

Health Connection

Your Good Health Newsletter

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Summer 2002

Are You Too Old to Exercise?...NEVER!

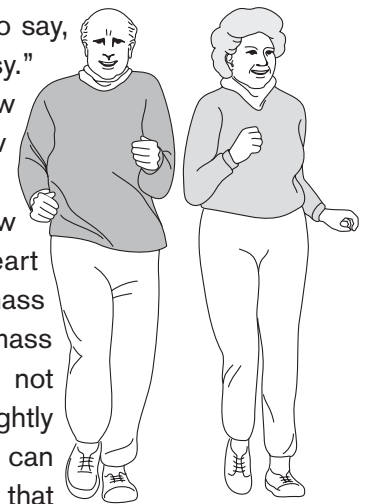
by Traci Mathias PT, GCS, Amsterdam Nursing Home
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Fall Fitness Classes

One is never too old to exercise. Society is quick to say, "You are getting older, you must take it easy." However, a great deal of health information is now available emphasizing the benefits of exercise and how exercise can change your lifestyle for the better.

Multiple studies have been performed to discover how normal aging changes the body. The American Heart Association states that a person loses 3-5% of muscle mass each decade after age 30. Decreases in skeletal bone mass are commonly known to happen in women, but men are not excluded. The ability of the lungs to exchange oxygen slightly diminishes and reaction time slows down. All of the above can be exaggerated if a person is sedentary. The good news is that all of these changes are normal. Even more good news is that exercise can help slow the aging process.



Exercise has been shown to diminish the incidence of stroke and heart attacks, regulate blood sugar, aid in digestion, and increase muscle mass and bone density. Exercise has also been shown to reduce depression. Considering all the benefits of exercise, how can you begin your own exercise regimen?

Exercise can take many forms. It does not have to be restricted to the gym or to the use of high-tech machines, which can be intimidating. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Take a ten-minute walk rather than riding the bus, or get off at a bus stop two stops away from your home. The American Heart Association recommends a total of 30 minutes of exercise a day. But if you can find even a few minutes in the day to exercise, you are sure to be happy with the results.

Exercise classes are also a great way to enjoy the benefits of physical activity. Many gyms and community centers have multiple group exercise classes for all ages. Water aerobics is gentle on your joints and a great way to control the pains of arthritis. T'ai Chi Chih, a form of exercise using slow moving positions, has been proven to increase balance. Weight lifting increases muscle mass and bone density, lowering your risk of osteoporosis. An exercise class not only improves your physical health, but also provides an opportunity for social interaction.

Nothing is more important than exercise when wanting to live a healthy lifestyle. Age should not be a deterrent but rather a motivator to begin exercising!

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Healthy People 2010 marks the third time that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has developed 10-year health and fitness objectives for the Nation. Healthy People 2010 is designed to underscore the importance of daily physical activity in improving health, fitness and quality of life. Remember these key facts on the health impact of physical activity as you consider planning your own personal fitness regimen!

- Children and adolescents need weight-bearing exercise to promote normal skeletal development.
- Young adults need regular physical activity to achieve and maintain peak bone mass.
- Older adults can improve and maintain strength and agility with regular physical activity, reducing the risk of falls.
- Regular physical activity enhances psychological well being and may reduce the risk of developing depression.

Chandler Wilson

Sports Massage 101

by Kriota Willberg, Licensed Massage Therapist, Integrative Care Center

You do not have to be a professional athlete to benefit from sports massage. If you are an avid amateur athlete, an athlete of the “weekend warrior” variety, or simply enjoy regular physical activity such as a gym workout or exercise classes, sports massage could be for you.

The scope of sports massage can vary greatly, but is organized generally into three areas.

Event massage is tailored to meet the demands of an athlete around the time of a sports event. The massage will vary in duration and techniques depending on the needs of the athlete. Pre-event massage is used as an adjunct (not replacement) to a warm up. Inter-event massage helps to keep the athlete loose, warmed, and focused. Post-event massage reduces next day muscle soreness.

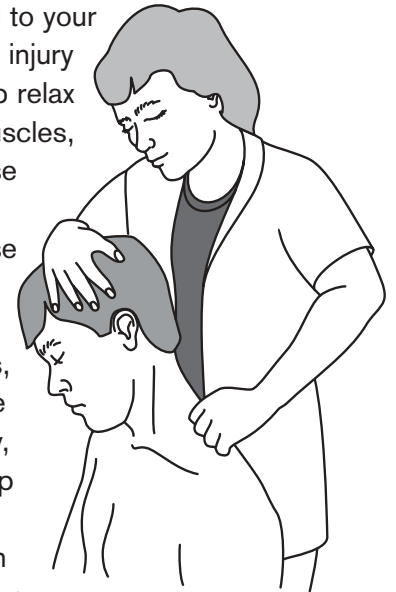
Maintenance massage is coordinated with an athlete’s needs, training schedule, and goals. It can include any number of styles and techniques such as relaxation, muscle therapy and deep tissue techniques, or even shiatsu.

Clinical or rehabilitative sports mas-

sage entails techniques that facilitate recovery from injury. Common sports injuries that can benefit from massage are muscle spasms, tendinitis, minor muscle tears, minor sprains, shin splints, etc. Techniques will vary with the condition but often include deep tissue massage techniques, stretches, and possibly heat or cold applications.

Massage is an excellent way to enhance physical performance and meet fitness goals. Massage

focused to your sport or injury can help relax tight muscles, decrease spasm, decrease pain and stiffness, increase flexibility, and help you get in touch with your body.

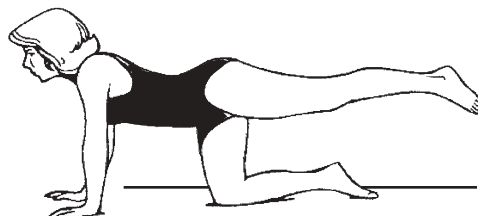


From the Studio

by Karen Ready, Osteoporosis Exercise Class Participant

“I’ve been consistently struck by the quality of care in this significant public service being offered by Hospital for Special Surgery. The exercises are simply and clearly designed, the guidance is specific, rigorous, attentive, professional and friendly, the class provides a built-in

support group, the cost is minimal and the base for the public education programs is one of the city’s most renowned health institutions. My own experience is that the repeated



connection to an exercise class provides a kind of kinesthetic memory boost that is invaluable in establishing on-going practice at home.”

cream or lotion
2 p.m. standard time 5. C.A soothing
for sunburn is 4. C. Between 10 a.m. and
Caucasian males 3. D. How high your risk
1. A. Sun Protection Factor 2. D. Older
Pg. 4 Answers..What is your Sun Safety IQ?

Workout Tips for Exercising in the Heat

by Robyn Stuhr, MA, Women's Sports Medicine Center

During hot weather, should I change my exercise program?

A hot environment can compromise both exercise performance and safety. If you get dehydrated and overheated, your heart must work harder, your muscles will fatigue sooner and you are at greater risk for heat illness. As you get used to the heat, you'll be able to train harder and tolerate the heat better.

- During your first hot weather workouts, cut back on exercise duration or intensity. Exercise at about 60-70% of normal training intensity.
- Avoid exercising at the hottest times of the day. Try early morning or evening. Find an exercise area that provides lots of shade: parks or tree-lined streets. Consider an air-conditioned facility on scorcher days!
- Monitor your heart rate and slow down if your pulse is higher than your target zone or if you do not feel good.
- **DRINK PLENTY OF FLUIDS!**
- Know the symptoms of heat stress: nausea, dizziness, headache, chills, awkwardness, muscle cramps, extreme breathlessness and lots of sweating.
- Train with other people when it is extra hot. They will notice if you are in trouble, even if you do not.

How can I teach myself to handle the heat better?

The best way to acclimatize to the heat is simply to exercise in hot weather. Continuous or intermittent aerobic training will cause your body

to acclimatize after about 7-14 days. Just make sure you start slowly, keep well hydrated and watch for signs of heat stress. Gradually increase both your training intensity and volume. Warm-up should be shorter and less vigorous and recovery breaks longer and more frequent. Drink plenty of cool, refreshing beverages. You should drink even more as you become acclimatized and develop an enhanced sweating response to exercise.

How much and what should I drink?

In normal temperatures, the average sedentary person should drink at least 8 glasses of non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic beverages daily. Warm weather and exercise push up that requirement. Do not rely on thirst as an indicator of your body's need for fluids. By the time you are thirsty, you are already 1-2% dehydrated! If your urine is dark and there is not much of it, you are dehydrated and should increase your fluid intake. Drink fluids until your urine is pale yellow/straw-colored and plentiful. However, if you are going to the bathroom every 30-45 minutes, you are probably drinking too much. Sports drinks are a great choice during activity because they provide fluid, carbohydrates and electrolytes to promote fluid retention and provide energy. Other good beverage choices throughout the day include water, fruit juices, smoothies, seltzer waters, lemonade, soft drinks, milk and herbal teas. Beer, coffee and caffeinated soda pull fluid out of the body due to the effects of alcohol or caffeine.

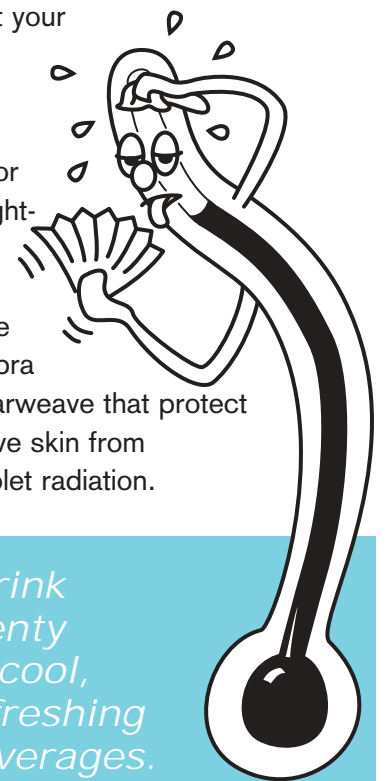
In general, drink as much fluid as you can comfortably tolerate both before, during and after exercise. Cool beverages are absorbed better than warm beverages. You'll often see athletes pouring cold water over their head during a race or competition. While this may provide temporary relief from the heat, pouring fluid into the body is much more effective.

What kind of clothing will keep me cool?

Lightweight, loose, white or light-colored fabrics will help reflect the sun's heat rays and allow for good air circulation. Remember to apply a broad-spectrum waterproof sunscreen of at least SPF 15 (preferably 30) to protect yourself from the sun's UVA and UVB rays. A sun visor or breathable, vented hat with a 4" brim can

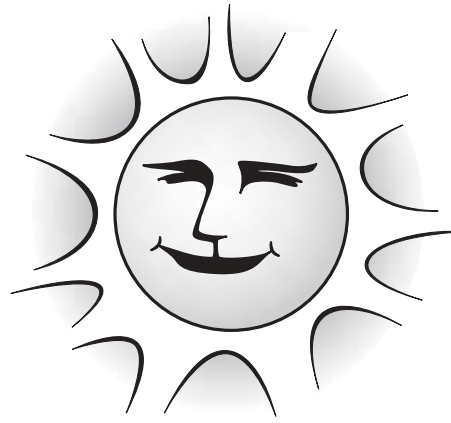
protect your face and eyes.

Look for new lightweight fabrics like Solumbra or Solarweave that protect sensitive skin from ultraviolet radiation.



Drink plenty of cool, refreshing beverages.

What is your Sun Safety IQ?



Millions of people will be participating in a variety of outdoor sports, exercise and fitness activities this summer. Be safe in the sun this season.

Test your sun safety IQ!

Question #1 What does SPF stand for?

- A. Sun Protection Factor
- B. Safety Priority Frequency
- C. Skin Protection Field
- D. Sun Process Factor

Question #2 Which of the following groups has the highest mortality rates from skin cancer?

- A. Older Caucasian females
- B. Teenage females
- C. Older Asian females
- D. Older Caucasian males

Question #3 What does a UV index indicate?

- A. Universal variations of sunburns
- B. The likelihood that your moles or freckles will turn into skin cancer
- C. The probability of developing skin cancer
- D. How high your risk for sunburn is

Question #4 When are the sun's rays the strongest?

- A. Between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. standard time
- B. At high noon standard time
- C. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. standard time
- D. Between noon and 5 p.m. standard time

Question #5 Of the following choices, which is the best sunburn remedy?

- A. Butter
- B. Soap and water
- C. A soothing cream or lotion
- D. Vaseline

see page 2 for answers

DID YOU KNOW...

➤ For the eleventh year in a row, The Hospital for Special Surgery has been ranked #1 for rheumatology in the Northeast by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Exercise Classes at HSS's Integrative Care Center

T'ai Chi Chih T'ai Chi Chih is a simple and highly effective movement routine designed to maximize control of your body's vital energy, Chi. These simple, rhythmic movements provide immediate benefits including relaxation, heightened energy and a general sense of well being.

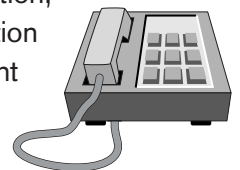
Yoga Gentle exercise combined with quiet music and guided imagery help you relax and revitalize the entire body. Some postures are specifically designed to help people with medical problems deal with the physical and psychological aspects of their diagnosis.

Chair Yoga Chair yoga offers all the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits of a traditional yoga class, all while sitting in a chair. Chair yoga is a mix of centering, yoga positions, gentle strengthening exercises, self-massage, and meditation breathing and relaxation techniques done in the comfort of a seated position.

Osteoporosis Exercise Class

Osteoporosis exercise classes are designed for individuals with osteoporosis or osteopenia (low bone mass). The course focuses on posture, flexibility, strengthening, weight bearing and balance. The major goal of the Osteoporosis Exercise class is to motivate and instruct participants on this 5 Point Program in order for them to continue an independent exercise program.

For further information, contact the Education Division, Department of Public and Patient Education at **212.606.1057**.



Exercise & Osteoarthritis in Older Adults

by *Osric S. King, MD, Assistant Attending Physician, Department of Sports Medicine, Hospital for Special Surgery;*
Brian C. Halpern, MD, Assistant Attending Physician, Department of Sports Medicine, Hospital for Special Surgery

Nearly half of person's ages 65 and older have some form of arthritis. Osteoarthritis (OA), the most prevalent form, is characterized by pain, stiffness, and loss of mobility resulting from progressive deterioration of articular cartilage lining the joints. The cause is often unknown but it has been associated with chronic joint instability, trauma and overuse. There is no cure, but early diagnosis and treatment can minimize symptoms and help patients maintain active lives.

A patient's response to arthritis pain may be to decrease joint motion. Although initially OA can make joint movement painful, avoiding activity can lead to more disability involving other joints and organ systems. Keeping joints moving is an effective way to stabilize if not improve the degenerative process. This can be achieved through various forms of exercise, which numerous studies support as beneficial for patients

with arthritis.

Muscle function can be improved even in very old persons. One study examining subjects aged 67 to 98 years found that regular low-intensity seated exercise can improve quadriceps strength. Other studies have found similar evidence of the trainability of the muscles of even the very elderly. This adaptive muscle function in turn helps protect the osteoarthritic joint.

The connection between exercise and OA is controversial. Several studies done on former athletes even implicated their sport as the cause of their arthritis. A 2- to 4-fold increased risk for OA at the hip and knee has been described in former elite athletes. Other studies have found the incidence of degenerative joint changes in athletes to be similar to that seen in the general population.

The critical question is whether mild to moderate exercise exacerbates preexisting arthritic conditions. Active persons with arthritic condi-

tions often select exercises that impart low impact to their affected joints and moderate the duration of the workout to maximize gains and minimize discomfort. The result is a routine that accomplished the targeted goal and does not re-injure the patient.

For successful implementation of an exercise program for a patient with OA, the activity must be convenient, safe, and enjoyable and goals must be achievable. Progression from one phase to the next in the exercise process should be gradual to allow both physician and patient to anticipate difficulties and gauge progress.

Developing a program that fits all patients is impractical. Too many physical, financial, and motivational parameters influence the patient's ability to set goals and maintain them. Although some patients need only initial guidance from a therapist, others require contact supervision. For financial or social reasons, a group approach may be the best.

Volunteer Opportunities

Tele-Bone is a peer education program specifically developed by the Education Division at the Hospital for Special Surgery to increase osteoporosis awareness. Trained Tele-Bone volunteers commit to calling five friends and family who are 65 and over to encourage them to get screened for osteoporosis. With your help we can raise osteoporosis awareness and encourage people to be screened early for the disease.

People Educating People (PEP) Talks will use trained volunteers to provide overview lectures about musculoskeletal health at community-based sites. Volunteers will be recruited, interviewed and must successfully complete a multi-part training prior to becoming certified to present lectures. Volunteers will also be required to participate in quarterly meetings and be re-certified after one year.

For more information about these and other opportunities, please contact Susan Robinson, Pediatric Education Supervisor at **212.606.1057**.



Do you have pain in your lower back? Are you 60 years or older?

Then you may qualify to join a study on the benefits of acupuncture for lower back pain. The Hospital for Special Surgery is conducting a research study to examine whether older people with chronic back pain will benefit from acupuncture treatment in the relief of back pain. To see if you qualify, or for further information, please call Dr. Charis Meng at **212.224.7916**. There is no obligation to call.



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➤ **Sports Medicine Performance
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Rehabilitation Services**

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**National Association for Health &
Fitness** www.physicalfitness.org

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

Hospital for Special Surgery is an
affiliate of NewYork-Presbyterian
Healthcare System and the Weill
Medical College of Cornell University

**Look for these fitness classes
this Fall at the Hospital for
Special Surgery's Integrative
Care Center:**

Movement for the Joints
Osteoporosis Exercise
Chair T'ai Chi Chih/Qigong
Yoga for the Shoulders
Slow Flowing T'ai Chi Chih

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“AARP names Hospital
for Special Surgery Top
Hospital for Knee-Hip
Orthopaedic Care.”

- *Modern Maturity magazine*

The Department of Public and Patient Education provides information to the general public and patients through a variety of health education programs. Professionals provide practical information to help prevent or manage health problems related to different types of arthritis or orthopaedic problems. Program are held at the hospital as well as in the community. The department's dedication is education today, so that everyone can have a healthier tomorrow.

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