

# Healthy Aging Communication Network

## Living Stronger & Longer

### Physical Activity & Older Adults: Strength Training

#### Quick facts on the benefits of strength training:

- Strength training has been shown to very safe and effective in [older adults](#).
- Some [strength training exercises are particularly helpful for healthy bones](#)
- Some strength training exercises are particularly helpful in preventing falls
- Throughout the lifespan the body may [respond positively to strength training](#)
  - Older adults in the 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> decade of life, and also those with multiple chronic diseases participated in strength training programs yielding considerable health benefits.
- The weaker you are prior to strength training, the greater the increase in strength
- Strength training can stop or reverse the [typical loss of strength and muscle](#) seen in adults as they age.
  - Typically Americans lose 4% of their muscle mass per decade from the late 20s through their 50s & as much as 10% of their muscle mass per decade from the late 50s through the end of life.

#### How to strength train:

- Resistance [Training is safe](#) when done correctly and the participant is [properly screened](#) for the physical activity.
  - Take the [safety quiz](#) before starting
  - If you are a beginner, receiving instruction may be helpful. [Who should help](#) with resistance training?
- Strength training requires that you move a joint against resistance. Resistance can be:
  - Resistance (weight) training machines
  - Free weights (dumbbells, barbells)
    - Cans of food, bottles of water
  - Your body weight
  - Resistance tubing (stretchable bands and tubes designed for exercise)
  - Moving your body in water
- Strength training for most muscles of the body should be performed 2-3 times per week.
  - [Strength Training Exercises from the NIH](#)
  - [Strength Training Exercises from the CDC](#)
  - [Strength Training from BEST program for Fit Bones](#)
- You should take at least one day rest between strength training exercises for each specific muscle. Don't do the same exercise on consecutive days.
- Strength training relies on the "overload principal" which simply means that you ask your muscles to do more work than you are accustomed to doing.
  - [Progressive overload](#) means gradually and consistently increasing the work once your muscles are accustomed to the original overload.

Health Professionals: For more information & resources visit:

[www.livingstrongerlonger.org/activity.htm](http://www.livingstrongerlonger.org/activity.htm)