

The 411 on Strength Training

What is strength training?

A simple definition of strength training is “using your muscles to force resistance against something.” The forced resistance can be against gravity, your own body weight, the weight of another object, or the resistance of such things as machines or elastic tubing. You can do two types of strength training:

- *Static* – your muscles contract, but you do not see movement.
- *Dynamic* – muscles contract with movement of joints.

Why is strength training important?

- Combats muscle’s wasting.
- Manages weight.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Decreases cholesterol.
- Easier management of type II diabetes.
- Improves heart function.

How do you start strength training?

- See your doctor.
- Determine what you want to accomplish:
 - *Bigger muscles.*
 - *Muscle tone.*
 - *Prevent osteoporosis.*
 - *Weight management.*
- What type of strength training best meets your needs?
 - *Free weights.*
 - *Resistance tubing.*
 - *Resist-a-ball.*
 - *Machines.*

- Get started, but always remember the keys to success!
 - *Warm up.*
 - *Stretch.*
 - *Use correct posture.*
 - *Breathe!*
 - *Don’t use too much or too little resistance.*
 - *Stay slow and steady –lowering the weight is just as important as lifting it!*
 - *Complete each exercise using the full range of motion.*
 - *Start with shorter workouts a few times a week. Gradually increase time and days.*
 - *Remember that some soreness a day or two after the workout is a good sign that you are doing an adequate workout.*

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