

Ageing, Physical Activity and Exercise

Introduction

Evidence suggests that participation in physical activity is an effective way to reduce and prevent functional decline linked to ageing. People are living longer and we know that prevalence of disease (e.g. cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis) increases with age. Therefore it is important that people continue to be, or become, physically active later in life to maintain their quality of life and extend their independence.

Why be Physically Active as I Get Older?

We know the many benefits of being physically active. There are a number of known benefits associated with physical activity and ageing.

Reduced risk of:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Osteoporosis | Cancer |
| Cardiovascular disease | High BP |
| Falls | High cholesterol |
| Diabetes | |

Improved:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Bone mass | Muscle mass |
| Healthy weight | Quality of life |
| Aerobic capacity | Social independence |

How Much Physical Activity?

It is recommended that adults over 65 years of age should engage in the following:

- **cardiovascular exercise of moderate intensity for 30 minutes on 5 days a week**
(moderate intensity equivalent to working at a RPE of 6 on a scale of 1 (light) to 10 (hard). An individual should be able to have a conversation during exercise).*
- **strength training exercise (8-10 exercises working all major muscles), performing 10-15 repetitions 2-3 times a week.**
- **balance exercises**

What Type of Physical Activity?

Everyday chores – gardening, climbing the stairs, doing the housework, walking (use a pedometer and aim to increase your daily step count)

Join a club & meet new friends – take up a new or old activity, eg bowling, dancing, walking with a group, swimming, aqua, golf...

Exercise classes - see a qualified exercise instructor who can advise you towards a suitable physical activity plan and exercise programme