

Seniors staying fit by exercising while they sit

Special classes offered by Alzheimer Society at Hamilton libraries

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They say sitting is the new smoking.

But you can do a lot of good while sitting if you are serious about improving your health and mobility, says fitness instructor

Diane Duda.

She runs a regular "chair yoga" session as part of the Sit to be Fit classes at the Sherwood library and other branches for the Alzheimer Society.

Sit to be Fit is a low impact workout for seniors. Classes focus on strength, balance, flexibility and endurance, which help to improve and maintain daily living skills.

Exercise balls, tension bands and lightweight sticks are all included in chair yoga workouts that help a person stretch, build up strength and increase range of motion.

"We try to do a little bit of everything," says Duda.

While it's best to start young and continue with exercise throughout one's life, the Sit to be Fit classes are designed with everyone in mind.

There's no pressure if you can't perform the exercises to the same level as others in a class.

"You do the workout at your own pace and your own abilities," says Duda.

She has people as old as 96 taking her classes and helps tailor a workout to individuals.

"Use it or lose it," says Duda. "It's better to move a

little bit than not at all."

Donna Kiernan says she is proof of how much Sit to be Fit can help a person.

"I couldn't lift my arms up before I started the classes," she says. "Now I lift my arms up, I dry my hair,

it's a big improvement."

Linda Purdy, who has been taking the class for about 18 months, is another fan of Sit to be Fit. She says it took less than two months of steady workouts to notice a big improvement.

"It's very enjoyable," she says. "It keeps you mobile."

"We all look forward to it."

For a list of Sit to be Fit locations and times, call 1-866-428-1552 or see alzhn.ca or hpl.ca.



Metroland file photo
Fitness instructor Diane Duda of the Alzheimer Society leads a session of "chair yoga" at Sherwood library.



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