

Exercise for Good Health

Exercise Principles:

- Do a variety of exercises:
 - Strength-building (resistance or weight-training),
 - Endurance (cardio), and
 - Stretching (limbering, especially any tight or tender muscles; stretch these before and after exercise).
- Exercise daily if possible, even if briefly.
- Build more exercise into daily activities, with more climbing stairs, walking, gardening.
- Interval training (repeated brief intense exercising until short of breath, with brief resting in between) burns fat better than a continuous exercise session.
- Don't exercise any muscle area that hurts more with exercise; stretch it first, then reduce intensity of exercise to avoid further injury there. Get professional guidance if any body pain with exercise is not improving daily.
- Muscles especially prone to tightness and cramps include calf muscles and hamstrings (posterior thigh muscles). These should ideally be stretched every time before doing strengthening exercises. Other muscles prone to strain and cramping include the thigh flexor muscles (in front of the hip joints), the muscles alongside the spine in the neck and upper and lower back, and the muscles above the shoulder blades. These muscles, when sore or tight, require special stretching exercises, which I can teach you if needed.
- Walking is not the same as stretching; if you have leg cramps, learn how to stretch them properly (ask me to teach you).
- If you are not accustomed to exercise, you need to start at low intensity as tolerated, and increase gradually enough to not cause injury and pain.
- If you have increased joint stiffness, chronic back pain, or any pain running down your leg with exercise (sciatica), I can evaluate this and advise you on how to modify your exercise.