



Exercising with Friends - The Health Benefits for Seniors

Just as eating right and pursuing an active social life can help you stay happy and healthy, exercise can help seniors enjoy a healthier and more satisfying lifestyle. And the benefits of regular exercise are not just physical. You'll gain emotionally and psychologically too!



[1]Regular exercising will also help you maintain your independence and enhance your mobility. Take a look at the short-term benefits below and you'll realize that the bottom line about sticking to an exercise program is that it makes you feel better and enjoy life longer! What could be simpler than that?

Short-term Benefits

- Increased metabolism. Exercising helps you burn more calories per day - both while you're exercising and when you're at rest. This creates a favorable balance between the calories you eat and those you expend.
- Increased bone density. With strength training often comes an increase in bone density (or at least prevention of bone loss), which helps in the prevention of osteoporosis and can prevent falls and broken bones.
- Increased cardiovascular fitness. When you exercise regularly, you strengthen your heart muscles which helps your heart function more effectively.
- Increased muscle strength, flexibility and endurance. These help you perform day-to-day tasks without straining your muscles and can reduce the chance for injury. You'll also reduce the pain and stiffness that come with arthritis.
- Decreased severity of menopause and diabetes symptoms.
- Increased energy and ability to cope with stress.
- Better sleep. You'll fall asleep more quickly and sleep more soundly through the night.

Long-term Benefits

- Reduced risk of coronary artery disease and high blood pressure.
- Reduced risk of type 2 diabetes.
- Reduced risk of some types of cancer.
- Long-term weight management - and possibly even weight loss. As you increase your muscle mass, you burn more calories. You may also change your body composition, which decreases the ratio of body fat to muscle, bone, vital tissue and organs.
- Decreased depression and anxiety.
- Stronger immune systems that more easily and effectively fight infection and sickness, and help you recover from illness more quickly.
- Increased mobility, flexibility and balance. These will reduce the risk of falling and lessen arthritis pain. When you increase your coordination through regular exercise, many of your daily chores and activities can also be easier to perform.
- Better digestive function - with better waste elimination and functioning of your gastro-intestinal tract

Many people who exercise regularly also report that they feel better, have more self-confidence and experience

- [Get Started](#)
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greater contentment with life. And exercise is a great way to meet people and stay connected - just join a class or plan exercise activities with your friends.



[2]According to some studies, older people who exercise may even increase their intelligence - and exercise definitely helps our minds become more alert! Recent research shows that regular exercise can help prevent Alzheimer's disease and dementia because it keeps the brain active and enhances regular brain functioning. Exercise also benefits patients of Alzheimer's by improving memory and circulation.

NOTE: Always talk with your doctor before beginning an exercise program. Every type of exercise is not appropriate for all people, especially if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes. And it's important that you start slowly with any physical activity.

Adapted by Personal Safety Nets® from "Benefits of Exercise" in senior.com and "Exercising with Your Partner or Friends" in realbuzz.com.

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