



Getting Regular Exercise Has No Age Limit.

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FROM: The New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)

In fact the older you are the more you can benefit from an exercise programme. Some estimates suggest that about half of the physical decline associated with old age may be due to a lack of physical activity. It has been suggested that people over the age of 65, more than any other age group, require adequate fitness levels to help them maintain independence, recover from illness and reduce their high risk of disease. Various studies show that it is never too late to get started as the human body responds to exercise, no matter what its age, and there are many health benefits.

But don't take our word for it; here is some of the latest research and information on how exercise can be beneficial well into your senior years.

General Benefits of Exercise:

- Increased muscle strength and flexibility.
- Improved balance and co-ordination and reduction the risk of falls.
- Encouraging social networks, leading to new friends and a sense of purpose.
- Help with daily tasks such as lifting groceries and mobility while out and about.

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a bone disease that affects more than half of NZ women, and nearly a third of NZ men over the age of 60 years. The cost to our country for this preventable disease is estimated at \$1.1 billion per year. Exercise helps contribute to the prevention of osteoporosis by increasing bone density, and assists with injury prevention by strengthening muscles in your legs, which helps you maintain your balance and prevents falls. The most effective exercise to maintain bone density is 'weight-bearing' exercise, when your muscles move against gravity.

Dementia

Dementia occurs as a result of physical changes in the structure of the brain. 48,000 New Zealanders have this disease that affects memory, thinking, behaviour, personality and emotion. While it associated with aging, symptoms can appear as early as 45.

There is some amazing news for those who fear the onset of dementia, as research published in the Annals of Internal Medicine found that the most physically fit middle aged adults were almost 40 percent less likely to develop dementia by the time they were 65, compared with their counterparts who were not regularly exercising.

Dr. Laura DeFina, Medical Director of research at The Cooper Institute comments "physical activity changes in midlife may lead to improved fitness levels, resulting in less all-cause dementia with aging".

Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is a form of arthritis that usually develops as people get older – almost half of all people over 60 will have osteoarthritis. It's caused by a breakdown of the cartilage that protects your joints.

Sufferers often experience pain that prevents and limits movement at times however studies show that regular and appropriate physical activity and exercise help improve pain tolerance, mood and quality of life for people with arthritis.

It's never too late to start an exercise programme, and with the anti ageing benefits it's better to start now.

To make sure you get the right advice to improve your health and fitness and reduce the chance of injury we are very fortunate to have a nationwide network of qualified and experienced REPs Registered Exercise Professionals. REPs Registered Exercise Professionals can provide support and motivation to get our seniors on the right journey to better health through physical activity. Simply go online to www.reps.org.nz to search a nationwide list of professionals, or telephone 0800 55 44 99 for help.

References and information links:

<http://www.bones.org.nz>

<http://www.cooperinstitute.org>

<http://annals.org/article.aspx?articleid=1567367>

<http://www.health.govt.nz>

<http://www.arthritis.org.nz>

Contact Details:

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What is the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)?

REPs is an independent non profit organisation administrating the New Zealand exercise professionals register to ensure that the public receive safe and effective exercise advice.

Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the “Warrant of Fitness Check” that an exercise professional and facility meet New Zealand and international standards to deliver exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to over 35 other national exercise professional registers through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) www.icreps.org.

