

Exercise: The Fountain of Youth

Turning Back the Clock - *How physical exercise consistently decreases your biological age.*

Whether we are looked upon as being either young or old, our attitudes vary regarding our current age as it relates to our self confidence. Chances are that as we enter middle age, the perception that "it is all downhill from here" consumes most of us. The fear of getting old or aging is a topic that always boggles the mind.

We all want to be able to say that we are still in our prime. Living in a youth driven society where youth and beauty are synonymous, age in some cases negatively affects self-esteem specifically as we grow older. The question then becomes how do we turn back the clock?

How do we decrease our biological age since there is no way to decrease our chronological age? Although there is no way to stop getting older, we can battle the amount or rate at which we age. One of the most effective ways possible is through progressive physical exercise. Studies have shown that exercise helps to bring about better health in a variety of areas including muscular strength, locomotor coordination and cardiovascular fitness.

With appropriate and consistent exercise, your quality of life can be improved regardless of any age. Last year, an 87 year old male completed the New York City marathon! This month's newsletter takes a look into the effects of the aging process and how exercise positively shapes your body throughout it's lifespan.

Sports Conditioning and Rehabilitation

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Your quality of life can be improved with consistent and proper exercise.



Daily exercise, regardless of age, is one way to ensure the aging process is a graceful one.

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Our Mission is to provide personalized rehabilitation, fitness training and sports performance in an environment that leads to client involved, functional improvement from metabolic, neuromuscular and orthopaedic impairments.

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Age Related Changes of the Musculoskeletal System

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There are many significant changes in body composition with aging that can lead to many functional impairments subsequently causing injury. Daily life seems to get affected the most. Movement patterns that didn't take much effort to perform when we were younger become a more challenging task as we grow older. Our physical activity decreases when these movements are no longer easy.

Physiological changes occur in the body as we advance in age. In one study conducted, 65% of women aged 75 to 84 years were unable to lift 10 lbs. Common changes that can occur include a decline muscle strength, muscle endurance, flexibility and bone mineral density. This all seems to be bad news. In contrast, these changes can be vastly improved with a proper resistance training program.

If any of the previously mentioned problems exist, it is commonly believed that exercise might cause more harm than good. The good news is exactly the reverse. A fitness program can be designed to help battle ailments related to advanced age. Current evidence suggests that resistance training can be remarkably safe for seniors if appropriate guidelines are followed. One study showed that resistance training of older adults showed as much as a 50% increase in muscular strength and power after six months. More importantly, with these increases in strength and power also came improvements in the subjects' functional ability.

Before starting a resistance training program, a health screening by your physician is strongly recommended. At SCAR, we've recently introduced **Body Age™ testing by Polar®**. This is a computer analysis which gives us an indication of your biological age through a battery of fitness tests and can vary compared to your chronological age based on your level of health. For example, a 60 year old female who lacks lower body strength, leads a sedentary lifestyle, and has a body fat percentage higher than the expected norm might reveal a body age ten to fifteen years higher than her actual age.

The Body Age™ test will provide specific suggestions on how to decrease your biological age based on your results. This test is also complimentary. For more information about scheduling a Body Age™ test, please see a SCAR staff member.



Off The Physical Therapy Desk

Exercise Is Medicine

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Every human being on our planet is born with a progressive relentless disorder which can lead to an increased incidence and in many cases serious illness and even death. Several of these disease processes include coronary artery disease, cancers, arthritis, osteoporosis, incontinence, and depression among others.

This preceding list defines some of the existing conditions that we currently find ourselves in. The most irresponsible and common approach is to turn our backs and act as if we are impervious to these diseases which can be detrimental to our health. How each individual treats these underlying predicaments can directly influence one's response to the aging process.

Imagine if scientists were able to develop a miracle cure which could provide all of the following benefits: increased strength, improved cardiac output, refined muscle tone and a renewed self esteem. How much would people be willing to pay if this medication was also proven to reduce the risks of heart attacks, osteoporosis, diabetes, obesity and stress?

Believe it or not, scientific research has shown that a regular physical exercise regimen can help to provide all of the preceding benefits and more. The merits of exercise from preventing chronic health conditions to boosting self confidence are hard to ignore.

Regardless of your age, sex or physical abilities, a regular exercise routine can improve the quality and length of your life. When you set up a fitness routine, that is suited particularly to your own functional impairments you will establish a healthier lifestyle, and the rewards that follow. If you have any further questions related to starting an exercise regimen, please see a SCAR staff member.



Females can prevent losses of bone mineral density as they grow older with resistance exercise.



The Athletes Corner

The Challenge of Aging

Exercise can profoundly influence the effects of aging at every stage in life. The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise 5-7 days out of the week. This level of physical activity helps decrease the risk of heart disease, strokes, diabetes, as well as developing stronger muscles and bones and even providing mental benefits such as improved self-image, more energy, and better sleep. Exercise, especially resistance training, improves bone mineral density as long as a program is maintained. People of all ages could benefit from stronger bones and better mental and physical well-being.

Most athletes get plenty of exercise as a part of the training regimen for their sport. Depending on the age of the athlete there are specific considerations that must be addressed in order to help them stay both at the top of their game and in peak health. Young athletes who are still growing need to do extra stretching because as their bones grow, muscles and tendons tend to lengthen slower and can be too tight, leading to overuse injuries, especially in the knee. It is a myth that exercise, especially strength training, can stunt growth. In fact a good resistance training program will improve strength and coordination, both of which decline with dramatic increases in limb length. Heavy weight should be avoided, but it is generally safe to use light weight with repetitions of 12 or 15 and sets of 2 or 3. Functional exercises using bodyweight are especially important because they improve coordination and balance. One of the best things young athletes can do is learn a good exercise routine that they enjoy and develop a habit of doing some resistance training. Their body will benefit, not only as they grow and develop in their teens, but also in their adult years.

One challenge aging athletes face is increased susceptibility to overuse injuries because of the volume of repetition in the joints and muscles. This repetition can cause postural changes resulting in some muscles being chronically short, and others overstretched. Overuse injuries such as tendinitis or chondromalacia patella can be the consequence. It is important for athletes to have balanced strength and flexibility to avoid overuse injuries. Each age range has specific challenges and considerations, but exercise improves health at any age. At SCAR we offer a wide range of services provided by certified and licensed professionals including personal trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, athletic trainers, physical therapists, and a certified nutritionist. Ask any SCAR staff member which professional would best suit your individual needs.



Aging athletes face an increased susceptibility to overuse injuries.

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Nutrition, The Missing Link

Age Well With Good Nutrition

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Good nutrition in all stages of life can have a positive impact on aging. It is important that we adhere to some practical guidelines to help us maintain our body throughout our life so that we age gracefully.

Listed below are some helpful tips on how to make your diet go hand in hand with a healthy lifestyle:

1) Eat a variety of foods in balance and moderation- Foods contain combinations of nutrients and other helpful substances. No single food can supply all nutrients in the amounts that you need. For example, oranges provide vitamin C, but no B12. Cheese on the other hand provides vitamin B12, but no vitamin C.



2) Balance food intake with physical activity- It is true that the more you workout, the hungrier you probably will be. A common pitfall among adults and athletes is thinking that they can eat whatever they want because they just had an amazing workout! The amount of calories consumed shouldn't be in excess of the amount of calories burned with your body's resting expenditure in addition to what you burned in the gym.

3) Choose a diet moderate in sugar and low in salt/sodium-There is a link between high salt intake and obesity which, in turn, can lead to a host of other dietary diseases such as hypertension and Type II diabetes. The same holds true for those consuming high amounts of sugar.

Reading some food packages can be tricky. Particularly, some sweets will claim that their product is fat free. In truth these foods are loaded with calories coming from sugars. If these sugars consumed do not get utilized as energy, they get converted into fat. Exercise moderation when using sugar/salts in your diet.



*Remember to use
sugar and salts within
moderation.*

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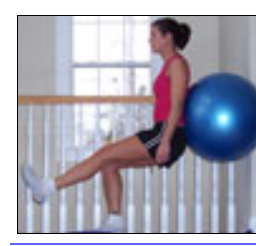
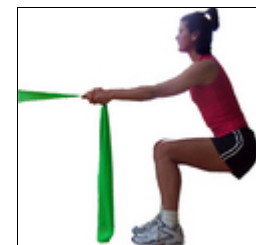
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The Squat

The **squat** is a lower body exercise used in strength training, but is also an essential part of everyday life. The exercise's main emphasis is on the quadriceps and the gluteal muscles, but it also involves the hamstrings, the calves, and the lower back. The squat is often called "the king of exercises" by those who believe it capable of inducing more and faster muscle growth than any other exercise.

The squat is performed by bending the legs at the knees and hips, lowering the torso between the legs, and then reversing direction to stand up straight again. The feet should be flat on the floor, with even distribution of weight between the heel and the ball of the foot during eccentric (slow movement against gravity) muscle action. In order to reach a range of motion beyond parallel, individuals without sufficient ankle flexibility may try putting flat board beneath the heels to artificially improve their flexibility.

The following is a good beginning progression of difficulty for the squat exercise.



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Mark your calendars!

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

6:00-7:00 pm
In the PT room

We invite all SCAR members to a seminar on
“Balance” presented by Jim Herkimer.

Jim will be give a short lecture followed by an active
lesson. Be prepared to participate in the exercise
demonstrations

Sunday, May 3, 2009

6:00 am

Irvine Spectrum

Help Us Reach for the Cure!

Join SCAR raise money for
Pediatric Cancer Research.
Join our team and raise money
yourself while training for a 5K,
10K or 1/2 marathon or just
support one of our team members.

ASK one of the SCAR staff members for details on how to
join our team or support our cause.

