

Strong Muscles and Flexibility in the Older Adult
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Growing older does not have to mean you lose strength and energy. Weakness related to aging is mainly due to muscle loss. Flexibility plays a critical role in preventing falls. Keeping your muscles strong and flexible allows you to stay healthy and independent.

For healthy aging, you need a plan for physical activity

- Get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise every week.
This is activity that makes you breathe harder and makes your heart beat faster. You should be able to talk to friend while doing this activity, but you could not sing a song.
- Do muscle-strengthening activities that work all your muscle groups 2 days each week.
This is activity that works your legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, or arms to the point that you cannot do the movement again without help.
- Do balance training at least 3 days each week.

Does that seem like too much time?

It is just 15 minutes longer than the time you would spend watching your favorite movie, and you don't have to do it all at once: try just 10 minutes at a time.

What if you have a chronic health condition or disability?

Your health care provider can help you adjust the time you spend exercising.

What are examples of activities you can do?

- For aerobic exercise: try treadmill walking, dancing, or anything active you enjoy
- For muscle strengthening: try weight lifting, heavy gardening, yoga, push-ups, or sit ups
- For balance: try heel-to-toe walking, standing on one leg, or tai chi

Remember to check with your health care provider before starting a new exercise program!

References:

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