

## Is any Exercise Good Exercise ? -

A good question, and the answer is a qualified yes if you're using proper technique, not stressing your body in the wrong ways, and taking account of how fit you are when you start. Borders Sport and Leisure Trust Centres all have Personal Fitness Instructors qualified to SVQ3 standard who should be able to help.

### So what about older adults ?

Regular physical activity helps muscles, bones and joints grow stronger so you can keep doing day-to-day activities without becoming dependent on others.

If you're 65 years of age or older, generally fit, and have no limiting health conditions you can follow these guidelines. **(Remember you can break it up, but you must try to do at least 10 minutes at a time)** This is a minimum for *maintenance* of fitness – do more than this and you're likely to see an improvement, and that's got to be good !

#### Each week, do

2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate exercise

or

1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous exercise (i.e., jogging or running)

and

On 2 or more days a week work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms). Try to do 8—12 repetitions per activity (1 set). If you're not sure about muscle strengthening exercises go to your local leisure centre and ask for help to ensure you exercise safely

On a 10-point scale, where sitting is 0 and working as hard as you can is 10, moderate- activity is a 5 or 6. It will make you breathe harder and your heart beat faster. You'll also notice that you'll be able to talk. Vigorous-intensity activity is a 7 or 8. Your heart rate will increase quite a bit and you'll be breathing hard enough so that talking is difficult.

### Muscle-strengthening activities

Besides aerobic activity, you need to do exercises to make your muscles stronger. Unless you do this you'll lose muscle as you get older, and your bones and joints will weaken over time.

For health benefits, muscle-strengthening activities need to be done to the level where it's hard for you to do another repetition (one complete movement of an activity, like doing one sit-up) without help. Try to do at least 1 set of muscle-strengthening activities, but to gain even more benefits, do 2 or 3 sets.

There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether it's at home or the gym. You could try lifting weights, working with resistance bands, doing exercises that use your body weight for resistance (push ups, sit ups), or work like digging or shovelling. For more information about strength training, you can download a booklet from this web-site: [http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/downloads/growing\\_stronger.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/downloads/growing_stronger.pdf)

***Finally, and very importantly: if you haven't exercised for a while, or have any medical conditions which might cause problems, check with your Doctor to ensure it's safe to increase your activity levels.***

***Remember, pain is a sign that something is wrong....***

***Alan Clinch***