



You're Never Too Old

Let's face it, we are all getting older. People with hemophilia who have access to factor replacement therapy now have a normal life expectancy and are having to deal with the issues of aging. One of the most important things we can do for ourselves is to stay physically active. For individuals with hemophilia or other bleeding disorder, it is especially important to keep muscles and joints strong. Not only to help prevent bleeds and joint damage, but also to help with balance and agility, to help prevent falls, and for general safety.

This article from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shares why physical activity is so important for older adults, the types of exercise recommended for older adults and shares NIH's Go4Life resource which is based on studies showing the benefits of exercise and physical activity for older people, including those with chronic health conditions.

HFA's FitFactor program is also a great "go to" resource for instructional exercise videos, exercise information and personal stories from community members who are finding great health benefits by being physically active. Check it all out!

Keep Active as You Age | National Institutes of Health

We've all heard that exercise is good for you. Did you know that it's as true for older people as it is for any age group? You're never too old to get moving, get stronger and improve your health.

Fitting exercise and physical activity into your day can enhance your life in so many ways. Regular physical activity can improve your balance and boost or maintain your strength and fitness. It may also improve your mood and help you manage or lessen the impact of conditions like diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis and depression.

Despite these proven benefits, exercise and physical activity rates among older people are surprisingly low. Only about 30% of people ages 45 to 64 say they engage in regular leisure-time physical activity. This falls to 25% of those between the ages of 65 and 74 and 11% of people age 85 and older.

Experts recommend 4 types of exercise for older adults: endurance, balance, strength and flexibility. Brisk walking, dancing and other endurance exercises improve the health of your

heart, lungs and circulatory system. These exercises can make it easier for you to mow the lawn, climb stairs and do other daily activities. Strength exercises include lifting weights or using resistance bands. They can increase muscle strength to help with activities such as carrying groceries or lifting grandchildren. Balance exercises can help prevent falls—a major health risk for older adults. Stretching, or flexibility exercises, can give you more freedom of movement for bending to tie your shoes or looking over your shoulder as you back out of the driveway.



“Even if you haven't been active previously, it's important to get started and stay active,”

says Dr. Richard J. Hodes, director of NIH's National Institute on Aging. “We know that people want to live independently for as long as they possibly can. By exercising regularly and including more physical activity in their daily routine, older people can preserve their physical function, which is key to doing the everyday things they want to do.”

To help you get started and keep moving, NIH brought together some of the nation's leading experts on aging, exercise and motivation. They developed a guide to exercise for older adults. The guide serves as the basis for a new national exercise and physical activity campaign for people ages 50 and older. It's called Go4Life.

“Older adults can exercise safely, even those who have physical limitations,” Hodes says. “Go4Life is based on studies showing the benefits of exercise and physical activity for older people, including those with chronic health conditions.”

Go4Life exercises are designed to be done safely at home without special equipment or clothing. The free book *Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide* from the National Institute on Aging is the core resource for the campaign. Other free materials, such as an exercise DVD and tip sheets, are also available. *Workout to Go*, a mini exercise guide, shows you how you can be active anytime, anywhere.

To learn more, visit the Go4Life website. You'll find exercises, success stories and tips to help you stay motivated.

www.newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/dec2011/feature2
www.hemophiliafed.org/fitfactor

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