

## *From Baby Boomers to Centenarians - Staying Active is Key!*

What is the key to longer lives? It might be more simple than we realize. It seems in every “heart healthy” “prevent stroke”, “reduce pain”, “prevent Alzheimer’s” article we read, a key factor is activity. Yes, keeping our minds challenged, having a good genetic package and eating a healthy diet contribute to longer lives, but exercise is a key to staying engaged, independent and feeling good.

Activity that includes strength building, stretching and some form of aerobic movement seems to be the elixir we all need – and it doesn’t need to cost a dime! It only takes will power, willingness and, with a little discipline, making exercise a priority.

No matter what our age, 40 or 85, most of us can exercise. We must believe, with the desire of wanting to be stronger, healthier and live all the days of our lives, that some form of intentional and scheduled movement is necessary. If you are already moving every day by walking, running or swimming, including stretching and some weight training, you can probably stop reading now.

Healthy movement is much like a healthy diet; it is best done with variety and moderation. Trainers, physical therapists, medical professionals and exercise experts will all have a slightly different philosophy.

What works for one person might not work for another. If the movement you choose is fun, you will continue to do it – if it feels like a chore, you will find excuses not to participate.



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Another benefit of doing some types of exercise is that they help us with balance – good balance contributes to fewer falls as we age. One of the exercise modalities chosen should be one that improves balance. This could be as simple as walking on a balance board. Weight training doesn’t mean you need to go to a gym 3 or 4 days a week to work on the equipment, but could be as simple as doing arm lifts with cans of soup in your hands. Don’t forget to exercise your legs. Leg lifts and a simple weight on the ankles will help you build necessary muscle. A session with a personal trainer could help you with a routine that won’t strain your muscles.

When we start a new routine we can get overly ambitious – moderation should be a motto. Start moving for just 5 or 10 minutes a day and then gradually work up to moving 45 minutes or an hour a day. The newest research suggests movement for one hour a day – don’t let this overwhelm you. Start slowly, chose a variety of movement activities – maybe just parking at the farthest spot from your destination may give you that first 5-10 minutes of walking. Consult your doctor to be sure that you can do some activity safely.

If you want to help an older family member move more – take them to a park for a picnic where you need to walk a little distance. Look for activities that are fun – a trip to the zoo is not just for kids and you are moving without even thinking about it! Make your life long, live strong, prevent illness and enjoy your environment – MOVE!

### **May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. Start moving!**

**Eldercare Services provides Counseling, Support Groups, Caregiving, and Care Management to aid Family Caregivers. If you or someone you know could benefit from self-care, give us a call at (866) 760-1808.**

#### **Activity Check List**

1. Exercise is the key to independence & feeling good.
2. Activities to focus on are strength building, stretching & aerobics.
3. Make exercise a priority!
4. The benefit to exercise is to help with balance.
5. Consult a doctor to confirm you can perform activities safely.

**Call us for Counseling or Support Groups: (866) 760-1808**



#### **Go Green & Receive the E-newsletter!**

To receive this newsletter by email and to conserve paper, please send a request to [DanielleG@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:DanielleG@EldercareAnswers.com)



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Eldercare Services has offices in Marin, Oakland, San Francisco and Walnut Creek, CA. Visit us on the web at <http://www.EldercareAnswers.com> for more information.

**Class Registration:** Please call at least 3 days ahead for more information regarding classes and support groups, visit us at [www.EldercareAnswers.com](http://www.EldercareAnswers.com) or call (925) 937-2018, (415) 469-8300 or email us at [info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:info@EldercareAnswers.com)

**The World of Parkinson's**  
Friday, May 14, 2010 from 10 AM to Noon  
**Families Dealing with Dementia**  
Thursday, May 20, 2010 from 6 PM to 8 PM

Walnut Creek

*Community Classes*

When concerns for aging family members are part of every day life, or when they interfere with work, your health or other relationships, you need to join a support group.

**Caring for An Aging Family Member**  
2nd Thursday of every month from 7 to 8:30 PM  
1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595  
605 A Cheney St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
1st Tuesday of every month from 6 to 7:30 PM

**Cost for Support Groups:** None  
**Support Group Registration:** Not required

*Support Groups*