



# TWIN CREEKS

An Active Adult Community

## THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING ACTIVE, MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY

### Benefits from Physical Exercise

- Increased muscle mass, strength, and flexibility
- Lower body fat, especially in the abdomen
- Higher metabolic rate and less tendency to gain weight
- Improved ability to do everyday tasks
- Better balance and less risks of fall or fractures
- Increased joint mobility and less arthritic pain
- Increased longevity
- Improved sleep habits
- Improved quality of life
- Decreased risk of many chronic diseases, including:
  - Heart disease
  - High blood pressure
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Depression
  - Memory problems
  - Osteoporosis
  - Cancer



### Getting an elder moving

Outside of the physical perks of elevated cardiovascular capacity, stronger bones, and better balance, working out also provides elders with a host of mental benefits.

Physical activity increases the blood flow to all areas of the body, the

brain included. Research indicates that regular exercise may also help manage depression, increase concentration and reduce stress. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) encouraging a loved one to start with something as simple as a 30-minute walk several times a week can be helpful. Senior's should gradually add additional endurance, flexibility, strength and balance exercises to ensure that they're getting a well-rounded workout

### Growing Muscles May Prevent Shrinking Brains for Seniors

Spending a few extra minutes on the treadmill may be more beneficial for a senior's brain than tackling a daily crossword. Elders who exercise regularly have significantly less brain shrinkage than those who lead more idle lives, according to researchers from the University of Edinburgh. Surprisingly, the same could not be said for seniors with dynamic social lives, or those who participated in mentally engaging activities.

"People in their seventies who participated in more physical exercise, including walking several times a week, had less brain shrinkage and other signs of aging in the brain than those who were less physically active," study author Alan Gow, Ph.D., said in a press release. "On the other hand, our study showed no real benefit to participating in mentally and socially stimulating activities on brain size."

For three years, scientists tracked the daily physical and mental undertakings of hundreds of adults in their early seventies.

They examined MRI scans of the seniors' brains to determine how certain activities impacted the rate of age-related brain changes, such as atrophy and white matter lesions (clusters of dead cells that can disrupt mental functioning). Physically active seniors had larger brains with fewer lesions.

**DRINK WATER/STAY HYDRATED!!**



### Why is water so important?

Water is an essential source of our daily lives. The human body is made up of between 60% and 70% water. It is imperative for staying hydrated which in turns help us perform better in our everyday life. Water helps maintain healthy skin, hair and nails. It is also a factor in maintaining normal body temperature, blood pressure and heart rate.

### How do I stay hydrated?

It is recommended that you have something to drink as soon as you get up in the morning. It is also important to drink something before, during and after you exercise. A good rule of thumb is to drink water every 15 minutes as you exercise. Monitor your fluid intact while also factoring foods. The golden rule though is to remember to drink fluids before you become thirsty. Stay hydrated and drink up!

### Back to Fitness

By Guy Salerno, Fitness/Activities Director at Twin Creeks Retirement

The most common question I hear is "How do I stop nagging back pain?" In most cases, simple exercise and weight reduction should relieve your pain. With serious back pain or injury, consult a doctor first.

First of all walk! Walking is a safe and natural way to build up weakened lower erector muscles. Twenty minutes a day will do. Monitor your breathing while walking.

Next comes the most important part of any exercise program for the back: stretching. For lower-back pain, try these three stretched:

#### 1. The cat and the camel stretch

Place your hands and knees on the floor with a pad under you. Pull your head under, (your chin should touch your chest) and arch your back like an angry cat. Hold for thirty seconds, breath and release. Repeat three to four times. The camel part of the stretch reverses the movement. Pull head back to shoulders so you're looking up at the ceiling, and arch back like a camel. Hold thirty seconds, breathe and release. Do three to four times.

#### 2. The prayer stretch

Again using a floor mat, sit on your knees, place your hands together in front of you, then lean forward and stretch your arms out in front of you on the floor. Hold for thirty seconds and breathe. Return to upright sitting position. Repeat three to four times.

#### 3. Floor lower-back stretch

Lie down on the floor with your knees bent and your feet resting flat on the floor. Slowly pull your knees into your chest and wrap your arms around your thighs behind the knees. Go slowly at first and pull as far as your body will allow. Hold for thirty seconds, relax and return to starting position. Do three to four sets.

Do these simple stretches two to three times a day for best results. Always move very slowly and don't forget to breathe.

A simple breathing exercise is to breathe in for the slow count of three, hold for the count of three and slowly exhale for the count of three. Practice this daily.