the simplicity of this game is the immense adaptability that it offers. The rules of the game are very easy to understand and learn, and the automatic scoring systems take care of all the scoring for you. Participants enjoy this sport not because they like the competition that comes with it but because of the fun they have and the ease with which they are able to pass the time with their family and friends.

10 Hand-eye coordination: Throwing the bowling ball and hitting the pins requires a great amount of hand-eye coordination. This kind of focus stimulates mental alertness, concentration and tactical strategy. This makes bowling the perfect game for young people to sharpen motor skills and hand-eye coordination, and for older people to refine tactics.

