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Yes, Virginia … Grandma Does Need to Exercise

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Yes, Virginia.....Grandma Does Need To Exercise!!!

Kettering College & Medical Center
2012
Aging is Inevitable...But Can Also Be Enjoyable!!!
Why Be Fit...at Our Age???

- Paul, likening us to household vessels, points out that some are to be “instruments for special purposes made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work”
  
  
  2 Timothy 2: 20-21

- We’re to be prepared for work the Lord has for us to do....no age limit specified!!!
We “Live In” Our Bodies...We Are Stewards of Them

• In this age, we are the “instruments” by which God’s work on earth gets done

• Satan doesn’t want seniors to be strong and vigorous....but he’s tricky.....He knows we won’t do overtly harmful things, but we might:
  – Become “couch potatoes”
  – Over-indulge the “sweet-tooth” most of us have
  – Make excuses for lack of physical activity
But.....Age Changes Us

• Appearance: Hair loses its pigment; lines of facial expression deepen; skin becomes thinner; lose muscle mass; past 65, most lose height

• Functionally: most note decrease in physical strength and endurance; some joint or back stiffness or pain; general “energy” loss

• Psychologically: “creeping” concerns/fears... declining income; loss of loved ones; possible loss of independence.....
The Demands of Daily Life Change

• Reality is that, sometime in early or mid-20’s, life’s tasks and priorities change
  — Work demands
  — Family responsibilities
  — Financial needs
• Although we are “busy”, things like exercise get “crowded out” of our days
• Most of our work is sedentary; we become careless in our eating habits
• Most of us cope with significant stress
• These subtle lifestyle factors combine to weaken our bodies, and accelerate the aging process
So, Gradually, Nearly Imperceptibly, We Change

• By mid-60’s, many Americans have:
  – Lost skeletal muscle mass
  – Increased in fat percentage
  – Begun to lose bone mass
  – Gained body weight
  – Begun to experience back and joint pain
  – Noted a general decline in physical strength and endurance
Through the 60’s and 70’s, Without Intervention, Those Changes Accelerate

• These combine to:
  – Exacerbate existing health problems
  – Increase risk for cardiovascular and metabolic disease
  – Increase risk of falling, and skeletal injury
  – Decrease vigor of the immune system
  – Decrease our “joy in living”

• It becomes easier to “maintain status quo” rather than to make changes
Some change is inevitable...but we can “square the curve” of decline by making some lifestyle changes—primarily in physical activity
Factors We Know Have A Role in Our “Rate of Aging”

- Heredity
- Chronic diseases of childhood onset
- Work and family responsibilities
- Stress, and how we cope
- Lifestyle choices
  - Personal habits
  - Eating patterns
  - Exercise
  - Spiritual life
We Can Change Only Lifestyle

• While all have parameters imposed by work, family, and finances, we can still make very significant choices
  – Personal habits
  – How we cope with life’s stresses
  – How we use the leisure time we do have
  – How we establish priorities for use of time, energy, resources
One of the “Easiest” Changes to Make Is Mild-Moderate Exercise

• Weight-bearing exercise enhances bone density, as well as increases lower body strength
• Slows loss of muscle mass; aids glucose control; enhances weight management
• Aerobic exercise improves general circulation, and has been shown beneficial in preserving/improving cognitive function
Factors Most Seniors Cite As “Barriers” to Exercise

• Availability of appropriate and affordable place to exercise
• Health concerns; thinking they “can’t”
• Don’t feel they know “what” they should do, or how to go about it
• Don’t have anyone who will do it with them
• Lack of encouragement from grown children, spouse, friends
The Fact Is:

• Our Creator put within us the ability to adapt to reasonable physical demands......if we can still move a body part, we can strengthen it!
Advice Based on Both Knowledge and Experience of the Aging Process

Kenneth Cooper, the man who got Americans moving with his 1968 book “Aerobics” is now in his 80’s....he gives this advice: “Don’t retire; Stay involved in work and social activities; Stay active physically and mentally; Don’t smoke; Control body weight; Address medical problems that exist; Stay optimistic-look on the bright side of life.”
So...What Can We Do?

• Take stock of your present situation:
  – What physical limitations do you have?
  – What resources are available to you in the community?
  – What advice has you health care provider given?

• Start with a simple exercise program; it could be doing some chair exercises at home, or walking for 10 minutes 3 times a day
Seniors Can Do Lots of Different Things
Find What You Can Do – and Do It
Cedarville University Senior Jackets
Cedarville’s Sr. Jackets

• Open to those age 65 and older
• Moderate cost for equipment upkeep
• “Mentored” exercise Tue./Thur. during chapel hour; may use facility other days
• Exercise Science majors practicum experience on Tuesdays and Thursdays
• Social times: coffee/tea Tue. and Thur.; last Thursday of month – birthdays for the month; Christmas cookie exchange; Spring luncheon
• Opportunity to share prayer requests
Exercise A While...Visit A While...
Fellowship A Huge Part of Program’s Benefit
Christmas Cookie Exchange
Learning Across the Generations
Answer Questions; Encourage; Listen
Instruct, Motivate, Make Exercise Fun
Encourage Workout Independence
Some Do Have Tendency to Stop and Chat....
But They Do Work!
So What Does Exercise Do For Seniors?

• We don’t have controlled studies of our seniors, but.......what we observe, and what they tell us:
  – Improved mobility, strength, and endurance
  – Better able to accomplish daily tasks
  – Diabetics report better control of blood glucose
  – Feel “stronger”; feel “better” ; have more energy
  – Value the opportunity for fellowship
  – Value the interaction with the college students
What Research Literature Tells Us

• Weight bearing exercise preserves bone mass in those over 60
• Moderate regular exercise lessens rate of muscle mass loss and fat tissue gain
• Maintains cardiovascular function; lessens cognitive losses due to circulatory deficit
• Regular exercise helps to maintain joint function and mobility
• Helps one recover from illness/surgeries that do occur
• In spite of those benefits, an NIH survey found that only 25% of those >65 engage in regular exercise
• Physical activity is the “easiest” lifestyle feature to change
• It can be as simple as walking 30 minutes a day, either at one time, or in shorter segments
• Exercise shouldn’t hurt; “no pain-no gain” is a myth
• Exercise is a great “medicine” if taken regularly
• Need to make it a priority
• God has allotted our years...He’s give us stewardship of our physical bodies
• He’s allowed us to learn ways we can cope with changes in ourselves, and in our world- our grandparents didn’t have to make room in their lives for exercise...their work required it; we have to plan it
• Use what we know; we will age, but by staying as fit as we can, we’ll be fit for the work He has planned for us
As Senior, Balance Rest and Activity
Rocking Chairs Are Nice..but Don’t Spend too Much Time There
Final Thoughts

• Job 12:12
• “With the ancients is wisdom, and in length of days, understanding.”
• Psalm 71:18
• “Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, don’t forsake me until I have shown Your strength to this generation, and Your power to every one that is to come”