



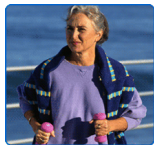
Dear Sheri,

Here is your weekly "Fit Brain, Fit Body!" plan.

It's time to do some practicing to stay feeling and looking younger, including working on your posture and keeping your pelvic muscles strong. We'll also spend some time discussing why it's so important (and hard) to get enough of certain minerals into your body as you age.

Enjoy! Sheri Colberg, PhD, Executive Director, Lifelong Exercise Institute, LLC

WEEK 33: Weekly Physical Activity and Exercise Plan



Life in Motion (daily movement):

Have you really exhausted all the possible ways that you can add more activity to your daily life? Our guess is that you have not. Have you considered doing your own dishes instead of letting the dishwasher do the work? Keep thinking of other options.

Weekly Life in Motion Goals for Everyone:

- Make a list of all the ways you can increase your SPA (spontaneous physical activity) at home and work, and implement at least five of them this week.



Exercise as Medicine (planned exercise):

Last week we focused on variety, and although we're shifting to new topics this week, always keep in the back of your mind that doing things differently may cause slightly varied physical and mental outcomes--which is not a bad thing. Keep trying new things!

Weekly Goals for the **Beginner or Returning Exerciser.*

- Stay the course this week with 30 minutes of exercise on three days, including faster intervals of any length all three days.
- Keep pumping up your resistance training with two days of 2 sets of 12-15 reps on at least 8-12 exercises.

****Weekly Goals for the *Current or Intermediate Exerciser*.**

- Again, do 30-40 minutes of moderate exercise on 4-5 days this week, including faster intervals on 3 days or substituting in 1 day of a faster, steady pace for 25-30 minutes.
- Keep your resistance training as one day with 2 sets of 12-15 reps, the other day with 1 harder set of 8-12 reps.

Weekly Fitness and Healthy Living Tip



As you age, you will likely get shorter and less flexible, but is there any way to combat such changes? You can work on having better posture, which can help prevent back pain and may slow down some of your loss of height as well. Read on to find out how.

Weekly Tip: *Practice good posture to prevent back pain (and more)*

There was a good reason that your parents used to make you practice good posture by walking around while balancing a book on your head. As you age, your body tends to bend forward, moving your center of balance the same direction, making your body unstable as you walk, and increasing your chances of falling down. Adaptive patterns of movement like slouching can also increase the stress on your joints, while good posture reduces it and keeps your spine more limber. Having a good posture is very important to preventing pain and maintaining better balance.

For better posture, practice a single exercise: stand with your back to the wall with your heels two inches from it; hold your chin down onto your chest, and then with your chin tucked in, attempt to touch the wall with the back of your head. Most people over 50 years old don't succeed in doing so, but it is a good exercise to practice regardless.

Weekly Dietary Improvement Tip



Last week, we discussed how to get the most out of your foods by including a variety. This week, we'll spend more time talking about two very important minerals and why it's important to have enough of both in your diet as you are getting older (as we all are).

Weekly Tip: *The importance of calcium and iron (and other minerals) in healthy aging*

Your bone health is also a major concern as you age. At a minimum, all women should consider taking at least a calcium and a vitamin D supplement, the combination of which is critical to preventing thinning bones (osteoporosis) and fractures. Once you reach menopause, your body will require between 1,000 and 1,500 milligrams of calcium daily, which is difficult to acquire through food sources alone especially when your diet is lacking. In addition, supplementing with at least 800 IU of vitamin D will ensure that calcium is absorbed into the body efficiently.

As far as other minerals go, depletion of magnesium can also limit your ability to keep your blood pressure in check, and both magnesium and chromium are important for effective insulin action and blood sugar use. Selenium (found in abundance in Brazil nuts) works in concert with vitamin E to limit oxidative damage around the body. A zinc deficiency may interfere with normal release of insulin if you have type 2 diabetes, and your immune system may be depressed as well.

As for iron, premenopausal women in particular need to take in greater amounts of iron (15 mg/day) to prevent iron deficiency and anemia, both of which can affect your body's ability to function normally. Being anemic can make you feel tired, run down, and susceptible to illness. Particularly if you eat very little meat and poultry containing the "ferrous" form of iron, you may want to consider taking iron supplements since plant sources of iron (mostly "ferric" forms) are less well absorbed.

On the flip side, an excessive intake of certain minerals, such as sodium, is more of a concern than consuming too little. Excess sodium can cause calcium loss from bones as well, which is by itself an excellent reason to cut back. Although only about 20 percent of people are "sodium sensitive," meaning that excess sodium causes them to retain water and experience increases in blood pressure, imbalances of other minerals can cause you to be more reactive. Particularly in African-Americans, a lack of potassium in the diet causes blood pressure to rise when too much sodium is consumed. Limit your intake of visibly salted foods, canned products, and highly processed packaged items to lower your sodium intake.

For the sake of your bones, you should also cut back on your intake of phosphorus, which is found widely distributed in foods, but in abundance in dark-colored colas containing phosphoric acid. Your calcium intake should ideally be balanced with phosphorus (1:1), or else calcium can be pulled out of bones and cause thinning. Too much caffeine can have a similar effect, so it's best to avoid drinking caffeinated colas or too much coffee or tea (but herbal varieties are fine).

Other Important Weekly Advice and Information



The old adage "If you don't use it, you'll lose it!" applies to every muscle in the human body, including the ones that keep your pelvis strong and keep you continent and sexually active. Not having any problems yet? Better to prevent

them than to have "stressful" sneezes or coughs later.

Weekly Info: *Kegel exercises for women (and men, too)*

Stress incontinence (that is, when a small amount of urine is forced out of your bladder when you are active) occurs more often in women whose bladder neck has prolapsed outside the abdominal cavity and is particularly common in women who have gone through childbearing, even when they're still in their 20s and 30s. When you cough, sneeze, bounce, or jog with this condition (all of which are potential "stressors"), you will often experience increased pressure on your bladder, but not on your internal sphincter, resulting in urine leakage even if you just peed. Men can also experience some of the same problems, and weak pelvic floor muscles can also lead to a less strong erection and premature ejaculation.

A simple treatment for both women and men consists of pelvic muscle training called Kegel exercises. A side benefit of these exercises is that your increased muscle strength is likely to enhance your sexual pleasure, which largely depends on the training of these muscles since they're the ones that contract during orgasms.

The following Kegel exercises may feel hard to do at first, but the more often you practice them, the easier they get. Expect that it may take as long as eight weeks for substantial improvements to occur, however. For best results, contract these muscles 50 to 100 times daily by doing as many repetitions as you can several times a day. To minimize your stress incontinence, also contract these muscles before coughing or sneezing. As mentioned, improving the strength and endurance of these muscles will likely enhance your sexual (orgasmic) satisfaction.

- During urination, try to stop and start your urine flow; at the end of the exercises, make sure you empty your bladder totally (men and women).
 - Tighten your anal muscles as if stopping gas from coming out. Then shift muscular tightness from your rear to your front area (men and women).
 - Variations include contracting and holding these muscles for about 10 seconds at a time (instead of rapidly contracting and relaxing them), with 5 second rests between extended contractions (women and men).
 - Tighten your vaginal muscles around two fingers inserted into your vagina or a tampon inserted halfway (women only).
 - Get an erection and hang a wash cloth or small towel on your penis. Then try to contract your pelvic muscle to lift the towel several times (men only).
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If at any time you have any questions, comments, thoughts, suggestions, concerns, or other feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us via e-mail at info@lifelongexercise.com or by using our contact page at www.lifelongexercise.com.

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