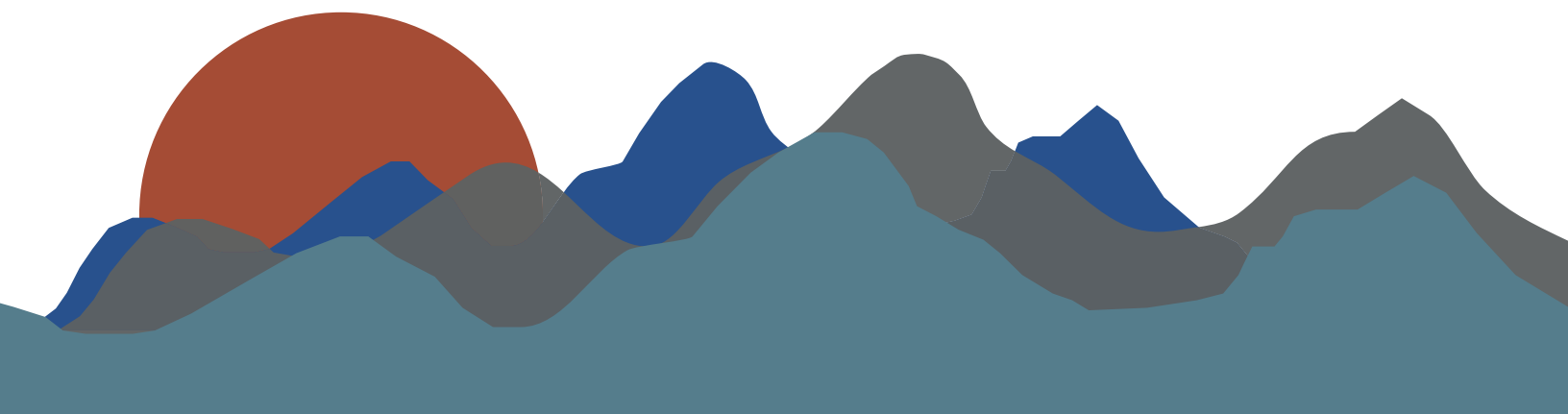


Age-Friendly Carbon County

Newsletter - Spring 2021

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Introduction to Exercise in Older Adults

Physical activity has many benefits and doesn't have to be called exercise! Any movement - yard, housework, or other chores - can be useful as well as pleasurable. Research has shown that persons in their 70's and 80's can become more physically fit, even if they have never exercised before!

Much of the decline in strength, stamina and flexibility is blamed on aging, but it is much more often due to inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle! Regular consistent movement using legs and arms has many benefits including diminished fall risk, decreased osteoporosis, lower blood pressure, lower risk of diabetes, and less mental stress. Improvements in brain function and cognition, better sleep, less depression and increased energy may also be noted.

It is best to have a structured guided plan in place with a therapist, trainer, or other authority, but much information and guidance is available on various websites such as CDC, National Institute of Aging or medical sites. (only those with dot EDU or ORG). Your health care provider, nurse, library or yoga instructor may also be good sources of advice. Some links are provided below:

- nia.nih.gov/health/real-life-benefits-exercise-and-physical-activity
- cdc.gov/physicalactivity/resources/recommendations.html
- health.harvard.edu/free-report-downloads
- seniorplanet.org/virtual-fitness-wellness-events

»»» Our Bodies are Meant to Move

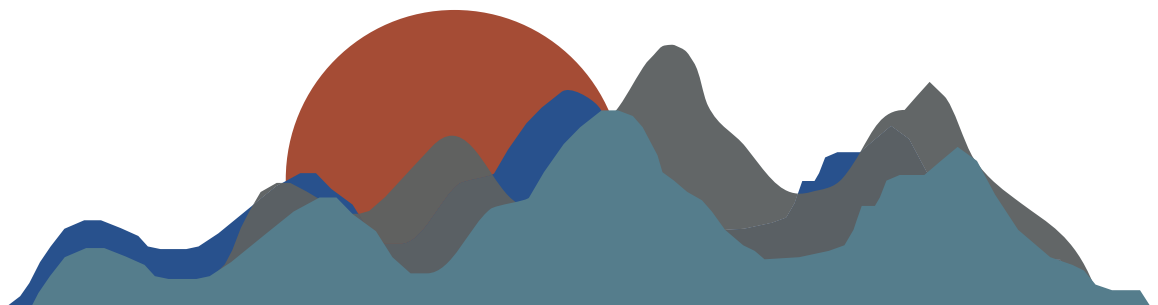
Exercise in Your Daily Life

Though Sir Isaac Newton wasn't talking about exercise per se, the law applies nonetheless: Bodies in motion stay in motion. Moreover, continued, sustainable motion is the key to health and vitality in older adults. In order to understand how continued motion invigorates the lives of seniors in Carbon County, we interviewed health and exercise experts in our community.

Across the board, exercise professionals agree that the single most important factor in staying healthy is regular and conscious movement. "It is important to understand and accept that aging looks and feels different for each person", says Martha Johnson of True Doing Yoga and Yoga Therapy, "and each person's abilities may change from day to day". Holding on to sameness, she says, is a barrier to curious exploration and meaningful movement. With that in mind, Martha encourages folks to move past the "push and performance" mentality to a mindset of "protect and maintain". Similarly, Red Lodge School of Dance owner, Pat Luptak, hopes to teach her students of all ages that engaging with your body on a daily basis encourages physical and mental health equally. A positive feedback loop is created as you exercise: movement gives you more energy, thereby encouraging more exercise and more opportunities to be present in your life and to have fun.

The formula to creating a sustainable exercise plan, according to Martha Johnson, is respecting the body's needs and limits, using activity to improve the things you need to be able to do, and granting yourself patience as you explore and experiment. While exercise does not necessarily have to look like spending hours in the gym, it is important to prioritize functional movement in your health routine. For older adults, exercise should primarily center on improving balance and the plasticity of ligaments. Improving balance and flexibility will have the greatest impact on a senior's quality of life as it prevents injuries from falls and helps ease daily tasks. Stimulating the cardiovascular system helps improve circulation, heart function, and boosts energy. While we often imagine exercise as weight lifting, AARP lists it as the least important form of exercise for seniors, though it still certainly adds to health! Age-friendly movement and exercise includes hiking, dancing, biking, swimming, bodyweight and resistance training, and yoga!

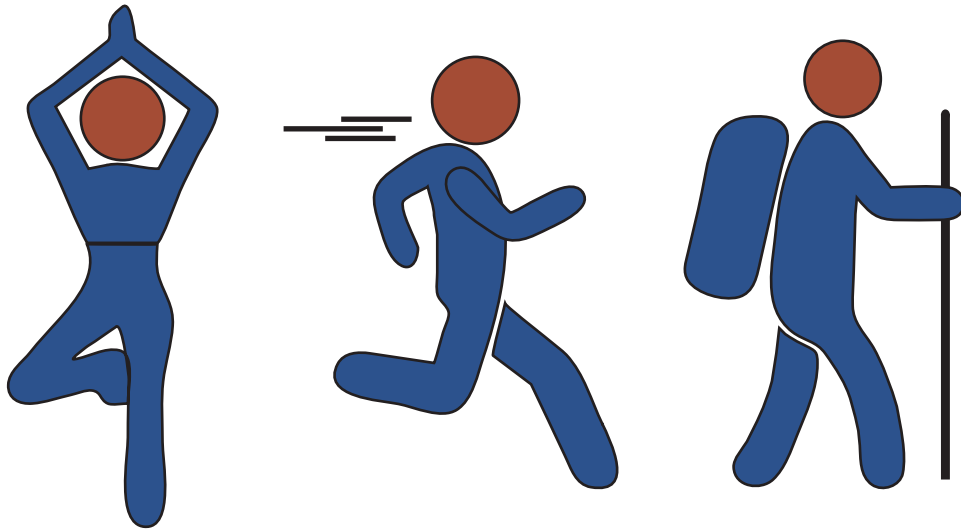
Marg Strum, long time member of the Red Lodge Hiking Club, stresses the importance of picking a type of exercise that doesn't feel like a chore so you will enjoy doing it every day. For her, it's walking and hiking with her dog. Similarly, Pat Luptak encourages using movement you are already doing to deeply engage your body. For instance, while you are washing dishes at the sink, do calf raises. Calves, says Pat, are the heart of the lower body, and getting your blood pumping once a day while you are engaging in other activities, is an easy way to integrate movement into your routine. Given the COVID restriction on socialization, walking or hiking with friends or a club is an excellent way to socialize and exercise! Most importantly, all health experts agree, do not let your changing body or expectations of how exercise "should" look get in the way of movement. Exercise as a senior offers an exciting opportunity to connect with your body in a conscious and more meaningful way. And in doing so, we may just prove Newton right: bodies in motion stay in motion, no matter your age or ability!



Age-Friendly Opportunities in Carbon County

Fit Tips

- Start every morning by waking up your joints, roll your joints, working the clicks out.
- Play music and move to connect your mind and your body.
- Use everyday activities as an opportunity. Try putting your dishes away as slowly as you can to connect with your body.
- Altitude affects us differently when we age. When hiking remember to ascend slowly and drink plenty of water. If you develop a headache, descend back down the trail.
- Challenge yourself to make a little changes like parking farther away.
- Join a group to hold yourself accountable.
- Break your exercise into little "snacks" of ten minutes of movement.
- Give yourself time to settle into a new exercise routine. It takes time to develop new habits!



Trails:

- Palisades Trail
- Airport Trail (take hill entrance off of Milligan and 15th for extra endurance)
- Lakefork Trail
- Ewald Wellness Trail
- Red Lodge High School track
- Cooley Dam County Road
- J-Walk Joilet Fitness Path

Classes and Fitness Centers:

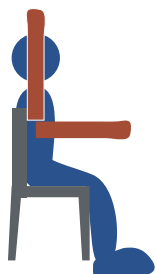
- True Doing Yoga
- Red Lodge School of Dance
- Well Approach Fitness Professionals (Accepts Silver Sneakers)
- The Gym at the Pollard (Accepts Silver Sneakers)

Groups:

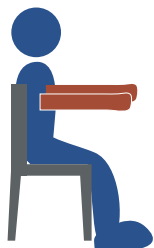
- Red Lodge Hiking Club

Exercises from Home

➤ Helpful tip: Try to match your breathing with your movements. Inhale as you move towards your body, exhales as you stretch and move away from your body.



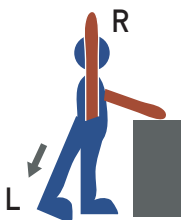
1. Lift right arm into the air as high as you can, then lower to lap. Repeat 10 times. Repeat on left side.



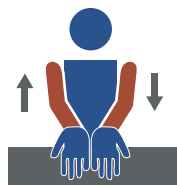
3. Put both arms in front of you at about shoulder height. Turn them both at the same time in a circle. Repeat 10 times. 4. Open and close fists 10 times, holding for 5 seconds.



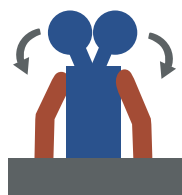
8. Sit up straight in chair. Lift right leg, put down. Lift Left leg, put down. Repeat 20 times. Repeat on right side. 9. Place both feet flat on floor. Pick up toes, then pick up heels. Repeat 10 times.



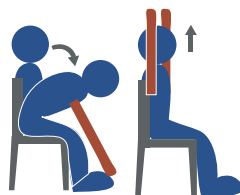
13. Stand in front of counter/table with feet several inches apart, hands resting lightly on top of counter/table. Gaze at a spot on the wall in front of you. Lift the R arm and step the L foot back (toes down, heel up) Lift the L arm and step the R foot back.



2. Bring hands together in lap facing up. Lift up to nose and lower. Repeat 10 times.



5. Rotate your head to the right in a circle 10 times. Take deep breath. Repeat on opposite side 6. Look up. Count to 5. Repeat looking Down, Left, and Right 7. Tip head so ear touches right shoulder. Count to 5. Repeat on Left side.



10. Put hand on hips. Turn your body from the waist up to the right 10 times. Repeat on left side. 11. Bend over and touch your toes. Count to 5. 12. Raise arms as high as you can. Bend to the right. Count to 5. Sit upright. Repeat on right left side.



14. Say your vowels with extreme facial expressions. Repeat 5 times. Raise your eyebrows as high as you can. Hold for 5 seconds. Make the biggest smile you can. Hold for 5 seconds.

➤ Please join the Willows via Zoom on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 for more exercises. Call Marcia Sullivan at 406-446-1020 for the Zoom codes.



Carbon County Area Ride & Transit

Want to explore Carbon County? CART can help!
Call David, our Transportation Coordinator at
406 426-4506 to learn more!

For additional copies of the newsletter,
contact Tesla at tesla@rlacf.org or 406-446-2820