



2023 WEEK THREE



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Why Strength Matters

Walking and other types of aerobic activity provide many health benefits, but they don't make muscles strong. Strength training does. You can feel a difference when your body is stronger. Strengthening exercises also improve balance, coordination, and agility, allowing you to perform everyday movements much easier.

People start losing muscle around age 30, and the rate of muscle loss accelerates around age 50. Some of muscle loss is part of the aging process, but inactivity accounts for the rest. The good news is you can prevent muscle loss and can increase your strength – no matter your age!

Do muscle-strengthening activities two to three days a week, with a rest day between. Work all major muscle groups, including the legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, and arms. Following are strengthening exercises you can do at home or in a gym:

Free weights or dumbbells. These are classic tools used to strengthen your upper body. They are inexpensive and available in many sizes. Start with 2- to 5-pound weights and gradually work up.

Body weight exercises. These require little or no equipment since they use your body weight for resistance. Try push-ups, pull-ups, abdominal crunches, lunges, and leg squats.

Resistance tubing or bands. These offer weight-like resistance when you pull on them. They are inexpensive and good for building strength in arms and other muscles, and they are available in varying degrees of resistance.

If you are new to strength training, start slowly. Make sure you warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of stretching or walking, and always work both opposing muscle groups – right and left sides.

An excellent resource to learn proper and safe strength training exercises can be found on the Walk Kansas website. Check with your local Extension office to see if they offer *Stay Strong Stay Healthy* classes (ksre-learn.com/staystrong). These strength training classes are affordable and accessible, and targeted toward adults around age 50 and over.



Tiny Habits

In addition to carving out time for physical activity, including moderate intensity (walking, biking, etc.) and strengthening exercises, it is also important to just move more and sit less throughout your day. This is where “tiny habits” can have great impact. These tiny habits often feel easiest to accomplish because they happen “automatically” and don’t require much thought or planning. They are small bits of movement integrated into your day and have become habits.

This Tiny Habits approach, developed by BJ Fogg, Director of the Behavior Design Lab at Stanford University, can be summed up like this: If you want to create a new habit, make a plan to do it **RIGHT AFTER** an existing habit that you already do reliably.

Here are steps to help you create tiny habits that work for you:

1. Think about tasks that you do consistently throughout a typical day. Perhaps you can relate to one of these: Sending emails and brushing your teeth.
2. Now, think about a small behavior (related to sitting less or moving more) that you would like to do more consistently throughout the day. Some examples: Stand up and stretch more often; improve your balance.
3. Finally, create your tiny habit: After I hit send on an email, I will stand up and stretch; while I

Sleep Hygiene

Good sleep hygiene is a combination of sleeping conditions and lifestyle habits that result in consistent, uninterrupted sleep. Here are tips on how to have good sleep hygiene:

- » Be consistent. Go to bed each night and get up at the same time each morning, as much as possible.
- » Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and at a good temperature for sleeping, 60 to 67° F.
- » Make your bedroom relaxing (clean and clutter-free).
- » Make your bed a sleep-only zone. Don’t watch TV there or use electronic devices (phone, iPad, laptop, etc.).
- » Don’t eat large, heavy meals before bed and limit caffeine and alcohol.
- » Exercise during the day. Movement and physical activity will help you fall asleep more easily.

brush my teeth, I will stand on one foot/leg to improve my balance.

Tiny habits, like these, work because you’re sequencing a new habit with something you already do reliably, building it into your typical routine without disruption. You can also think about adding and connecting activity, or other healthful behaviors, to other things you do consistently, like:

- » Park further away from your destination.
- » Stand up and walk around while talking on the phone, and during TV commercials.
- » Lift light weights while on a Zoom call (with your camera off).
- » Set an alarm to prompt you to get up and move a little every hour.
- » Walk the stairs whenever possible, instead of taking an elevator.
- » When eating out (and at home) have water with your meal instead of ordering a beverage.
- » Keep a bowl of fruit on your desk or kitchen counter so it is ready for a quick snack.

What are some ways you can create tiny habits to increase physical activity and make healthier choices? How can you connect these to things you already do throughout your day?

Eating the Med Way

The Mediterranean way of eating is one of the healthiest in the world. This style of eating is not about cutting calories and restricting certain foods, as popular diets often emphasize. The Med Way is a way of life that includes enjoying a wide variety of whole, nourishing foods with friends and family, and practicing an active lifestyle.

Studies show that eating and living the Med Way can reduce your risk of developing certain diseases, including Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer. Other benefits include lower blood pressure and weight loss, and improved eye health by protecting against macular degeneration.

Here are seven simple steps to help you eat the Med Way:

1. Change your protein. Replace some of the meat you eat with plant proteins like beans, nuts and seeds; choose fish and seafood two to three times per week; limit red meat and choose lean meat and poultry; greatly limit processed meats.
2. Swap your fats. Choose olive oil for cooking, dressings, and marinades; replace solid fats (butter, margarine) with olive oil or canola oil.
3. Snack on nuts and seeds.
4. Eat more vegetables. Get at least three cups of vegetables per day; choose a variety of colors; include more dark green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, collards, and turnip greens.
5. Eat more fruits. Eat at least two cups of fruits per day; choose a variety of colors; include berries often.
6. Make your grains whole. Choose and eat a variety of whole grains like oatmeal, quinoa, brown rice, and popcorn; look for "whole" in the product ingredient list (e.g., "whole wheat") preferably listed first, when choosing bread, pasta, etc.
7. Rethink your sweets. Limit sugar intake; choose no more than three servings per week of high-sugar foods and drinks, such as candies, sugar sweetened snacks, desserts, or beverages.

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French Potato Salad

Makes 6 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1 pound baby red potatoes
- 1 pound baby yellow potatoes
- 1 clove garlic
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup water
- ½ teaspoon each, salt and pepper
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon each minced fresh chives, parsley, dill

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Prepare produce and herbs by rinsing under cold running water. Place potatoes in a large saucepan; add water to cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Cook, uncovered, 10 to 15 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, slice green onions and mince garlic and fresh herbs.
3. With a slotted spoon, remove potatoes to a colander and cool slightly. In a small bowl, whisk ¼ cup water, oil, vinegar, mustard, garlic, salt, and pepper. Cut cooled potatoes into ¼ inch slices and transfer to a large serving bowl. Pour the dressing over potatoes and toss gently to coat, then gently stir in green onions and herbs. Serve chilled or warm.

Nutrition Information per 1 cup serving: 201 calories; 9g total fat (1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat); 29g carbohydrates; 3g protein; 2g fiber; 239mg sodium; 1g sugar.



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