

# The Wellness Family

Dr. Roller Keeps You Informed

## Senior Living Diet & Exercise

More than a quarter of the population is over the age of 50 and this is due in part to many individuals aging well and living longer than at any other time in history. Still far too many people are inactive and sedentary, which means that, while they may be living longer, what is the quality of that life?

Medical research shows that a healthy diet and physical activity can reduce the onset of most chronic diseases and their risk factors; such as diabetes, heart disease, some types of cancers, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity.

### Healthier Eating

It's no secret that the first step to a higher quality of life is to maintain a healthy weight. While busy lifestyles have led to an almost chronic dependence on fast food it's important to remember that our overall health is going to be a reflection of our food choices.

Fast foods are the biggest enemy to our health since they frequently contain the following:

- Saturated and trans fats
- Cholesterol
- Added sugars
- And salt

The healthiest eating will usually be found on the outside walls of your local grocery mart in the produce, meat and seafood section.

For a truly healthy diet the Department of Health and Human Services has provided the following guidelines:

- Consume 2 cups of fruit per day remembering that variety is the key.
  - Citrus, berries and other tree fruit are best.
- Consume 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day choosing from all subgroups.
  - Dark green, orange, and legumes while limiting starchy vegetables.
- Consume fish and chicken as your primary sources of protein.
  - Avoid red meat and dark or fried poultry.
- Consume fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and whole grains often.

For a healthier diet avoid the following items:

- Consume less saturated fatty acids and cholesterol
- Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35% of calories.
  - Most fats should come from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids such as: fish, nuts and vegetable oils
  - Consume less than a teaspoon of salt
- Avoid white flour and processed sugar all together.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages all together.
  - While an occasional glass of red wine has been found to be beneficial (being rich in antioxidants) for the most part alcoholic beverages should be eliminated from a healthy diet.



*“Adding just a few more steps to your day may add a few more years to your life”*

### Healthier Moving

Many of the problems that are generally associated with “aging” have little to do with aging and more to do with “inactivity”. While many feel that it may be too dangerous to exercise after a certain age, the truth is, it's probably more dangerous not to.

Older adults who exercise in moderation tend to:

- Look younger,
- Feel better,
- Have more energy,
- Sleep better,
- Have fewer medical visits, and
- Stay more active in all areas of their lives.

The most important aspect of healthy exercising is to pick an activity that you like. Any physical activity (such as walking or dancing) done for 30 minutes a

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day can have huge benefits. A word of caution, if you've been leading a very sedentary lifestyle, start slowly but the key thing is to start. Take the first step of simply moving for a minute or two and build up by a minute each time.

### **Healthier Walking**

Maybe the very idea of beginning an exercise routine is overwhelming. Not to worry, it's never too late to start exercising. Study after study has demonstrated that the single most important activity a person can do to slow down and even reverse the aging process is just to exercise and this can simply mean moving your body on a daily basis.

- Start by taking a 15-minute walk each day and increasing by 5-minutes a week.
- Take a 15-minute stroll before and after dinner.
- Partner with a friend or family member, or even take the dog for a walk, since companionship will help you stay motivated.

Once you're used to walking, keep this in mind: the ideal walk is brisk enough to make you break a sweat, but not so fast that you run out of breath. Make the last bit of your walk slower. This brings your heartbeat down to its resting rate.

Remember that when walking you should never walk so fast that you can't carry on a conversation with your walking partner. If you are unable to talk while walking then you're over doing it.

These are strategies that anyone can adopt no matter what age or physical condition. Adding just a few more steps to your day may add a few more years to your life.

### **Activities to Avoid**

Unless you've always been an active runner, you should not take up running or jogging. The additional stress placed on your joints will far outweigh any benefit gained from running. As we age the connective tissue in our joints is not very elastic. Orthopedic injuries are common among runners of all ages but increase as we age.

### **In Summary**

Research has proven that a healthy diet and regular exercise can result in significant improvements in cardiovascular and musculo-skeletal function. When you're ready to make diet and exercise a regular part of a healthier you call Dr. Roller and schedule a wellness lifestyle conversation.

### **How to Choose Walking Shoes**

#### **Find shoes that...**

1. Relieve pressure on your feet. Avoid shoes that fit too tightly.
2. Properly fit the shape of your feet.
3. Reduce shock and shear. Buy shoes that reduce the downward pressure on your feet (shock) as well as the sideways movement of your feet within the shoes (shear).
4. Limit the motion of your joints since doing so can often reduce swelling, relieve pain and stabilize your feet when walking.

*Dear Patient,*

*Dr. Roller is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in wellness care for your entire family. With this in mind, please take a moment to speak with Dr. Roller today regarding any questions you may have about your overall health.*

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