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# Starting A Fitness Program For Seniors

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As people age their beliefs about themselves change, and one of those beliefs is about their ability to lead an active lifestyle. Many older people believe that they can no longer exercise like they used to when they were young. In many cases this may be true. However, studies show that it is never too late to start exercising. Nobody is too old to begin exercising. But it is important to start slow and work your way up. Once you have established an exercise routine you'll likely find that you can be healthier, more active, and feel better than you did and even in your younger years.

Before you start an exercise program you should have a medical checkup. Check with your doctor to see what kind of exercises he recommends. You aren't likely to find that your doctor will disagree that exercise will be a positive thing even into old age.

At the beginning your exercise program should include moderate levels of activity, and you should not start out with marathon exercise sessions. A good short 15 minute walk is an example of a moderate form of exercise that can yield great benefits. You may want to start with just 10 minutes. Or you may find it you can only walk for five to 10 minutes before taking a rest. The important thing is to keep setting goals and moving ahead. So if you start with 10 minute walks gradually increase that time to 15 minutes and then to 20 minutes. Don't try to prove to yourself how much you can do in your first session. It is far better to build yourself up and increase your activity level each day as your body begins to feel more comfortable with the tasks you are putting it through.

A good goal is 30 minutes of modest exercise each day. Ideally, this would include a combination of stretching each day and alternating aerobics and weight training. But this isn't where you have to start. Especially if you have not been active for many years it could take weeks or even months before you're comfortable with a 30 minute walk. There are many changes in our bodies as we age. Aging causes muscles to deteriorate along with our lung capacity. The rate of our metabolism and our flexibility decreases with age. There are also higher risks of medical problems such as osteoporosis.

It is estimated that regular exercise can prevent over half of the potential physical declines associated with aging. Physical activity slows down the aging process while increasing your energy, your stamina, and your mental health.

Improvements in strength, muscle tone and appearance are obvious benefits of exercise. But regular exercise will also increase the efficiency of your lungs and your heart warding off potential problems. It is essential to keep your ligaments from becoming too stiff as you age as this will result in less flexibility and reduced range of movement. An active person will receive benefits such as decreased blood pressure and a decreased heart rate. Improvements in self-image, confidence and reduced levels of stress are other benefits.

When you are considering a course of exercise activity is important to examine several categories. These categories are aerobic training, weight training and flexibility. In the beginning it is essential to increase your flexibility as much as possible. For people who have not exercised in a long time increasing flexibility should be the starting point and should precede other activities. Tight muscles can lead to injuries.

What you have spent several weeks improving your flexibility it is time to move to aerobic activities. Walking as previously mentioned as a great way to start. Another great activity is water aerobics. If you have access to a pool is a great way to get aerobic exercise without causing pain or stress to the joints.

Weight training should generally come after you have learned to increase your flexibility and developed a program of regular aerobic exercise. There are many options for weight training that do not require you to join a gym. Many exercises such as push ups, or even push ups starting from the knees can help to build muscle strength.

While many people feel that exercise is something that is more difficult for them to do as they age it is just as if not more important to exercise in the latter portions of our lives.

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