

Med-Sense Guaranteed Association

JOURNAL



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Slowing Sarcopenia Keep Your Muscles Healthy as You Age

(NIH-News In Health) Starting at age 30, our bodies naturally start to lose muscle mass. We lose about 3–5% every 10 years. You might not notice the effects at first. But over time, the reduced muscle mass leads to decreased strength. After a while, it can lead to a condition called sarcopenia.

“With aging, you start losing muscle mass, muscle strength, and have some limitations with your activities,” says Dr. Rosaly Correa-de-Araujo, an aging expert at NIH.

Some muscle loss is expected with the natural aging process. But too much muscle loss can lead to mobility difficulties. Sarcopenia can make it harder to stand up from a chair, walk, open a jar, or carry groceries. It can also increase your risk of falling.

Certain factors may make muscle loss worse as you age. These include some chronic illnesses, a lack of exercise, and an unhealthy diet.

Hormonal changes that occur during menopause can also contribute.

Researchers estimate that 10–20% of older adults have sarcopenia. But testing people for sarcopenia can be tricky. That's because there isn't a widely agreed-upon method to measure muscle loss. It's also not clear exactly how much muscle someone can lose before it leads to disability or injury. So an NIH-funded team of experts recently set out to better define sarcopenia and its impact on people's health.

The team analyzed data from several studies that looked at thousands of people aged 65 and older. They focused on three different measures of muscle health: grip strength, walking speed, and lean body mass. Those with weaker grip strength and slower walking speed (less than 2.6 feet per second) showed higher risk of falls, mobility limitations, hip fractures, and death. But lean body mass was not linked with these outcomes. As a result, the researchers recommended using grip strength and walking speed to help assess sarcopenia.

As muscle loss worsens, so can sarcopenia's effects. Because sarcopenia increases your risk of falling, those who have it are nearly twice as likely to be hospitalized as those without it. Sarcopenia increases the risk of broken bones and the loss of independence with age. It can also make it more difficult for your body to fight certain diseases, like cancer.

You can take steps to prevent too much muscle loss and weakness as you age. Getting enough physical activity is key. In particular, Correa-de-Araujo says, "you need to have resistance training because this is going to help build your strength." Resistance training can include activities like push-ups, squats, or lifting weights.

A healthy diet can also help prevent or manage sarcopenia. Your body needs protein to build and maintain muscle. Eating a diet rich in protein can keep your muscles healthy as you age. Experts suggest eating at least 1.2 grams of protein for every two pounds of body weight to treat or manage sarcopenia.

While more research is needed, some dietary supplements have shown promise for preventing muscle loss when combined with diet and exercise. These include amino acids, fish oil, vitamin D, selenium, magnesium, and omega-3 fatty acids.

If you think you might have sarcopenia, talk with your doctor. They can help you make a plan to prevent further muscle loss and preserve your health and independence.

Build Your Muscle Strength



When beginning to exercise, start slowly. Find a manageable exercise routine that you think you can do on a regular basis.



Work each major muscle group. These include arms, legs, abs, back, and chest.



Focus on strength and resistance training. Examples include push-ups, squats, sit-ups, arm curls, planks, side twists & bends, certain yoga poses, knee raises, and arm & leg lifts.



Do what you can. Even five minutes of activity is better than none.



Eat enough protein. Protein-rich foods include lean cuts of meat, poultry, and eggs; fish and seafood; low-fat or fat-free dairy; legumes, nuts, & seeds.



Talk with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine to find the best options for you.





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Benefits of Being Physically Active



(Family Features) A walk isn't just good for your body; it's a simple, powerful way to care for your mind and soul. Physical activity, like walking, reduces stress, boosts mood and promotes overall well-being. Yet physical activity levels in the United States continue to decline, a trend threatening both mental and physical health.

Less than half of adults and fewer than 1 in 5 children in the U.S. get the recommended amount of physical activity needed for heart health, according to the American Heart Association's 2025 Heart & Stroke Statistical Update.

National recommendations call for children to get at least one hour of physical activity each day, but the latest statistics show less than 19% of children in the U.S. achieve that target. Meanwhile, less than half of adults get the recommended 150 minutes or more of weekly physical activity.

What's more, according to data from a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1 in 4 U.S. adults sits for longer than eight hours each day, which can have negative consequences on physical and mental health.

For decades, the American Heart Association has championed the importance of physical activity in communities across the country. These tips and information can help you understand how a brisk walk can make a world of difference for heart health and mental clarity.

Benefits of Physical Activity

Staying active is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy.

The physical health benefits may be obvious, but research suggests physical activity can also help bring more joy to your life. According to the 2019 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, people who get the recommended amount of physical activity are less likely to experience depression.

Regular physical activity enhances your mood, sharpens your mind, improves sleep and boosts overall well-being, all while reducing the risk of disease and depression and increasing both the quality and longevity of life.

How to Be More Physically Active

Exercise as simple as a brisk walk can put a major spring in your step. It can even energize you to finish other tasks at hand, whether it's cooking or running errands. Give your daily physical activity level a boost with these tips:

- Exercising outdoors is a great way to get moving. Spending time outdoors has been shown to reduce stress, promote a sense of belonging and improve mood. It's even better if you can enjoy the sunshine outside, which can improve mood, boost your immunity and help you get some vitamin D.
- Invite a family member or friend along with you. It's good for them, it's good for you and it's good company all around.
- Instead of wondering if you'll move today, explore how you'll move. A walk, a dance or a stretch all count.

Getting Pets Involved

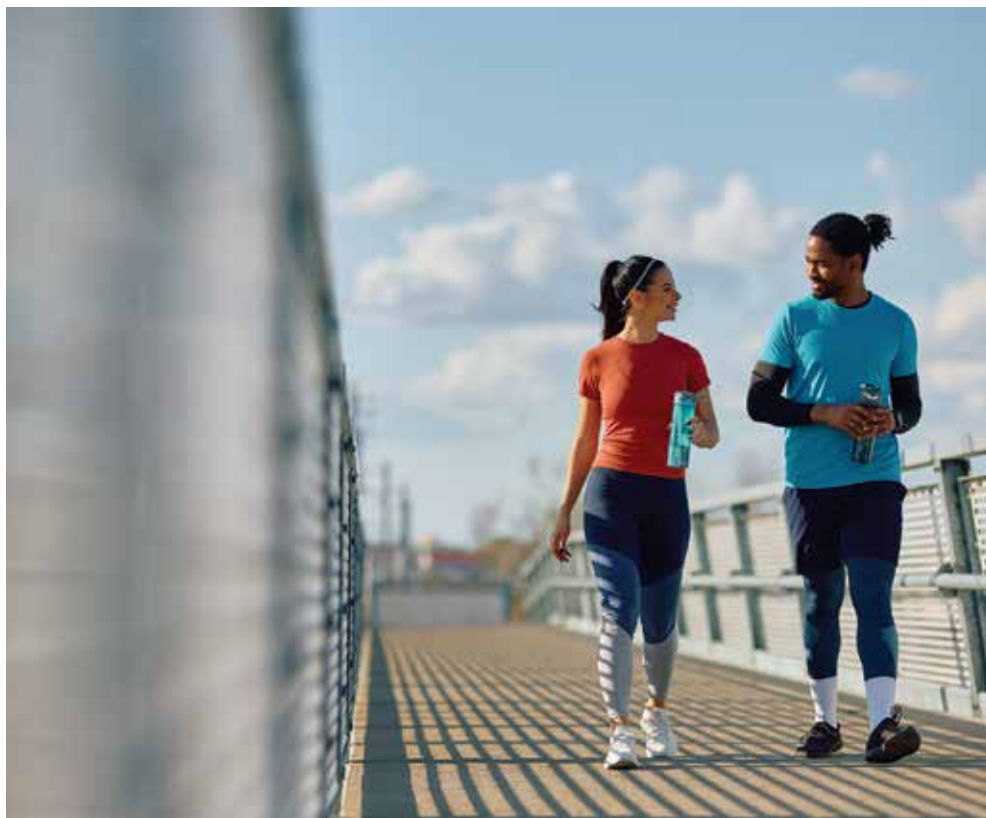
Pets are part of your family, and they can help you get healthy together. Pets provide a fun reason to spend more time outside and get the exercise needed to reduce the risk of disease later in life.

Getting moving along with your pet adds more exercise to your routine, which means living longer, reducing risk of dying from heart attack or stroke, reducing risk of diabetes, reducing stress and even boosting your overall happiness and well-being.

Exercising with your pet can also mean enjoying more socializing. You may find yourself meeting other dog owners in your area on a walk or at the dog park.

Learn more about how simple habits like walking can support your overall health at heart.org/MoveMore.

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and association services, call or write:

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