

Take care of your bone health! How exercise can help your bone strength and decrease your fall risk

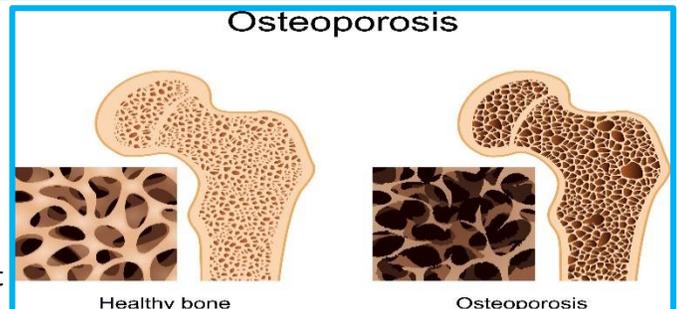
By Cathleen Renkiewicz PT, DPT, GCS

We all have a vision of how we do not want to age – stooped over, walking gingerly with a cane or walker, limited mobility leading to difficulty living independently.

Our bones can weaken as we age. Often time, one is unaware that they even have a problem! Osteoporosis, or “porous bone” is a disease affecting over 44 million Americans.

Dire statistics! However, the good news is that fall prevention education and a safe, appropriately prescribed exercise program can help reduce this risk.

- ✚ **Fall prevention** includes education concerning risk factors, home and environmental modifications, medication assessment to minimize side effects, and a strength and balance exercise program.
- ✚ **Exercise to prevent fractures and improve bone health/strength** is focused on 3 main components: exercises that help increase or maintain bone density and strength, improve posture and body mechanics, and improve balance to prevent falls from even occurring.
- ✚ **Weight bearing exercises** such as walking and standing aerobic exercises stimulate the bones to maintain density and strength.
- ✚ **Resistance exercises** using dumbbells, weight machines, cuff weights, exercises bands or tubing should target trunk and leg muscles that help maintain balance and control.
- ✚ **Specific balance exercises** and activities such as Tai Chi and standing leg exercises performed in a safe environment can challenge your balance and specifically strengthen those muscles and systems that support it.
- ✚ **Functional exercises** are activity specific exercises such as climbing stairs, repeated standing from a chair and other normal activities that are challenging and improve the strength of several muscle groups at one time.



Not all exercises are helpful, however.

Exercises to avoid include those that cause spine (back) flexion such as curl ups and toe touches. These movements can increase the risk of spinal fracture. All exercises should be performed with your best posture. Movements should be smooth and steady, not jerky or with quick thrusts. Starting with weights beyond your capacity will cause you to struggle and perform exercises with poor, unsafe technique. You should breathe throughout the exercise, not hold your breath.

The safest way to start. Consult your physician and get screened for osteoporosis. An exercise prescription from a Physical Therapist will provide you with a specific program to safely improve your strength and function and help you stay active. You can reduce your risk of fracture and disability!

Statistics and suggestions are courtesy of the Section on Geriatrics, American Physical Therapy Association.

Cathleen Renkiewicz PT, DPT, GCS received her bachelor’s in physical therapy from the University of Pittsburgh in 1978, Clinical Doctorate from VCU in 2011, and is a Certified Geriatric Specialist. She is Director of Rehabilitation at Virginian Outpatient Rehabilitation & Wellness in Fairfax, VA, specializing in the treatment of older adults and those with neurological diseases. She is trained in the Meeks method for treatment of posture and osteoporosis.

New To PD. But Not Alone.

By Kelley Grant, PTA



Boxing Against Parkinson's Battle with Kelley

- ❖ **Newly diagnosed with Parkinson's disease (PD)? Feel lost? Feel hopeless?** You're not alone. According to the Parkinson's Foundation, PD affects more than 10 million people worldwide with approximately 60,000 Americans being diagnosed each year. By 2020, nearly one million will be living with Parkinson's disease (PD) in the U.S., which is more than the combined number of people diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and Lou Gehrig's disease (or Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) (2).
- ❖ **Parkinson's disease (PD)**, is a neurodegenerative disorder that affects movement due to a loss of dopamine (a neurotransmitter) in the brain. PD symptoms vary from patient to patient, but common symptoms include but are not limited to tremors, slow movements, decreased gait quality, stiffness, and loss of balance. While, understanding the disease can be challenging and the fight against PD can seem impossible, with the help of a great support system and resources, you don't have to fight alone. Below is a list of resources to help you begin your journey with PD and live your best life.

Helpful resources for patients with Parkinson:

- ✚ **Parkinson's Foundation:**
The Parkinson's Foundation makes life better for people with Parkinson's disease by improving care and advancing research toward a cure.
<https://parkinson.org/>
- ✚ **Parkinson's Help Line:**
The Helpline is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET. We can assist you in either English or Spanish. You can also email us with a question at any time: helpline@parkinson.org. #1-800-473-4636
- ✚ **LSVT Global:**
Treatments customized to each person's specific needs and goals, it can help, with normalizing one's voice and body, regardless of the stage or severity of your condition.
<https://www.lsvtglobal.com/>
- ✚ **Find a Physical, Occupational, and/or Speech Therapist to address your functional goals/needs**
<https://www.lsvtglobal.com/LSVTFindClinicians>
- ✚ **Find a Physical, Occupational, and/or Speech Therapist to address your functional goals/needs**
<https://www.lsvtglobal.com/LSVTFindClinicians>
- ✚ **Get involved in the PD community.**
There are a variety of ways to connect with people who are also diagnosed with PD. For example, local group fitness classes, support groups, online forums, walks, and lecture series.
<https://parkinson.org/get-involved>
<https://parkinson.org/Living-with-Parkinsons/in-your-area>

UPCOMING EVENTS **COME AND JOIN US!!!**

- *****Join Now!!!*** DANCE FOR PARKINSONS**
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- **KNOCK OUT PARKINSON'S BOXING GROUP RETURNS SEPTEMBER 3rd 2019**
CLASSES EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY AT 3.30 PM IN B2 OUTPATIENT GYM
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