

Be strong at any age

When you think of exercise, do you think of going for a run or taking an aerobics class? Those are great cardio workouts. But there is more to fitness than just cardio.



STRONG IS HEALTHY

Strength training or lifting weights is a big part of being healthy and fit. Many people don't do strength training because they don't want to "bulk up." Older adults might skip it because they think it's only for younger people who are more muscular.

You won't get big bodybuilder muscles from doing strength training. That is, unless you train hard with that goal in mind. And many older adults can safely do strength training and find that they love how it makes them feel.

If you do regular strength exercises, you will get a stronger body and better quality of life at any age. No bodybuilder is needed!

Research shows that strength training can lower the risk of heart disease and other health conditions. It also helps you stay independent as you get older. Older adults who do strength training may find that everyday tasks are much easier. This can include things like getting out of a chair or climbing stairs.

STRONG IS GOOD FOR THE MIND

The benefits of a strong body don't stop at the muscles. Research also shows that strength training may reduce the effects of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It can also help boost self-esteem.

YOU CAN START TODAY

If you don't have equipment, like weights, you can use things around the house, like soup cans. You can also use your own body weight. Think push-ups, planks and other similar exercises. They use your body weight and gravity to build muscles.

A good way to start is with an exercise video or online class. You don't have to go to a gym. But before you start, talk to your doctor. Ask if a new exercise program is safe for you. Talk about things you should or should not do to stay safe and help avoid injury.

Give strength training a chance. You may find that it makes you feel better than you thought possible! A diet with adequate protein can help build muscle at any age and even promote healing. Talk to your doctor if you plan to make major diet changes.

Source: National Institutes of Health