



A Step Above

Personal Training Concepts

Look to your health; and if you have it, praise God and value it next to conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of, a blessing money can't buy. – Izaak Walton



THE WHOLE-BODY BENEFITS OF EXERCISE FOR SENIORS

1. Helps maintain or lose weight.
2. Reduces impact of illness and chronic disease.
3. Enhances mobility, flexibility, and balance.
4. Improves sleep.
5. Boosts mood and self-confidence.
6. Boosts brain power.

HelpGuide.com—Senior Exercise and Fitness Tips; How to Gain Energy and Feel Stronger

"It's not so much about looking good — it's about feeling good, staying healthy, and being able to move!"

—Jane Umberger & Betty Fisher, ASA 50's Plus Aerobics Class

Jinjer's thoughts . . .

Am I Too Old to Exercise?

I haven't done much in the way of exercising in over 20 years, why should I start now? Yes, I move a bit more slowly when getting out of bed. And, yes, my hips hurt, my back hurts, my knees hurt — just bending down to pick up the laundry is extremely painful. If I already have all these aches and pains, then why do I want to exercise and make things worse? I do get a little out of breath walking up the stairs, but that's just because I'm getting older. Now that I'm 65, I'm no spring chicken anymore. I need to save my strength and rest — not put myself at risk of falling in an exercise class. Besides, I'm disabled and can't exercise from a chair anyway. Let's face it, I'm just getting old, and all this is to be expected.

WOW! What you just read are myths about why older adults and the elderly do not exercise. Fact is, no matter what age, health or fitness level, everyone can benefit from moving more! As we age, regular exercise is more important than ever to our bodies and our minds. Once

you understand your personal health problems and concerns — and your need to include exercise in your life — check with your doctor and get medical approval before beginning any exercise program. To reap the rewards of exercise, you don't need strenuous workouts or multiple trips to the gym. You simply need to add more movement and activity to your life, even if only in small ways. Start exercising slowly and begin enjoying the benefits of exercising safely.

Research has shown that exercise is greatly beneficial to the older population over the age of sixty. Regular exercise provides a myriad of health benefits in older adults and has shown to decrease mortality and age-related morbidity. Exercise for those older than 60 is beneficial in building muscle and helping with posture and balance. *"By the year 2030, 22 percent of the US population will be older than 65 years, a total of 70 million people. The fastest growing segment of the elderly population is the group older than 85 years, classified as 'old old.' Because activity*

levels generally decline with advancing age, the absolute number of inactive older Americans will most likely increase dramatically." (American Family Physician 2002 Feb 1;65(3): 419-427). The "baby boom" generation, those born after World War II between 1946 and 1960, represent a huge spike in population in the United States (NCSF, 2003).

The older population present fitness professionals with special challenges due to the presence of chronic diseases such as arthritis (49%), hypertension (36%) hearing impairments (30%) and heart disease (27%). There is no question that the components of fitness all decrease with age and adversely impact functional ability (cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition). Research has shown that muscular strength begins to decline about the age of 30. After the age of

Am I Too Old to Exercise? (CONTINUED)

50, it declines about 15% per decade; after the age of 70, 30% per decade. (NCSF, 2003)

There is a **monumental** need for exercise in older adults and the elderly. The most common exercise prescription for this population is aerobic exercise, strength training, balance and flexibility. Some older adults are more sedentary. Studies have revealed that those adults who go from none to some exercise on a regular basis benefit the most. The Harvard Alumni study found that when comparing people who exercised in their younger years and subsequently stopped versus people who started exercising later in life, the mortality rates were lower in the subjects who started exercising later in life (*American Family Physician*. 2002 Feb 1;65(3):419-427). Accordingly, it is understood that it is never too late to benefit from physical activity. Some of these benefits can be improved circulation with a substantial reduction in risk of coronary heart disease and improved blood pressure, improved joint range of motion, improved alertness, improved balance and flexibility to help prevent falling, weight loss, improved cholesterol levels, and improved bone density etc.

So how do you get started? First, check with your doctor and get a clean bill-of-health. Inform your doctor of any medical restrictions you feel that might prevent you from performing certain physical activities. Pick a program that best fits you such as Tai Chi, Yoga, low impact aerobics, or strength and conditioning. Second, start slow and gradually move into increasing your heart rate throughout your training. This will

help you with your cardio-respiratory fitness. Sedentary adults might want to only do 30 or 40 minutes of aerobic activity a day, breaking it up into **10-minute sessions** if not used to steady increases in heart rate. More active older adults might want to keep their heart rates between 60% to 80% of their heart rate reserve (HRR) for 30 to 60 minutes most every day of the week.

Due to a loss of muscle mass (sarcopenia) with age, engage in some light weight training, using either 2- or 3-lb weights, resistance bands or tubing, or fitness machines in the gym. Maybe even participate in a group strength and conditioning class for older adults. However, prior to that, if you've never lifted weights before, I would suggest finding and getting with a fitness professional to supervise your fitness needs and to teach you proper skill acquisition before engaging in a program on your own. Pick 8 to 10 different exercises, doing only 10 to 15 repetitions each, 2 to 3 times a week. Also in active older adults (**if lifting heavy**) avoid holding your breath during movement or doing isometric contractions of the muscle (flexing and holding that muscle for several seconds at a time). Don't forget to add in your balance and flexibility training. When stretching during a cool down, make sure you breathe through pain-free range of motion. You can hold a static stretch for approximately 15 to 30 seconds, and stretching should be facilitated at least 2 to 3 times a week. Also focus on balance. Evidence has shown that repeatedly standing on one leg can improve stability and decrease the risk of falls. Finally,

pick activities you enjoy such as biking, badminton, a group exercise class (The Silver Sneakers program), etc. Overall, just stay active, have fun, and relax. ■

Spinach & Mushroom Smothered Chicken Recipe



Chicken breasts stay nice and moist with a mushroom and spinach topping tucked under a blanket of melted cheese. It's extra special to serve but is not tricky to make

—Katrina Wagner
Grain Valley, Missouri

Ingredients

- 3 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1-3/4 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 3 green onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons chopped pecans
- 1-1/2 teaspoons olive oil
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (4 ounces each)
- 1/2 teaspoon rotisserie chicken seasoning
- 2 slices reduced-fat provolone cheese, halved

Directions

- In a large skillet, sauté the spinach, mushrooms, onions and pecans in oil until mushrooms are tender. Set aside and keep warm.
- Sprinkle chicken with seasoning. Using long-handled tongs, moisten a paper towel with cooking oil and lightly coat the grill rack.
- Grill chicken, covered, over medium heat or broil 4 in. from the heat for 4 to 5 minutes on each side or until a meat thermometer reads 170°.
- Top with cheese. Cover and grill 2 to 3 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. To serve, top each chicken breast with reserved spinach mixture.

Yield: 4 servings.

Nutrition Facts: 1 chicken breast half equals 203 calories, 9 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 68 mg cholesterol, 210 mg sodium, 3 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 27 g protein. **Diabetic Exchanges:** 3 lean meat, 1 vegetable, 1 fat.

MONDAY & WEDNESDAY

"50'S PLUS" LOW-IMPACT
LUNCH AEROBICS

12:00 noon—1:00 pm

Started March 7, 2011

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

BOOT CAMP

6:30 pm—7:30 pm

Ends May 31, 2011

Resumes August 9, 2011

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