

It's never too late to start exercising— even frail seniors benefit

Continued from pg. 1

obesity in Canada at \$4.3 billion (\$1.6 billion of direct costs and \$2.7 billion of indirect costs) in health care expenditures. This represents the total economic cost as 2.6% and 2.2 % respectively of the total health care costs in Canada.

It's never too late to start exercising
Exercise isn't just for older adults who

live independently and are still very active. Researchers have found that exercise and physical activity can also improve the health of people who are 90 or older, who are frail, or who have the diseases that seem to accompany aging. For some, that can mean the difference between getting up from a chair by themselves, or depending on someone to help them. The important thing is for seniors to participate in enjoyable activities within their ability. A physiotherapist can advise on suitable activities for each individual.

Older adults who begin to participate in regular physical activity can improve their quality of life. Regular physical activity helps maintain independence and reduce the risk of falls and fractures.

Older adults should consult a health care professional regarding their overall health status before they begin an exercise program. This will confirm the level of exercise program that is right for them, but also discuss the potential health benefits to be gained.

Physiotherapists are highly skilled health care professionals, qualified in developing exercise programs to suit the needs of seniors, especially those who have chronic conditions affecting their overall physical function. A physiotherapist can tailor a program to optimize physical function and fitness, and help gain and maintain mobility.

Physiotherapy's unique contribution to health care stems from its advanced understanding of how the body moves, what keeps it from moving well and how to restore mobility. The Canadian

Physiotherapy Association (CPA) supports the promotion of an active lifestyle and a fitter, more active senior population.

Visit the Canadian Physiotherapy Association website at www.physiotherapy.ca to find more information on physiotherapy and to access the "Find A Physiotherapist" directory. The CPA website also links to resources for finding physiotherapists through provincial association branches and regulatory colleges.

An excellent online resource for aging adults who want to take those first steps

toward an active lifestyle is "Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging". A PDF copy of the full 88-page Guide can be downloaded at <http://www.niapublications.org/exercise-book/index.asp>. The manual contains six chapters with information on exercise and proper nutrition, and provides useful tips on establishing and maintaining a regular exercise program.

Article provided by

http://www.lin.ca/resource/html/Active2010_LiveLongerLiveHealthier_sw.htm



Personal trainer Heinz Rusche was joined by Catherine Barrett and Doreen McIntyre as they did some wall push-ups during the Fit & Fun Class at Acton Community Centre.
Photo by Ted Brown

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