



Lady of America Newsletter – April 2010 – Power-Up Your Health

Fitness in Your 30s, 40s, 50s and Beyond

Science continues to make great strides in discovering how exercise helps slow the effects of aging and disease. Research has proven that working out may actually lower a woman's risk of breast cancer by 47%, osteoporosis by 45% and heart disease by 14%. A study published in the Jan. 28, 2008, issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine found a big difference in the cells of those who enjoyed leisure-time exercise compared to those who lounged on the couch in their spare time. The most active people showed a slowing of cell changes associated with aging — their cells appeared the same as sedentary people who were 10 years younger.



Regular, moderate physical activity has been shown to lower the risk of, or improve the symptoms of, many chronic diseases. Exercise can boost the immune system, improve mood and self-confidence and help enhance a deeper sleep. It also helps build muscle and bone strength, and improves balance and flexibility — all of which can protect your body from falls that can cause fractures. Scientists from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, have published a study showing a reduction in fractures with strength training. What is interesting about the study is that the benefits showed up many years after the main study stopped.

A National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III) shows that greater than half of all adult Americans don't meet even the minimum recommendations for physical activity, with inactivity the most evident in people over 60. And science has proven that living a sedentary lifestyle is dangerous, leading to illness and premature death in some instances.

As you age, your body changes. The metabolic rate declines by at least 2% per decade after age 30. High-intensity aerobic interval exercise can stimulate the metabolism to counteract or minimize this decline. In your 40s, you may begin to feel pain and wear and tear on your joints. Now is time for modifying your aerobic routine and adding more strength training to help maintain joint stability and increase your lean body mass. Instead of running or jogging, switch to non-weight-bearing activities like swimming, rowing or cycling. Hormonal changes in your late 40s into the 50s can cause weight gain. It's important to exercise and follow a healthy diet.

Anyone at any age can become active. Keep exercising on a daily basis and you will age healthfully and gracefully. Remember, always warm up and cool down for at least 5 minutes before you begin and end any program, and be sure to check with your doctor.

Below is a list of exercises to get you started or to change up what you already do. These exercises work well for women over 50 and younger.

Aerobic Exercise — walking, dancing, spinning, tennis, swimming, running, treadmill, hiking

Strength Training —free weights, machines, resistance bands, planks,

Stretching — Pilates, yoga

Tai Chi — said to improve balance and significantly cut the risk of falls

Stairs — take the stairs whenever you can

As you become more active, you'll begin to notice other signs that you're getting more fit:

- ❖ You have more energy
- ❖ Your overall mood improves
- ❖ Daily activities become easier to do
- ❖ You can climb the stairs or get out of a car easier
- ❖ You can get up and down from the floor easier
- ❖ You are sleeping better at night
- ❖ Your joints aren't as tight; you feel less pain
- ❖ Illness may improve or disappear

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