

Seniors Building Strength Through Resistance and Light Weight Training Myths versus Reality

Myth: Regular walking, swimming or another form of aerobic activity gives me the muscle strength I need.

Reality: Aerobic exercise, while crucial for cardiovascular health, does not build sufficient muscular capacity to overcome age-related muscle loss, known as sarcopenia. Adding resistance and light weight training to your exercise routine is the best way to build the muscular capacity you need.

Myth: You have to be strong to begin resistance and light weight training.

Reality: Resistance and light weight training can be done by almost anyone, regardless of age, gender and whether you have exercised before.

Myth: People with Alzheimer's are not capable of doing resistance and light weight training.

Reality: Many of those with early to moderate dementia can participate with the proper guidance and support.

Myth: A strength-building program will create bulky muscles.

Reality: A program of resistance bands and light weights in multiple repetition will strengthen and tone muscles without creating bulk. Visibly larger muscles come from training with increasingly heavy weights in low repetition.

Myth: A strength-building program hurts.

Reality: Properly done, a strength-building program tailored to your capacities and needs does not hurt and in fact, can relieve osteoarthritis pain.

Myth: It will take a long time to see any results.

Reality: If you are training on a regular basis, you could start to notice you have more strength within just a few weeks.

Myth: Strength-building exercise takes a lot of time.

Reality: It takes as little as 30 minutes three to four times a week.

Myth: I will have to join an expensive gym and learn how to use complicated machines.

Reality: Strength training can be done anywhere – including at home – using a combination of no weights, dumbbells weighing as little as one pound and resistance bands.

Myth: To learn how to do this, I will have to pay a lot of money to a personal trainer.

Reality: There are many free and low-cost resources for learning strength training. Contact your local Brookdale community for information on classes or call Brookdale at (phone number). The local senior center and municipal recreation center are resources, as well.