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THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Adding strength training into your weekly routine can significantly enhance your quality of life, especially as you age, therefore look to add some sort of strength work into your lifestyle.

FITNESS TIP

Mixing up your strength training routine with different exercises, equipment and techniques can help target all muscle groups and prevent plateaus.

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STRENGTH training, often associated with bodybuilders or athletes, is far more than just a way to build muscle. It's essential for overall health and wellbeing that can benefit everyone, regardless of age or level of fitness.

Adding strength training into your weekly routine can significantly enhance your quality of life, especially as you age. Benefits of strength training include:

Improved Muscle Strength and Endurance

Strength training involving specific muscle groups can not only help in performing daily activities but also improves your overall physical performance, whether you're lifting groceries or taking part in sports.

Increased Metabolic Rate

Muscle tissue is metabolically active, meaning it burns more calories at rest compared to fat tissue. By building muscle, you increase your resting metabolic rate, which can help with weight loss.

Bone Density and Joint Health

Weight bearing exercises, such as

strength training, are crucial for maintaining and even improving bone density. This is especially important as you age, as it helps prevent weak and brittle bones. Additionally, strength training strengthens the muscles around your joints, providing better support and reducing the risk of injury.

Improves Mental Health

Strength training has been shown to have positive effects on mental health. Regular strength exercises can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve your mood and boost self esteem.

Better Balance and Coordination

As we age, balance and coordination tend to decline, increasing the risk of falls and injuries. Strength training, particularly exercises that target the core and lower body, can enhance balance and stability, helping you maintain your independence as you grow older.

Improved Cardiovascular Health

While often overlooked, strength training also benefits heart health. It

*Life is simple –
you get out what
you put in*

Motivational quote of the day

helps reduce blood pressure, improves cholesterol levels, and enhances overall cardiovascular function. When combined with aerobic exercise, strength training contributes to a strong fitness routine that supports heart health.

As we age, our bodies undergo several changes, one of the most significant being the gradual loss of muscle mass and strength, a process known as sarcopenia. This begins as early as the third decade of life, with muscle mass declining at a rate of about 3-5% per decade after the age of 30. By the time you reach 70, you may have lost up to 30% of your muscle mass. This loss is not just a matter of how you look or physical strength, it can have detrimental effects on your mobility, balance,

and overall quality of life.

Several factors contribute to age related muscle loss:

- With age, there is a decline in hormones that support muscle growth, such as testosterone and growth hormone. These hormonal changes make it more of a challenge to maintain and build muscle.

- As we age many people become less physically active, whether due to lifestyle changes, health conditions, or decreased motivation. This reduction leads to muscle atrophy.

- It's important to consume enough protein or other essential nutrients needed to support muscle maintenance. A diet lacking in adequate protein, vitamins, and minerals can exacerbate muscle loss.

The good news is that muscle loss is not an inevitable part of aging. With consistent strength training, you can significantly slow down, halt, or even reverse the process. So how can you do this?

Regular Strength Training

Engaging in strength training exercises at least two to three times per week can help maintain and build

muscle mass. Exercises such as squats, lunges, deadlifts, push-ups and resistance band exercises target major muscle groups and promote muscle growth.

Protein Intake

Eating enough protein is crucial for muscle repair and growth. Older adults should aim for a protein rich diet, including sources like lean meats, fish, dairy, legumes and plant-based proteins.

Progressive Overload

It's important to gradually increase the weight or resistance used in your exercises. This concept, known as progressive overload, ensures that your muscles are constantly challenged and continue to grow.

Mix it up

Mixing up your strength training routine with different exercises, equipment and techniques can help target all muscle groups.

Strength training is a powerful tool that can help you stay strong, independent, and improve your quality of life.

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