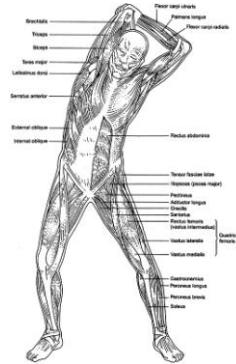


Ron Blehm, PT CEEAA Research Physical Therapist Portland VA Medical Center



- A Chronic Illness can take away as much of your life as a house fire!
- These situations can be scary and overwhelming
- We can assemble resources but you are the one's on the front lines
- I hope to give you some tools today that will enable you to fight back against the "fire" in your life.

“Clearly, the successful treatment of chronic disease involves much more than just the use of drugs. It is vital that any management is considered as part of a team approach with the involvement of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Dietician/Nutrition and possibly many others.”

Department of Neurology
Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, UK

“Having [A Chronic Illness] does not mean that you should sit down and stop being active. Actually, the opposite is true. Exercise, which includes being generally active, stretching, practicing good posture and doing specific exercises, should be a key component of your **daily life**”

Societe' de Parkinson Canada

The importance of Family and Friends and keeping your Social Circles cannot be over-emphasized. You must stay engaged in life if you hope to *have a life!*



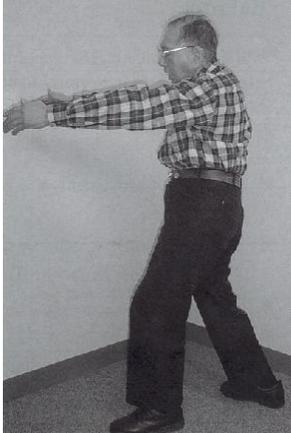
“More active people prolong their independence and rate a higher Quality of Life whether or not they have a chronic disease.”

“You have to be involved with other people ... you have to care about something: Goals ... Charities ... Church ... Family ... Hobbies. You have to dig in and take hold of something before life tries to wash you away.”



Younger Next Year: Crowley and Lodge 2007

Studies show that regular exercise has a positive effect on the general health of people with diseases or chronic conditions.



“Eight-five year olds demonstrated improved walking speed, improved oxygen uptake and lower BP after exercise. This lead to risk reductions and improved quality of life.”

“Individuals more than 90 years old increased functional capacity with *simple* muscle power training.”

Virtually all studies show that exercise also improves problems like:

- Fatigue**
- Digestion**
- Osteoporosis**
- Depression**
- Poor Memory**
- Constipation**
- Sleep Problems**

-Baylor College of Medicine website

“A dwindling memory and decreased concentration are generally caused by decreased blood flow to the brain and loss of brain cells.”

“Research shows that physical exercise may encourage the brain to work at optimum capacity by causing nerve cells to multiply, strengthening their interconnections and protecting them from damage”

Dr. Mao on Yahoo Medicine Feb, 26, 2008

“ ‘Forced Exercise’ seems to call on the body to strengthen and multiply the neurological connections with the rest of the body.”

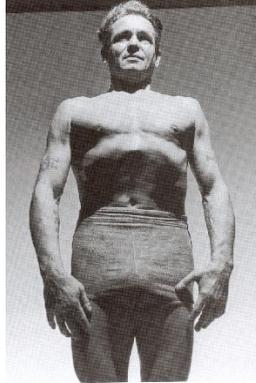
Ridgel, Vitek and Alberts 2009



So . . . When Shall We Start?

Lupus, Rickets, Polio and Rheumatic Fever as a child left Joseph Pilates bed-bound.

This is Pilates at age 65



Joseph Pilates, the founder of the Pilates Method of Controlled Movements.

Find a Workout Buddy!



Aerobics or Endurance

“Adaptations of the cardiovascular system to prolonged endurance training are similar in both young and old.”

“Those who participate in aerobic exercise are less likely to show declines in cognition.”

“Participation in regular exercise programs lead to higher levels of functional capabilities, maintenance of independence and improved quality of life.”

Flexibility

“Flexibility programs have been shown to have general health benefits for individuals with chronic disease.”

“Flexibility can be improved even in older adult patients through a low-intensity exercise program.”

“Back pain can be significantly reduced through a back flexibility program done 3x/week.”

“Spinal mobility may be decreased by up to 50% in individuals in their 70’s.”

Balance

“Balance training, more than any other type of exercise, may be easily incorporated into daily activities.”

“Adding additional tasks on top of balance exercise (standing on one foot while brushing your teeth) provides greater result than simply standing still.”

“Elderly patients who participated in balance training significantly reduced their falls risk.”

(Falls: One of the leading causes of death in older Americans)

Exercises that strengthen your muscles, while encouraging balance and coordination (Such as Tai Chi or Pilates) seem to make a lot of good sense!



Strength

“Long-term, resistive strength training results in substantial improvements in walking speed.”

“Low-intensity strength training resulted in improved gait stability and steadiness in disabled elderly patients.”

“Clinicians used a 12-rep max workout on otherwise healthy adults >65 y/o. Strength gains in the men were 112%. Strength gains in the women were 127%. They reported zero injuries from this work level.

Firefighters often “make a stand” at one house in order to save many others.

Its easier to keep what you have then to try and get it back after its “too late.”

I would encourage you to “make a stand” today, and start protecting what is most valuable in your life.

