

We know we should exercise but who has the time? With our hectic schedules and daylight-shortened days, it is often difficult to do the right things for our health. According to a recent poll, only 25 per cent of us exercise on a regular basis. Health Canada guidelines suggest 30 minutes of moderate activity five days a week (150 minutes) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity every week. A minimal interval of exercise could be as short as 10 minutes at a time according to these guidelines.

But why should we exercise? Are we really supposed to trade this world of automation for long hours of grinding exercise?

The good news is that exercise has been shown to help with a myriad of health conditions including: pain, osteoarthritis, depression, anxiety, heart attack, stroke and diabetes. It also helps with the most common condition we experience with age: sarcopenia. This is the loss of muscle bone and organ, often referred to as lean mass. It is a

Three Parts To A More Active Life

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natural and inevitable process that begins after the age of 25 and accelerates after age 40. This sounds like bad news but we have the ability to significantly slow the loss and even regain some portion of lost mass with the right exercises.

Cardio, Stretching, Strength

There are three parts to achieving optimal physical health. Most people focus on the one that is easiest to do: cardio. If you are sedentary or extremely stressed, this is a good place to start. However, within weeks, you should make it more

challenging. To get benefit from your cardio, you must get slightly sweaty and be breathing more deeply. When you are not sweating or breathing deeply, you need to expand your cardio capability. As you improve, you must continue to challenge your limits; continually expanding your capabilities. This can be done in 10-minute intervals.

All of you over the age of 40 know that your body is stiffening and that you should stretch. We all know that when we stretch a single muscle it hurts and it is just as tight the next time we

stretch it. So how do we get around that? Well, yoga, which has been tested over thousands of years, uses natural body movement and poses. Yoga doesn't just target a single muscle, but rather the tough collagenous fibre that is the foundation of our tissues (fascia). If you are not a big proponent of stretching, you might be amazed to see how your flexibility can improve in just a short time, such a 10 minutes a day of gentle yoga.

The final part to this article is on strength and you can read more about it on our website at: www.integratedhealthcentre.ca

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