



Muscles Matter

Did you know your muscles are active even when you are sleeping? Muscle cells are still doing the routine activities they need to do to stay alive. This work is called metabolism. Your metabolism burns calories and helps keep your weight in check even when you are asleep!

An increase in muscle strength that's not even visible to the eye can be all it takes to improve your ability to do things. Even small changes in muscle size can make a big difference in strength.

What do I have to do?

Do strength exercises for all major muscle groups at least twice a week. Don't do strength exercises of the same muscle group on any two days in a row.

Depending on your condition, you may need to start out using as little as 1 or 2 pounds of weight or even no weights at all. The tissues that bind the structures of your body together need to adapt to strength exercises.

Use a lower amount of weight the first week, and then gradually build up the weight. Starting out with weights that are too heavy can cause injuries. At the same time, remember that you are building muscles. Gradually add a challenging amount of weight in order to benefit from strength exercises. If you don't challenge your muscles, you won't benefit from strength exercises.

Stretch after your strength exercises when your muscles are warmed up. If you stretch before strength exercises, be sure to warm up your muscles first (for example: a light walk or walking in place).

Make sure to breathe normally during your strength exercises. Holding your breath while straining can cause changes in blood pressure. This is especially true for people with cardiovascular disease.

Please consult your physician before beginning any exercise routine.

Use smooth, steady movements to avoid injury. Do not jerk or thrust weights into position.

Remember, exercising should not hurt or cause pain.