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## ***Exercise, Illness and Chronic Disease***

The majority of the general public is well aware of the fact that regular participation in an exercise program can bring about certain positive benefits. However, what many people are not aware of is the fact that **those suffering from a variety of illnesses and chronic disease conditions can alleviate symptoms and prevent further deterioration through regular exercise participation.** Listed below are a few recent studies showing the benefits of exercise for a variety of conditions.

- **Diabetes:** Recent research supports the hypothesis that a structured diet and exercise program can prevent the onset of diabetes. A study from the University of Michigan School of Medicine demonstrates that individuals with impaired glucose tolerance who participated in an exercise program while monitoring their diet were four times *less* likely to develop diabetes than those who neither exercised nor monitored their diet. The average time before a person developed diabetes when being treated with drugs was 3 years, whereas for those individuals in the exercise and diet program, the average was 11 years. In addition, the average cost of the drug intervention was \$29,000, compared with approximately \$8,000 for the lifestyle changes.
- **Arthritis:** The Agricultural Research Service has completed a study demonstrating the increased energy levels of sufferers of rheumatoid arthritis with daily participation in an exercise program.
- **Cholesterol:** In Melbourne, Australia, the Baker Heart Research Institute published a study showing that heart-healthy athletes have higher levels of good cholesterol (HDL) than non-athletes. Their data indicates that regular aerobic training will lead to increases in HDL which in turn, may lead to a decrease in the cholesterol (LDL) that causes atherosclerotic plaque.
- **Depression:** Improved confidence and self-esteem are just two of the benefits associated with just 10 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise. The Mayo Clinic reports that by also providing a positive distraction, as little as 10 minutes of exercise can greatly decrease an individual's level of both depression and anxiety.
- **Heart Disease:** The University of Missouri published a study indicating that those individuals who regularly participate in aerobic exercise are more likely to possess the ability within their muscle cells to break down triglycerides, the major artery-hardening fat, thereby reducing their risk of heart disease.
- **Osteoporosis:** Women between the ages of 75-85 suffering from osteoporosis can reduce their risk of falling by strength- and agility-training. Canadian researchers published a study in the Journal of American Geriatrics Society that basically dispelled the common belief that individuals suffering from osteoporosis should avoid exercise due to safety concerns.

If you want to start a fitness program to improve your health or help alleviate symptoms from a chronic disease or illness, I can help. As an ACE-certified Personal Trainer and Clinical Exercise Specialist, I am trained to work with your health care provider to design a safe and effective program for you.

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*look, feel, be better!*

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