

## Baby Boomers - Never Too Late

Baby Boomers- the largest generational group around! And we are a breed unto ourselves! 60 is the new 40...we don't think of ourselves as getting older. Just look at the music we grew up with, The Stones are still leaping around on the stage, Springsteen, with or without the E Street Band, is still selling out concerts, as energetic as ever. The Eagles are still in for "the long run" with new music, as well. And take a look at those audiences—they are not only entertaining us boomers, but our kids have bought a lot of those tickets, too. "Rock and Roll will never die!" "Baby, we were born to run"! ...and run...and run...!

We cringe when we say something that might sound slightly like what our parents have said in talking to our kids, or oh, yeah, grandkids!

We are a generation that thinks young, acts young, and makes the most of life.

However, try as we might, the aging process happens, whether we like it or not.

Nothing can stop it. Or, is there?

We are a generation that is now possibly taking care of our parents, and maybe still taking care of our children! And grandchildren! How about taking care of ourselves?

We've worked hard, we're ready to have fun in retirement, but we need to be physically able to do that.

Amazed, or more like shocked, to look at pictures from 20 years ago, and think, hmmm...I've put on a *few* pounds?

As we age, metabolism slows. In your 30's and 40's, there is about ½ pound of muscle lost per year. (Evans and Rosenberg 1992) Over 50? You are losing twice that. (Nelson 1994) That is, if you are not performing regular strength training exercises.

Type II Diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis, heart attacks and strokes are all diseases that plague our generation. For that matter, one in every four suffers from various degrees of lower back pain. Thousands of dollars a year are spent on medications to control these conditions.

But there is one other prescription that should be considered a priority: exercise! It costs a lot less, and in the long run can actually save you money by decreasing the amount of medications you might be taking now.

A balanced exercise program of strength training and even just 30 minutes of cardio work a day can lead to a healthier, fitter, and happier retirement!

### **Why strength training?**

You say you don't want to look muscular, especially if you are a woman? You really need to be worried about having *less* muscle than *more*. (And you won't bulk up without the use of steroids, and you don't want to be put on **that** list, do you?) Muscle helps guard against injuries if you fall. They give you the support your body needs for balance. More muscle keeps your metabolism higher, therefore burning more calories over a 24 hour period. **It's not too late!** You can start building and regaining strength at *any* age. Research shows that even people who begin strength training in their 90's can gain muscle and strength in as few as 8 weeks.

Muscles will stay strong and firm if they are used and worked regularly.

### **Should I work with a personal trainer?**

There are definite advantages to working with a fitness professional. The personal trainer can customize your workout, and vary the workout to keep your interest. Having instruction in proper usage of equipment, and correct form minimizes the chances of injury.

The American Council on Exercise (ACE) lists the following as the top 10 reasons to use a personal trainer:

1. Motivation
2. Commitment
3. Safety
4. Individualized instruction
5. Efficient, effective workouts
6. Supervision
7. Sports-specific training
8. Injury rehabilitation
9. Health-related specific training
10. Improved self-image

So it's **never too late**- you don't have to lose your strength or muscle tone just because you're getting older. Only after a few months of strength training, on the average, most men and women will increase muscular strength by 20-40%. So, boomers, when have we ever backed down from a challenge? Keep strong, keep fit, stay independent, and stay active, and enjoy life to its fullest!