

Build Muscle, Boost Independence: Strength Training for Seniors

Strength training isn't just for bodybuilders - it's the key to staying strong and independent well into your golden years! For every decade that passes after age 30, our bodies will lose 3% to 5% of our total muscle mass between ages 30 and 60, and up to 8% per decade after 60. Losing 5%+ of muscle mass per decade can significantly impact your health and safety:



Reduced Strength and Power

Your risk of falling increases and everyday tasks like climbing stairs, carrying groceries, or getting up from a chair become more difficult.



Decreased Mobility

With weaker muscles, your balance and coordination may decline, making it harder to move around safely and independently.



Increased Risk of Chronic Disease

Muscle loss is linked to a higher risk of developing chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.



Weaker Bones

Muscles and bones are interconnected. Weaker muscles can put more stress on your bones, increasing your risk of osteoporosis and fractures.



Metabolic Decline

Muscles play a key role in burning calories. As muscle mass shrinks, your metabolism slows down, making it harder to maintain a healthy weight.

All these factors can contribute to a decline in your overall quality of life and ability to maintain independence. Fortunately, you can start strength training today to slow down the natural progression of muscle loss. Here are some steps:

Step
1

Perform strength training activities at least 2 days per week.

Step
2

Aim to do 8-12 repetitions per activity, which counts as 1 set.

Step
3

Do exercise repetitions until it's hard to do another repetition without help.

Step
4

Aim for 2 – 3 sets per activity and target the major muscle groups.

Remember that the development of muscle strength and endurance is progressive. Gradual increases in the amount of weight, number of sets or repetitions, or the number of days per week of exercise will lead to stronger muscles and a better you.

Below are some great exercises you can do to build muscle:

- ✓ Bodyweight exercises such as push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges, and planks.
- ✓ Lifting weights
- ✓ Working with resistance bands
- ✓ Other strenuous activities such as climbing stairs, heavy gardening, and carrying heavy loads.



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