



Healthy Habits

The newsletter for busy Cal employees who want to improve their health!

March 9, 2009

WEEK 3

Strength Training

“Use them or lose them!” That’s right. If you don’t use your muscles or strength train regularly, you can lose 3-5 percent of your muscle mass per decade. After 50 the decline in muscle mass increases to 1-2 percent per year! But no matter how old you are you can start strengthening your muscles, either to improve strength and mobility or to help postpone muscle loss.

Strength training, also known as weight training or resistance training, does not mean bulking up. It means strengthening the muscles in a way that allows you to be mobile and strong. Strength training can also help you develop strong bones, control weight, reduce risk of injury, boost stability and stamina, reduce body fat, help the body burn calories more efficiently, boost self-confidence and body image, sleep better, and manage chronic conditions. That’s a lot of benefit from just 20 minutes twice a week!

It’s important to remember that strength training can be done with or without a gym membership. Weight machines can be helpful, but you can also invest in resistance tubing and free weights at little cost, or use your own body weight for free. You can also make your own weights by filling jars or bottles with water or sand. Explore your home for various objects you can use.

Choose a weight that is heavy enough so that you just can get through 12 repetitions. At this weight you only need to do 1-2 sets of 12 repetitions. If you can easily do more than 12 repetitions you should use more weight or do some more reps. Always make sure to warm up for 5-10 minutes before you start and don’t forget to keep breathing! Rest at least one full day between exercising specific muscle groups to give them some time to recover. Although muscle soreness is normal, especially at the beginning, stop if you feel sharp pain or have sore or swollen joints.

Visit the Fitness section on the Mayo Clinic website for great Strength training articles, videos, and slideshows.

<http://mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/SM00103>

Health Assessments: The How’s and Why’s



Health Assessments (HA) are a great way for you to learn more about your health and have a clear sense of your well being. They can help to verify areas where you are doing well, identify areas of risk or discover health issues that you may not have known about. The information you gain through a tool like an HA can help you take steps towards a healthier lifestyle, or reinforce the healthy behaviors you already engage in.

UCOP understands the value of HA’s and that is why they are promoting the StayWell HA and the Kaiser HA. For more information about who is eligible to take these HA’s and more, please visit the 2009 Health Assessments webpage at:

<http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/healthmatters/healthassessment.shtml>.

This is a great opportunity to take advantage of such an invaluable tool. Learn more about your health and have access to interactive online programs, wellness coaching, and more. Read “From Health Assessment to Cancer Survivor” (http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/briefing/2009_feb/survivor.html) to learn about one UC employee’s experience with the StayWell Health Assessment. You never know what you could learn about your health or how you can help it

Announcements

• **Take your Health Assessment by April 15 to be eligible for prizes and rewards.**

• For more information visit:

<http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/healthmatters/healthassessment.shtml>