

St. Augustine Health Plan

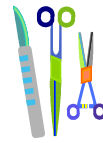
Almost like a ticking time-bomb, at about age-50 we start noticing sags and “bags” where there use to be instead of the feeling of wellness rumbles seemingly becoming greater sensitivity to take this heat like I use to” . . . colds and the flu come more energy, but more difficulty sleeping . . .



These are not the inevitable and irreversible consequences of aging, leaving us without hope and help. There is a fountain of youth – it is not magic, it isn’t any “miracle” of modern medicine, it is not some new and expensive product or pill available to only the rich or select few . . . it is what has been understood every day: the ONLY way to SIGNIFICANTLY reduce the ravages of aging is exercise; not “kids” exercise (for looks), but that developed specifically for those over 50 who want the substance of the benefits (having a considerable positive effect) while leaving the “form” (physical appearance enhancements) to the young!



There is no diet, pill or “procedure” that can or will make us healthy and well. Doing away with smoking, drinking . . . over-eating, will not make a person healthy! You can have all the money in the world, hire the best doctors, masseuse, personal trainers, dietitians, purchase the best equipment, like Howard Hughes live in a sterile environment . . . yet you cannot purchase health.



Life, in the area of health, is becoming fairer and fairer as time passes. In the past, diseases were the major cause of death; more and more it is becoming health. As diseases are eliminated, the gap between the “haves and have nots” is those who cooperate with the natural internal mechanisms of healing, by working to stay “in shape,” and those just wear down with age. Fairer because, like the other most important aspects of life, money cannot buy it – we will only find the blessing of health as we, through discipline, work for it. Exercise pays a great dividend, but only for those who make the investment of time! In the next 20 years and beyond we will hear more and more about this gap between the haves and have nots – yet no government program will help since we are not “entitled” to health, we have to earn it!

Aging involves a compounding of health issues that can be significantly reversed with exercise. However, the ONLY way to reduce the health-related compounding effect of aging (“uncoupling” the issues) is through exercise. The difficulty in diagnosing and correcting illnesses, as we age, is largely due to this multifaceted assault of various weaknesses. Fat and overweight, in and of themselves, seldom cause health problems. Smoking, as an isolated bad habit, isn’t that serious. But compound these with muscle mass loss, immune system



diminishing, a lessening of the body's ability to absorb fluids and nutrients, a slowing of metabolism . . . and any small “straw” can be the deciding factor in breaking the back of one's health; or more correctly, revealing its greatest weakness.

Miracle of Modern Medicine

The greatest legacy of the “miracles of modern medicine” is that they allow unhealthy people to live longer and longer, all the way, often, to “living” in a vegetative state. These “advances” will be a blessing OR a curse for every person:

- A curse if we fall for the foolish belief that modern medicine can make or keep us healthy.
- A blessing only if we properly use modern medicine to relieve and eliminate debilitating and potentially terminal illnesses to give us the OPPORTUNITY to live longer, healthier, lives; but this blessing is brought into being ONLY if we exercise – there is no other way to be healthy!

There is the myth that life means health while death equates to unhealthiness. Yet, every year, as medicine makes “progress,” the real effect is that, on the whole, we only become older and unhealthier. Instead of people dying younger (and healthier), medicine has added years to the average life so we can now die older, be unhealthier for years and years, in greater pain, unable to take of ourselves, largely because we have rested in the blessing without bridging it to our benefit. We only get to the side of health by crossing the bridge of exercise! That is why the average person in a Third-World country dies healthier than the average dying American – they die younger while they are healthier.



Illnesses can kill, but seldom do illnesses make us unhealthy – time itself, aging without any attempt to slow or reverse it, is (9 times out of ten) the cause of being unhealthy. Dying is a foolish fear, because it is inevitable – dying of “old age” is a legitimate fear we can do something about.



The best of both worlds is that we be healthy while taking advantage of the strides made by modern medicine – working together, they can provide a longer, more productive, healthier life. Modern medicine can eliminate or lessen the impact of the 1/3 of illnesses that are not healed by the internal natural healings of a healthy body. What is much better than being cured is not needing to be cured – having a healthy body that will fight off two-thirds of the illnesses unhealthy people will have.



versus



As mentioned earlier, the vast majority health care should be used as a bridge TO expected life-long solution to underlying



of drugs and other health, not as an problems that can

only be otherwise eliminated by restoring one's health. Health and illness issues generally signal a need for lifestyle changes – and the most important universal lifestyle change is the need to exercise as people age. And just as the need for exercise increases with age, the good news is that the benefits likewise dramatically increase with age.

A few of the key benefits that WILL result from a sensible exercise program are:

- ✚ Processing of food and liquids is improved with exercise so that the absorption of vital nutrients is increased and hydration is enhanced. The often touted discipline of drinking water is no substitute for the body's desire, craving and wanting water to hydrate – the need caused by use (rather than merely the passing) of water.

- ✚ Immune system enhancement – those who exercise properly get sick less often while healing quicker after being ill. We all know of the importance of our immune system, but we often forget about it since it is invisible. Additionally, the lessening of the immune system defenses (the body's most important safeguard against health issues related to “catching” diseases) is so gradual we often overlook its decline or fail to realize we can do anything to mitigate or reverse this waning. Sensible exercise has the same benefits as a cabinet full of medicine, without the side-effects!

It is no accident that older people are far more susceptible to communicable diseases than the younger, in spite of (because they have more often been exposed to these diseases) theoretically having a greater built-up resistance to them.

The immune system is a collection of cells and proteins that guards the body from potentially harmful, infectious microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses and fungi, including cancer and other diseases. It works like the body's muscles, when not exercised it weakens and declines – exercise is the only known way to directly and significantly enhance the immune system.

- ✚ Putting greater strain on an already weakened immune system in the aging, mucus (a primary germ incubator in the nose, throat, lungs, etc.) significantly increases with age, unless reduced by exercise.

While extreme mucus is most evident WHEN people are sick with a cold or the flu, its greatest damage is done TO MAKE people sick by incubating germs. Mucus increases with age, a process only reversed by exercise.

- ✚ Muscles are strengthened – back, neck and joints. After age 40, it is estimated we lose about one-third to one-half pounds of muscle mass EACH year while often not noticing it since we generally “pickup” an equal amount of fat. What pill or medical procedure do we expect to alleviate the effects of this deterioration? Only working muscles will build muscles!

- ✚ Stamina is improved as the lungs (and resulting lung volume) are strengthened.

- ✚ Balance, flexibility and mobility are much better. The tightening, falls (and resulting breaks) are greatly reduced with proper exercise.

- ✚ Digestion is improved – gastrointestinal issues are lessened. And this is a big one! There is probably no greater evidence of aging than in what it does inside! Unless reversed by exercise, we have more and more foods

that bother our systems and the internal “rumbles” increase dramatically and painfully.

- ✚ With exercise we have more energy, are less tired, yet sleep is better. One paradox of aging is how you can have less energy, but cannot sleep as well – you would think the opposite would be true. To resolve the problem, we can study all the causes, try all the remedies OR simply exercise to de-age.
- ✚ Elimination of waste and toxins is improved – thus, less attention has to be paid to what is eaten.
- ✚ Desire for better food is increased – cravings of fats and sweets are reduced.
- ✚ Metabolism is “reset” so that fat is burned. A re-set metabolism is the safest and surest way to lose the annual one-third to one-half pound of increased fat that “naturally” occurs after age 40. A side benefit to a properly re-established metabolism is that, within reason, a person can eat just about as much as they want! Disciplines exercise can eliminate the cravings and 24-hour a day, continual, hunger associated with any serious weight-loss program!
- ✚ Joints remain more supple (assuming low-impact exercises).
- ✚ Less sensitive to temperature changes.

As unmistakable evidences of better health, a person should see improved blood pressure, cholesterol levels, reduced need for drugs, waist size reduction and better weight control.

The often-recommended 30 minutes a day, three times a weeks, MAY reduce the rate of physical weakening, but it is not sufficient to provide the physical benefits of reversing the decline, returning a person to optimum health! And that is the paradox of why people typically fail when the “bar” is set too low while succeeding when challenged to do more.

1 minutes times a person’s age, 6 days a week,
WILL
very significantly, within a few months, improve a person’s health!

A successful plan will be one that is:

- ✚ Integrated into a person’s life as a long-term discipline, not a short-term strategy or plan.
- ✚ Evidenced by a noticeable reversal of health issues.
- ✚ Mentally focused since developing a long-term exercise discipline is much more a mental challenge than a physical one.
- ✚ Low impact.
- ✚ No pain – the objective is to stretch and strengthen muscles and boost stamina, not to build mass and bulk!
- ✚ Equal parts stretching, aerobic and mild strength training.
- ✚ Done inside and not dependent of weather or location.
- ✚ Transitioned to not being dependent on outside help as an exercise discipline is achieved – outside motivation (periodic meeting with other exercisers or a trainer, “postings” to a website, etc.) may be helpful

occasionally, but a good plan is one that is time-efficient and not reliant on constant outside influences.

Selecting a Level of Desired Health

A question we need to ask ourselves is what level of health do we want to die with? And then develop a discipline to achieve this objective. A discipline is a decision that eliminates the need for making many, many individual decisions. Decisions are hard for most people and making good decisions is even harder. Besides being easier than making many individual decisions, disciplines are better than decisions because they can be adjusted, modified, and improved over time while decisions are one-time events.

People fail to develop good disciplines because:

- 🌐 A solid decision is not made – rather they base their actions on their current feelings – not only do they make a decision, EACH TIME they want to do something, even worse, they have to have their feelings approve their actions! Is there any wonder . . .? Oh, there is no question you may have to fight your feelings, but they are beaten much easier through developing and growing disciplines than they are when a firm one-time decision has not been made.
- 🌐 Too often people confuse the what with the how – disciplines are “what” oriented, not focused on how. The “hows” WILL BE refined as the discipline is followed. Who, without doing something, will get better and better? This is the paradox of exercise – it gets easier as time goes by (even though you are doing more) because you are learning what “works” for you.

Exercise is a “no-brainer” because it is one of the “heads you win, tails you win” propositions – there are no trade-offs. Someone who exercises will add more time to their life than they will spend exercising and while they are living they will feel much better, be more mobile, have fewer illnesses, have to concern themselves less with health issues . . . because they are much healthier!

The current focus on eliminating tobacco and fat, eating better, etc. are (like modern medicine) only a foundation for becoming healthy – they are not the elements of good health as good and important as they are as a base for being healthy through exercise.

The last word. Still can't do it after trying, trying and trying? At some point when (or before) trying ANYTHING (whether we think it easy or hard – and especially after we have tried and failed) seek

GRACE

It doesn't matter how easy something **should** be – if you can't do it seek

GRACE

1 minute a day, times your age, 6 days a week
(I don't care what the Bowflex commercial say otherwise)