

FOREVER ACTIVE

PERSONALIZED FITNESS AND WELLNESS FOR MEN 50 +

Keep Active



Introduction

The number one concern of older adults as they age is maintaining their health so they can enjoy a high quality of independent living. Obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, depression, dementia and Alzheimer's are just some of the chronic illnesses that can significantly affect how older adults enjoy their retirement years.

Medical intervention such as medications and surgery have certainly helped improve the quality of life for those who suffer from these conditions but the research clearly endorses physical activity as the least expensive, safest, most effective non-invasive therapy readily available to everyone today.

The great thing about physical activity is that it is simple to implement. Moving your body is all it takes. Certainly it can become more sophisticated than that: personal trainers, high tech weight resistant and cardio machines, ultra modern gyms, but it does not need to be complicated to be effective. As Dr. Mark Tremblay, director of Healthy Living and Obesity Research at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario states, "the best thing is to move, and sit less." How much simpler can it get than that?

The new year brings new health resolutions that often are a distant memory by the time February comes. The number one reason for this is poor goal setting and putting unrealistic expectations upon yourself.

Forever Active's January 2014 newsletter deals with New Years resolutions and goal setting. <http://forever-active.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Forever-Active-New-Years-Resolutions.pdf>. The December 2014 newsletter focuses on the 80/20 rule and sustainability. <http://forever-active.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/35-December-2015-80-20-Rule.pdf>. I would recommend you reread each of these newsletters if you are finding it hard to set and fulfill realistic health goals.

This newsletter will focus on helping you get started on keeping active by giving you some new tools to "move more and sit less."

The Basics

1. **Exercise** - muscle resistance (push/pull) & cardio (elevate heart rate)
2. **Sleep** - quantity and quality are equally important.
3. **Eat** - how much you eat is as important as what you eat.
4. **Unplug** - technology dominates the world, don't let it dominate you.

Did you Know

5 Tips to Get You Started

1. Ask yourself, "Is maintaining my quality of life worth an hour a day?"
2. Start slow, pace yourself, maintain and sustain. Time is on your side.
3. Set a realistic goal such as 10 minutes a day of sustained physical activity. Slowly progress from there to an hour a day 5 days a week or 150 minutes total a week.
4. Remember, keeping active does not mean engaging in formal exercise. Park your car further away from your workplace, climb the stairs vs using the elevator. Adopt standing vs sitting at your workstation. Use your imagination.
5. Build your daily movement or exercise habit into your calendar. Make it a priority, make it sustainable.

**REMEMBER;
YOU ARE IN CHARGE,
MAKE IT WORK**

Adopt the “Use it or Lose it” Mentality to Maintain Flexibility

As we age, our muscles begin to shrink and lose size/mass. The water content of our tendons, ligaments, fascia and connective tissue decreases. As a result, our bodies become less pliable, stiffer, and less able to tolerate physical stress.



Live an active lifestyle and “keep moving” to help reduce muscle loss and maintain strength, endurance, balance and flexibility. If a joint is unable to go through its full range of motion then the muscle that controls that range of motion will become weaker and unable to protect that joint as well and leave it vulnerable to injury and the development of osteoarthritis. As a result, flexibility is as important to helping you maintain a high quality of living as are the two other components of fitness, muscle strength and cardio vascular endurance.



The Key

The key to maintaining and improving your level of flexibility is being consistent in performing your flexibility exercises. It is better to stretch 5 times a day for 1 minute each time than to stretch for 5 minutes once a day.

To Learn How to Stretch Properly

Please go to Forever Active web site to find a comprehensive article on how to stretch properly

<http://forever-active.com/learning-about-stretching/#more-1116>

Motivation to Keep Active

In the introduction of this newsletter I reference a previous newsletter, January 2014, that focused on goal setting. In this section I want to build upon that information and encourage you to use the template in that newsletter to set 5 different kinds of goals;

1. Daily Goal - to get you focused on being active every day.
2. Self-acceptance and Self – compassion Goal - to recognize that while fitness needs to be part of our daily life, you are not a machine and there will be times when you are not as active as we would like. Life tends to get in the way of our best laid plans sometimes. When you fall short of your goals, don’t despair, just move on and move toward your next activity goal. If you are successful 80 % of the time in achieving your activity goal you are doing fantastic.
3. Performance Goal — The key with this goal is to use the SMART template effectively. Your performance goal must be REALISTIC. It does not have to be related to a time, distance or number of reps, sets etc. It could be just doing the activity. Remember, “Success is in the Doing” so just “doing” is a great accomplishment. This is especially true on those days that you just don’t feel like it. On those tough days set your self a minimum time for exercise and if you still don’t feel like doing the activity after that time-give yourself permission to stop. At least you did the minimum and that is better than nothing at all.
4. Dedication goal— dedicate your efforts to someone you love. Make your activity about more than just about yourself. It will mean more to you if you do.
5. A Dream Goal— this should be an out-of-the – box goal. Something that initially didn’t seem possible, but if you start slowly and show sustainability, someday you may show your family and friends that anything is possible.

Sitting — the New Cancer

We all know the health dangers of smoking, lung cancer, heart disease etc. What we are less aware of is the health dangers of sitting for prolonged periods of time.



New research shows that the longer you spend sitting, the longer you have to be physically active to avoid a higher mortality risk. In an article recently published in a leading medical journal, adults need around 60 to 75 minutes daily of moderately intense physical activity such as a brisk walk or cycling to fully eliminate the increased risk of death associated with sitting for 8 hours a day.

Alarming, that is a much higher amount of exercise than the current Canadian physical activity guidelines, which recommend 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity for adults.



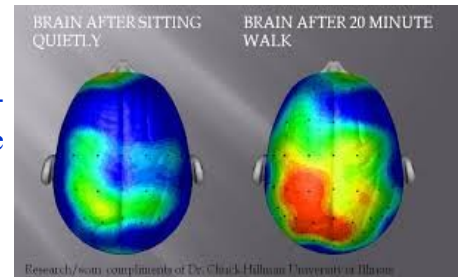
This is compounded by the fact that Stats Canada data shows that only 15% of Canadian adults meet these current guidelines and on average, adults spend 9.5 hours a day being sedentary. What researchers fear is that the average person will be discouraged by this news and not even try to meet the recommended guidelines.

However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. When it comes to physical activity, “everything counts” even if it is not at the high intensity that the recommendations suggest. Obviously more is better but “move more and sit less” is the message to remember.

Keeping Active: “Miracle - Gro” for the Grey Matter

You have heard this before, physical activity is good for the brain. It heightens cognitive awareness, memory and slows down the onset of dementia. But precisely how exercise alters and improves the brain was a mystery until now. New research is giving us a better understanding of how it all works.

Researchers have known that the brains of people who exercise regularly are different than those who are sedentary. They now believe that exercise enhances the body’s production of a substance called



Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor or BDNF which is a protein that researchers sometimes refer to as “Miracle - Gro” for the brain. BDNF helps neurons to grow and remain vigorous and also strengthens the synapses that connect neurons, and thereby allowing the brain to function better. Low levels of BDNF have been associated with cognitive decline, exercise increases the levels of BDNF in brain tissue.

If exercise has such positive effects on the *body*, then is it possible that it has an equally powerful impact on the *brain*?
New neuroscience finding say “yes”!

A University of Washington study found that when people 65 and older exercised

for more than an hour 3 times per week over a 6 year period they had a 32% lower risk of dementia than those that were sedentary

The bottom line is to make exercise part of your daily routine. Not only for your body but for your mind as well. Keep Active!