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Being 60+ is a good reason to start lifting weights

There is a myth that we don't need to exercise as we age. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have no idea how that notion came to be.

There is the 60-year-old that shuffles when they walk and then there is the 60 year old that runs marathons, lifts 300 pounds for fun or is active in the lives of their grandchildren. Sure there are lots of reasons that people shuffle, accidents, degenerative diseases to name a few. But what is the reason for the largest part of the ageing population. The truth is, it is a lack of knowledge of how exercise can positively affect our physical, mental and social selves.

Let's look at how exercise can transform our lives.

Lean muscle mass begin to decline at a faster rate after the age of 60 By age 75, that annual decline is 0.64 - 0.7% for women and and a 0.8 - 0.9%. Muscle strength declines much faster 2.5 to 3% for women and 3 - 4% annual for men. This matters as the simple every day tasks of retrieving a fallen object from the floor, getting up from your chair, climbing stairs all utilize muscles. The desire to enjoy a walk in the fresh spring air can be hampered by a loss of muscle mass. The desire to play with one's grandchildren or go hiking, canoeing, travelling are all hampered by a lack of muscle.

You can change all of this. Research shows that there is no age at which it is too late to build muscular strength and power.

When we exercise, we do more than just create muscle. Here's a quick list of the benefits:

- Lower the risk of cardiovascular disease
- Lower the risk of hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Lower the risk of Type 2 diabetes
- Lower of your adverse blood lipids
- Lower the risk of some cancers
- Improves your cognition
- Reduces the risk of dementia
- Reduces anxiety and helps with depression
- Helps with weight loss
- Increases bone density
- Improves range of motion and physical function
- Lowers the risk of falling in the elderly

- Reduces the risk or fall related injuries

- Allows you to participate in life.

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If you could make changes in even a few of items above with simple exercise, wouldn't you get on it immediately?

My Dad used to say that there was plenty of time for rest when you're dead. That man rode his recumbent bike into his 90's.

I encourage you to spend a little time thinking about the reasons you want to improve your health. It's not just that you will look great in that summer dress. Do some exploring as to what and who matters to you. Check out the Dream Journal on the home page of my website to help you with this exercise.

You don't need to belong to a gym or own a variety of weight. You could use filled water bottles if you don't have weights at home. If you're looking to purchase bands or light weights for use at home, there is a large grocery chain that has the initials SS that has a wonderful array of well priced equipment.

I encourage you to do you resistance training. This is the fountain of youth. There are lots of resources to help you get started. Check out U-Tube or Pinterest. Or a hire a trainer for a couple sessions to help you get started. Work within your ability. The body needs time to adjust to increased challenges. Go walking with your friends. Walking is not enough, but it is certainly enjoyable and a great start.

I encourage you to carve 30 minutes out of your day and get your exercise done. Your body is counting on you.

I am always happy to chat with you about ageing and fitness. Please don't be shy.

Stay strong.