

The Miracle Drug - Part Two

“Two thirds of healthcare costs are driven by our daily choices - WE are in the driver’s seat.” (Institute of Medicine 2006)

Welcome back to Part 2 of my celebration of Exercise is Medicine Month! Last week, I talked about Cardio-respiratory exercise. If you missed it, you can read about it here. This week, I’ll plunge into the second aspect of a well-rounded fitness routine...

Strength Training.

A good strength training routine will help you build your muscle mass and tone your body. It will help prevent osteoporosis and will make losing weight easier!

A full routine includes eight to ten exercises, which cover all the major muscle groups in the body: Chest, back, shoulders, arms (both biceps and triceps), abs (abdominals), and upper and lower legs. Choose a weight that you can do 10 repetitions of each exercise. Start with one set of 10 repetitions, two times per week, and then work up to two sets and then three sets, as your time allows (and you can add a third day). Just be sure to allow a day of rest in between. Once you can lift a weight for 10 reps comfortably, it’s time to increase the weight (NOT the reps).

I use dumbbells and stability balls exclusively. Why? Because they’re safer, while at the same time, they’re more challenging! And, the stability ball works the core muscles (abdominals & back), too!

For years with my personal training clients and now with the group strength training classes I teach, I stress the idea that good form is key - key to safely lifting the weights and key in exercising the correct muscle. So, if it fits the budget, consider having a certified personal trainer come up with a simple routine to teach you how to do each exercise safely (or, come to my class if you live in Kentucky!). You can purchase a book (http://www.amazon.com/dp/0736073884/ref=rdr_ext_tmb) or DVD with some beginner dumbbell routines. Or, do research online for basic exercises.

Let me bust this myth...

The myth about women “bulking up” with weight training is simply that, a myth. The only way a woman would bulk up with weight training is if she was striving to be a body builder, taking steroids, or working out with weights for hours and hours per day. The biggest mistake that women make when lifting weights is using too light of weights, so they don’t get the results they really want. Start light the first week, so you’re not sore. Then the second week, be sure they’re heavy enough that you can only do 10 repetitions.

If you are wanting to shed pounds, strength training or weightlifting is key in helping you to lose more weight, because you increase the size of the “engine” burning the

calories. Muscle burns calories, even at rest, so the more muscle mass you have, the better.

Strength training also helps to protect the bone you have and build more bone to guard against osteoporosis. One of the women in my strength training class just announced that, after ten years of taking them, she no longer is on osteoporosis medicine. She attributes her amazing bone scan, which now indicates she has normal bone density, to the weight training she's been doing for the past year!

How about you? Do you lift weights?

Leave your response in the comments below and come back next week to learn more about Flexibility and Neuromuscular training. And, remember, "It is never too late to be what you might have been." -George Eliot

Lisa :-)

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