

Active Image

Building the Foundation for a Healthier You!

Aging Gracefully

“To be 70 years young is sometimes far more cheerful and hopeful than to be 40 years old.” -
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Whether you're 20 or 70, you naturally want to be healthy, feel good about your body and experience life to the fullest.

You will approach aging with a greater sense of ease if you know what to expect from your body, and respond in a balanced, purposeful manner. Following are some of the physical changes associated with aging and ways to postpone or minimize them.

Loss of Muscle and Strength. Loss of strength begins sometime around the age of 40 and can lead to weight gain; a reduced ability to burn calories; balance and gait problems; falls and broken hips; fatigue; increased joint stress; back, hip and knee problems; and a decrease in mobility.

What to Do: Acknowledge the loss and take action to regain your strength:

- Start a balanced strength training program today. It can be as simple as some run of the mill push ups and squats or you may choose to join a gym and work with machines. Either way strength training will maintain your muscle mass. The beauty of it is that it's never too late to start!

Arthritis. Almost everyone over 40 years old has some sign of osteoarthritis, which results in stiffness in one or more joints. Damage or overuse of a joint commonly leads to arthritis.

What to Do:

- Seek medical treatment. Check with your doctor to see if you should take aspirin.
- Get physical therapy.
- Learn how to modify exercises to avoid injury.
- Participate in warm-water aquatic exercise.
- Strength train.
- Lose weight.
- Avoid overusing a one muscle by doing a various forms of exercise .

Osteoporosis. A loss of bone density increases your risk of falling and breaking bones. Smokers and small-boned, underweight, postmenopausal women are more susceptible.

What to Do:

- Engage in weight-bearing exercises and strength training.
- If you smoke, quit.
- Have your bone density measured.
- Consume calcium-rich foods and/or take calcium supplements.

Menopause (women). One woman in five experiences no unusual symptoms, but other women may experience irregular or heavy periods, headaches, backaches, fatigue, hot flashes and insomnia. Lower estrogen levels cause a decrease in bone density, a decline in vaginal lubrication and a thinning of the lining of the vaginal wall.

What to Do:

- With your doctor, decide if hormone replacement therapy is appropriate.
- Participate in weight-bearing exercises and strength training.
- Wear breathable clothing and dress in layers for workouts.
- Use lubricating creams for vaginal dryness.
- Listen to your body.

Enlarged Prostate (men). As men age, the prostate gland tends to enlarge, which can block the bladder, thereby increasing the frequency and difficulty of urination. Some men find sitting uncomfortable.

What to Do:

- Avoid activities that cause discomfort.
- Seek medical help if necessary.
- With your doctor, decide if you're a candidate for surgery.

Other practical things you can do to help you age gracefully

- Learn to laugh- a lot
- Participate in some form of physical activity every day
- Cultivate your spiritual life- join a church, pray, fast, meditate
- Learn how to manage your stress
- Get involved in social activities
- Spend some time around children
- Don't forget those 8 cups(at least) of water per day!