

## **ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE**

***Important: Before you get started, it's essential to be examined by your doctor.***

No matter how old you are, exercise can improve your quality of life and you don't have to spend a lot of time doing it to see and feel improvements. Like everyone else, seniors need to engage in cardiovascular exercise, strength training and flexibility exercises to stay healthy and maintain as much strength and functionality as possible.

Some things that can occur with aging:

**Strength:** [Sarcopenia](#) is the fancy term scientists have given to describe the loss of muscle, strength, and quality of tissue often seen in older adults. Some experts have suggested that muscle mass declines about 4% each decade from age 25 to 50.

**Endurance:** As we age, we could lose aerobic fitness and experts believe this often contributes to reduced mobility in daily life.

**Flexibility:** Joints change with age and this can lead to stiffness, decreased range of motion and more injuries

**Balance:** Each year, hospitals see over 300,000 patients for broken hips due to falls. Balance exercises can help you avoid injuries from falls and keep you independent and mobile.

### **Strength Training for Older Adults**

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If you have arthritis, osteoporosis, high blood pressure or heart disease, etc. you'll need to learn the types of exercises you can and can't do. Use the following guidelines to set up your program, once you have clearance from your medical provider:

*Lift weights for all muscle groups (chest, back, shoulders, arms, abs and legs) at least 2 non-consecutive days each week*

*Start with no weights or light weights—you can use dumbbells, machines and/or resistance bands*

*Do each exercise for at least 1 set of 10-15 repetitions. Use enough resistance that you can only do the exercise 15 times. If you can do more, you should increase your weights.*

*Progress by adding more "sets" (with rest in between) and/or increasing the weights each week*

*Focus on using good form for each exercise*

*Be sure to warm up with light exercise before lifting weights*

**Exercises Bench Sit & Stand** Stand in front of a chair (sit down first to make sure it's behind you!) with feet about shoulder-width apart. Contract the abs and sit down on the chair. As soon as you make contact with the chair, stand back up and try to do so without rocking back or using momentum. You can place your hands on your thighs if you need to. For added intensity, hold a medicine ball or a dumbbell and don't sit all the way down--stop just before your backside touches the seat.