



Enjoying Physical Activity

Reporting on the Tufts University research of Dr. Maria Fiatarone, the headline read, “90-Something and Pumping Iron.” Frail men and women in their 80s and 90s—most with arthritis and heart disease and using multiple medications and walkers—made significant physical, mental and social gains after a strength training program. *Whatever our age or condition, appropriate exercise is good for us.*

What are the benefits of regular exercise? You feel better and enjoy life more. It helps to keep your heart and lungs strong. You have a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke and your bones stay stronger. It helps to keep your weight and blood pressure at healthy levels.

Exercise also acts as a natural laxative, eases arthritis, and promotes mental alertness. Circulation improves; energy increases. It can reduce stress, depression and sleeping problems. Regular exercise may even help protect against certain types of cancer.

The body is a sacred garment. It's your first and last garment; it is what you enter life in and what you depart life with, and it should be treated with honor. —Martha Graham

There are hundreds of great ways for older people to exercise: walking, playing with grandchildren, strength training, swimming, chi gong, yoga, golf, washing windows, climbing stairs, square dancing, doing a video workout, joining a senior aerobics class, raking leaves, gardening.

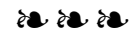


**INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
◆ OLDER PERSONS ◆**

Don't be too pushy in making yourself exercise. When done in an appropriately gentle and sensitive way, exercise can be an intensely pleasurable activity. For example, a walk in the freshness of the early morning air, or during a snowy day, or at dusk on a summer evening is a feast for your senses. You might experience the pleasurable rhythms of your muscles in movement, the beauty of your natural surroundings, the warm caress of the sun or the

moonlight's soft touch, the fragrances of nature, and the music of birds or breezes in the trees.

What physical activities are your favorites? Would you like to enjoy some of these activities more frequently? Perhaps a friend or family member can share new activities you might try.



Prepared by **Sam Quick**, Human Development & Family Relations Specialist, University of Kentucky.

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