



Improve & Lengthen Quality of Life with Strength Training

The American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association have finally updated their guidelines! Are you aware that as you age, you lose muscle? Where is it going? Why are you allowing yourself to whittle away? What's going to hold up your bones when all of your muscle has atrophied? Seriously, you have 100 percent control of your body's fate.

Look at it on a cellular level. You replace about one percent of your cells every day. That means that one percent of your body is brand new today. Think of it as getting a whole new body approximately every three months. You have the power to choose whether the cells come in weaker or stronger. The cells just follow the directions that you send by how you choose to live. Exercise and your cells get stronger, sit down and your cells decay. It's ultimately your choice.

So what are the new guidelines? The updated recommendations suggest that adults, ages 18 to 65, do eight to 12 repetitions of eight to 10 different exercises on the major muscle groups. This includes strength training with free weights, or machines or weight-bearing calisthenics. Just doing cardiovascular exercise, such as walking, running, or biking isn't enough. Doing cardiovascular exercise is very important to keep your heart healthy and for burning calories, but it just isn't enough!

Here is the secret: Fat cells primarily travel throughout the muscle (and out of your body ideally). The more muscle you have, the bigger the machine, the more capability you have to burn unwanted body fat. Remember, inactivity equals muscle loss; hence losing the fat burning machine. You won't build muscle by walking, but you will if you lift some weights. It's really that basic. Our bodies were not designed to lead a sedentary lifestyle. We were designed to move and be physically active. When we become sedentary we become incredibly unhealthy, among many other ailments. It goes back to the cellular level of "rotting cells." Yuck!

It's not too late to start

The most important thing to know is this: It's NEVER too late to take back control of your body! If you recall, you replace one percent of your body's cells every day. If you're 18 or 65 years old, it's still the same one percent of new cells. Cells do not discriminate with age, they are just looking to replace the old ones. Don't you want new cells that are active and healthy or do you want the new cells to come in unhealthy and with a sedentary lifestyle message? It's your choice.

Exercising isn't always easy and sometimes it takes real determination to do it. The payoff is so worth the effort though and if you want to live as long as you can in a healthy body then you need to make some decisions. If you've been reading our articles, you know that our tag line is "Just Decide." That can be applied



in so many aspects of your life.

I assume many of you reading this article are strong, capable and successful people. Why is it that we tend to take such control of several aspects of our lives, BUT often neglect our health? We go to work, school, take care of our family, attend meetings, volunteer, take care of the home, etc. When is it your turn? It's very sad and disheartening that you don't value yourself more. You should. Your "people" love you and would miss you if you were not here.

"The message is do as much as you can do to prevent yourself from falling into a disabled state," says W. Jack Rejeski, a professor of health and exercise science at Wake Forest University. Anything is 100 percent better than nothing. Just decide that you are ready to take back control of your body and your life. Just decide that you have what it takes to grow a new and healthy body, even if you're 50 years old, have bad knees or an aching back. You truly can improve the quality of your life one day at a time. A year in your life will pass by regardless. It's up to you to get yourself healthy or continue wishing that you had.

Just think, one year from now you could be in a 100 percent healthier body. Just decide. **HB**

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Sources of stats and statements in this article include "Younger Next Year," by Chris Crowley; The American Heart