



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

As you get older it is even more important to perform resistance work for your health and wellbeing. Your muscle mass drops 5% every decade post 30 years of age, this can be reversed with regular resistance training.

FITNESS TIP

If you are going to start a strength programme, it is very important you are shown the correct technique. Lifting heavier weights incorrectly could lead you straight to an injury. Therefore, seek advice before starting.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

A FEW years ago, seeing older women lifting big weights was a fairly rare sight in many gyms. This trend has well and truly changed. It's no longer unusual to see a woman performing chin ups, dead lifting or putting a barbell on their shoulders.

And there are so many reasons why women should:

- The stronger you are, the more you can do, not just in the gym but in day-to-day life.

- Being strong makes you independent. If you need to lift something heavy, you don't have to wait for someone to help.

- People in their 50s and over are realising they can be in excellent shape and stronger than they have ever been before.

- Being 50+ should not be a hindrance, embrace it and realise times have changed and you can be in much better shape than your parents at this age.

- It's ok to lift heavy weights if you learn how to do it correctly. If you can dead lift properly, then you can pick up heavy objects safely, eg. your grandchild, unlike someone with a sedentary lifestyle who's likely to injure themselves.

- So many people who are over 50 are also in a head space of thinking they shouldn't be able to do as much anymore. Strength

and power training can have a huge impact on reversing the aging process, not just physically but also on a psychological level.

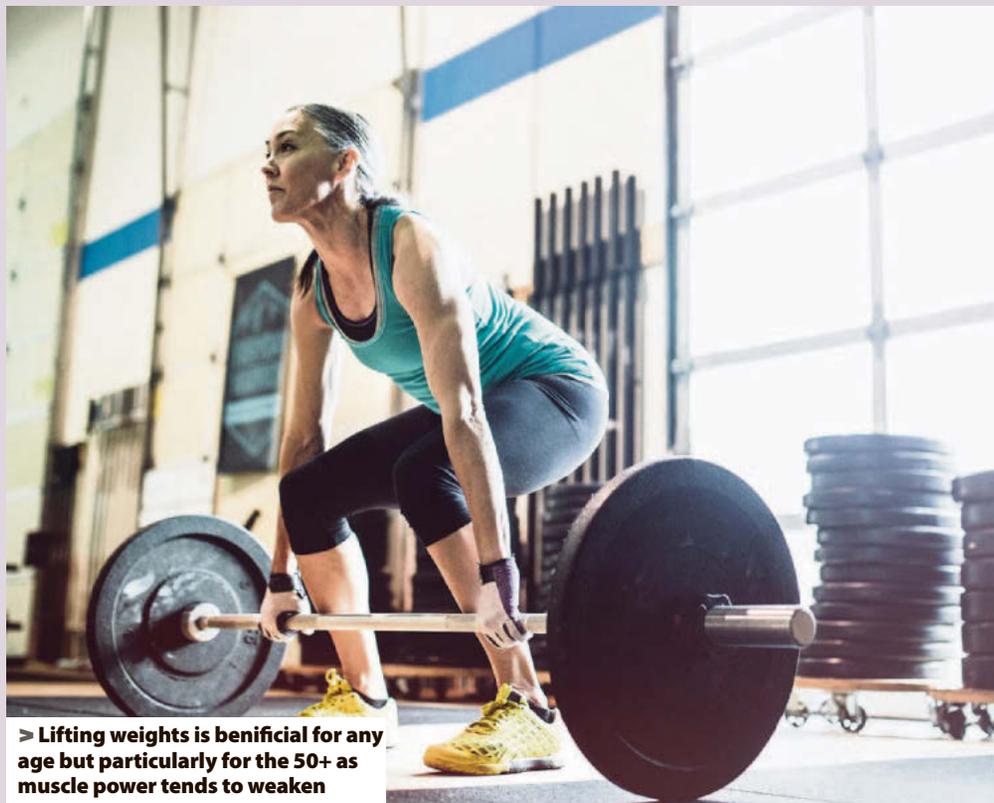
- Lean weight starts to drop significantly through middle age and this increases as you get older. This process can be halted, indeed you can increase lean weight quickly by following a specific strength and conditioning programme.

- Muscle power is one of the most important factors for maintaining independence as you age. With loss of power your walking speed slows, your stride gets shorter, your balance is reduced and everyday movements, which you took for granted when you were younger, become much harder.

- No one expects any beginner to lift heavy weights straight away, building strength and power is a gradual process. Some people are intimidated by the idea of going to a gym and pushing out of their comfort zones. We run specific strength and conditioning classes, including sessions for the over 50's.

- When you feel physically strong, you become much better at dealing with day-to-day life situations.

The combination of cardio work plus specific strength training is certainly a good start towards total wellbeing at any age, but particularly from middle age onwards.



> Lifting weights is beneficial for any age but particularly for the 50+ as muscle power tends to weaken