

EXERCISE: THE REAL FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

By Dr. Cathy

This year the Baby Boomers' oldest group turns 65. We are living longer and in some cases better than history predicted. The Baby Boomers led the way in the 70's, 80's and 90's bringing movement to the forefront re-popularizing tennis and skiing, jogging, aerobics classes, and inventing new ways to exercise like step aerobics and Jazzercise. We know more than all the other generations about the Science of good Nutrition and exercise and as we advance through middle age to becoming senior citizens, the evidence (and there is a lot) of the benefits of "getting and staying physical is REAL.

In fact regular exercising during middle age and beyond is one of the most effective ways to promote just the sort of old age that befits the Boomers image; independent, robust and free of chronic disease and disability.

"If you had to pick one thing one single thing that came closest to the fountain of youth," says James Fries, M.D. a pioneer researcher on healthy aging at Stanford University, ***"then it would have to be exercise."***

Statistics prove that exercise maintains healthy blood vessels for good circulation in the body and brain. It also helps weight management and is the best stress "buster" around, much better than anti-depression and anti-anxiety pills, which according to the latest report <November 2010> are no better than placebo (sugar pill or suggestion). 80% are ineffective for mood disorder and contribute to lack of energy, libido and zest for living. They also lose effectiveness over time.

Exercise also stems age-related losses in bone density and muscle mass while keeping the heart and lungs strong. In a nation like ours where heart disease and cardiovascular disease have been the leading cause of death in males and now females (risk increases during and after menopause) one would think getting in harmony with the principles that create and maintain health would be our greatest priority! Yet America is getting more obese than ever even into our youngest generations where the obesity rate jumped from 13.1 to 35.6 since 1960!

The best evidence, reflected in dozens of studies, is people who exercise, on average, live longer than those who don't, with a reduced chance of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, depression, falls and even mental decline. **"Exercise seems to be one of the key factors that distinguish people who have a healthy old age from those who don't"**, says Suzanne Leveille, a professor of nursing at the University of Massachusetts Boston, who is conducting research on disability in older people. **"Being sedentary is a known risk factor for just about every poor health outcome, from being hospitalized to ending up in a nursing home and even to mortality."** In terms of longevity, regular exercise seems to have an impact that few other health measures can match.

Will Obesity, high risk for most of the "functional" illnesses that we fear, be our nation's Achilles' heel? You can start right now to eliminate health risks by getting out of the comfort zone you have made a habit of and get moving. You can take responsibility in lending a hand to assist reducing the high cost of health care by using this free Anti-Aging method and lowering your risk for a decline in health.



Is it possible that we think of aging and illness as synonymous because that is what we witnessed in the previous generations who didn't understand the benefits of movement? You must get past the excuses and know if weight loss is a goal it must be combined with regular exercise and consuming fewer calories. If exercising around others inhibits you choose a "like bodied" class or gym and work out with a buddy for support and commitment. Exercise must be a priority taking primary time in your schedule. Many wait until a health crisis forces this issue and then isn't it amazing how we can suddenly find time to make exercise a priority when we didn't before, (that is if we make it through the crisis!) and find we have a more rewarding life. Here are some great examples of others who discovered the benefits and the empowerment of Moving:

Terry Schleede, 59. Mount Ulla, NC.

Then: In late 2007, Schleede, who weighed 263 pounds, was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. He cut out his 4 soda's a day and ate more fruits and veggies, and he got moving! He started walking, then trained for and competed in a mini-triathlon – swimming, biking, and running.

Now: Schleede continues to compete. He has lost more than 80 pounds, and his blood sugar is normal.

Lesson learned: "The hardest thing was getting off the couch. Once I did, everything began to fall into place."

Mary Mathewson, 53, Damascus, MD.

Then: Mathewson wanted to lose the weight she had gained over the years and decided to try an exercise program designed for office workers.

Now: She has lost 20 pounds in 5 months by eating less and smaller portion sizes and walking 1 1/2 miles in 25 minutes on her lunch break.

Lesson learned: "If I'd known that exercise could be this simple, I would have started long ago."



Best Exercise Tips:

1. **Minimum to stay healthy:** muscle-strength training twice a week plus 2 1/2 hours of moderate activity like walking, or 75 minutes of jogging.
2. **Get Fitter Faster:** More intense workouts burn more calories in less time. Walk a 5 K race in 40 minutes, jog it in 30 minutes or run in under 20 min. Either way your burning the same amount of calories.
3. **Short spurts are best:** Alternate short spurts of hard, high speed activity with periods of slower activity to shorten a workout while improving fitness.
4. **Stronger Muscles in Minutes:** Two to three minute weekly sessions using free weights or resistance bands will restore muscle and keep bones strong.
5. **Upper and Lower body moves:** Alternating upper-body strength training Exercise with a lower-body move is a time saver, try rope-jumping with lunges.
6. **Yoga:** a few minutes of Yoga-type stretches after a workout improve flexibility range of motion, and strength in a way that aerobic activities can't.
7. **Buddy up:** Exercising with others makes time fly, creates accountability.
8. **Mix it Up:** Exercise programs need variety, change your routine every 6-8 weeks or your body adapts and you will hit a plateau. Add classes to your workout: Try Zhumba, (my personal favorite), Bellyrobics, or Salsa classes.

Bottom Line: Move! Walk, jog, run, bike, dance, play, laugh, love, LIVE!

**We are offering a new health fitness/evaluation program for you.
Call the office (404.257.0188) and schedule a free consult on how you can get fit!**

You won't regret it!

