**5 Benefits of Exercise for Seniors and Aging Adults**

 You’ve heard it time and again: physical activity and exercise are good for you, and you should aim to make them part of your routine. There are countless studies that prove the important health benefits associated with exercise, and it becomes more important as we age. Regular physical activity helps improve mental and physical health, both of which will help you maintain your independence as you age. Below, we outline five benefits of exercise for seniors and aging adults.

1. **Prevent Disease**Studies have shown that maintaining regular physical activity can help prevent many common diseases, such as [heart disease](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/) and [diabetes](http://diabetes.org/). Exercise improves overall immune function, which is important for seniors as their immune systems are often compromised. Even light exercise, such as walking, can be a powerful tool for preventable disease management.   
   **2. Improved Mental Health**The mental health benefits of exercise are nearly endless. [Exercise produces endorphins](http://www.cnn.com/2016/01/13/health/endorphins-exercise-cause-happiness/) (the “feel good” hormone), which act as a stress reliever and leaves you feeling happy and satisfied. In addition, exercise has been linked to improving sleep, which is especially important for older adults who often suffer from insomnia and disrupted sleep patterns.    
   **3. Decreased Risk of Falls**Older adults are at a higher risk of falls, which can prove to be potentially disastrous for maintaining independence. Exercise improves strength and flexibility, which also help improve balance and coordination, reducing the risk of falls. Seniors take much longer to recover from falls, so anything that helps avoid them in the first place is extremely important.    
   **4. Social Engagement**Whether you join a walking group, go to group fitness classes or visit a gardening club, exercise can be made into a fun social event. Maintaining strong social ties is important for aging adults to feel a sense of purpose and avoid feelings of loneliness or depression. The key is to find a form of exercise you love, and it will never feel like a chore again.  **5. Improved Cognitive Function**Regular physical activity and fine-tuned motor skills benefit cognitive function. Countless studies suggest a lower risk of dementia for physically active individuals, regardless of when you begin a routine.
2. **Conclusion**Exercise is good for you; it’s just a matter of making it a priority and a habit in your daily life. In the aging population, exercise has been shown to prevent disease, lower the risk of falls, improve mental health and well-being, strengthen social ties, and improve cognitive function.