

Health Highlights: Read a book, improve your health Video Version

<<(I'M MATT SHEEHAN WITH TODAY'S HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS FROM OSF HEALTHCARE.

WHETHER YOU'RE CURLED UP ON THE COUCH -- OR TUCKED AWAY IN BED LATE AT NIGHT WITH A GOOD MYSTERY... EXPERTS SAY THERE'S LITTLE DOUBT THAT READING IS GOOD FOR OUR HEALTH.

RESEARCH SHOWS 75-PERCENT OF ADULTS PARTICIPATE IN SOME FORM OF READING. HOWEVER... ANOTHER STUDY SHOWS THE NUMBER OF KIDS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 9 AND 13 READING FOR FUN HAS DROPPED IN THE LAST DECADE.

ACCORDING TO ASHLEY PRATT – A PSYCHOTHERAPIST WITH OSF HEALTHCARE – MOST PEOPLE NEED JUST SIX MINUTES OF READING TIME A DAY... TO SEE SOME HEALTH BENEFITS... ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN.

TAKE SOT | Ashley Pratt, psychotherapist, OSF HealthCare

“It's one of the best things we can do for our mental health and our physical health. It's been shown to greatly reduce our stress levels, lower our blood pressure, improve our memory and cognition, and it improves our sleep quality.”

PRATT SAYS READING FICTION TENDS TO BE THE MOST HELPFUL WHEN IT COMES TO INCREASING SKILLS SUCH AS EMPATHY AND OUR ABILITY TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND PEOPLE. SHE ADDS THAT READING HAS BEEN SHOWN TO INCREASE RESILIENCY AND AN ABILITY TO HANDLE DIFFICULT EMOTIONS... AS READERS LEARN ABOUT CHARACTERS AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE.

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