

TOOLBOX TALKS

Keeping Fit At Any Age

Wellness is not just the opposite of sickness; it's a way of life that shows you care enough about yourself to stay healthy. Good living habits can:

- Prevent illnesses
- Reduce medical bills
- Make you feel more energetic so that you can participate in activities after work
- Help you live a longer, happier life



Illness can result from too much smoking, drinking, drug, junk foods, caffeine, and stress, and not enough exercise, rest, and good nutrition.

A good means of working against bad habits is to start a good habit – Exercise! This can be done at any age. Exercise will help you keep your weight down without strict dieting, reduce stress and tension, and lessen your use of cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs.

It will also strengthen your heart, muscles, and bones, increase your energy level, and help you sleep more soundly.

You don't have to be an athlete to exercise. Walking is one of the best exercises you can do. You can walk almost anywhere, and no expensive special equipment is required.

Try to walk outdoors in good weather, as the sunshine and fresh air will add even more benefits to the exercise. Don't think about problems at work or home, and try to find something new during every walk (a plant, a bird, a display in a store window) to keep up your interest even if you always walk the same route. Walking with your spouse or a friend makes the time go by more quickly and pleasantly.

Light weights assist with your toning when used with repetitive motions. There are books and videos available to help you design the best program for you. Start light and work your way up to heavier weights.

You might also enjoy team sports if your company or the local recreation department offers them. There are slow-pitch softball and over-40 basketball and volleyball teams that will allow you to play at an enjoyable level. Or you might prefer more solitary sports like swimming or biking.



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To get the greatest benefits and the fewest strains from exercising:

- Consult with your doctor before starting, especially if you have a chronic condition.
- Warm up before each session by stretching slowly.
- Build up your exercise time to at least 20 minutes per session 3 to 5 times per week.
- Don't overdo it. You should be able to feel you have worked your unused muscles but not be in pain or agony.
- Cool down after exercise with more stretching or a less exerting exercise after each session.

While I won't happen overnight, a program of exercise and more healthful living (without those bad habits) will make you look better, perform better at work, feel better, sleep Better – and live longer.



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