

Active Ageing - NARI



**LIVING
LONGER
LIVING
STRONGER™**
COTA



Physical Activity Recommendations for Older Australians¹ (people over 65 years)

1. Everyone should do some physical activity regardless of age, weight, health problems or abilities
2. Be active every day in as many ways as possible, doing a range of activities that incorporate **fitness, strength, balance and flexibility**
3. Accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days
4. Start at a level that is easily manageable and gradually build up the recommended amount, type and frequency of activity
5. If continuing to enjoy a lifetime of vigorous physical activity, carry on doing so in a manner suited to capability (and in accordance with appropriate safety recommendations and guidelines).



1. National Ageing Research Institute National physical activity guidelines for older Australians Prepared for the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing 2009

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-physical-rec-older>



Why *progressive* resistance training?

- Muscle mass loss after 45 accelerates to ~ 5% per decade but PRT can prevent this
- Prevention and management of chronic conditions
- Improved mental health, confidence, self esteem
- Better balance & coordination.



Living Longer Living Stronger: History

- 1990s & ongoing: Evidence of benefits grows
- 1998: Rosario et al trial with post-menopausal women
- 1999: COTA and RMIT funded to investigate factors to promote participation by older people in strength training
- 2000: Initial implementation of *Living Longer Living Stronger*[™] with funding from VicHealth*
- 2003-04 to today: funded by Victorian Government *Seniors Go for your life.*



*Victorian Health Promotion Foundation www.vichealth.vic.gov.au



Living Longer Living Stronger™ grows

- By end 2003: 86 providers at 94 sites with ~ 5000 participants
- 2003-2010:
 - Initial increase in number of providers/venues
 - Number of Victorian providers is steady, participation has increased further: current estimate ~19,000
 - *Living Longer Living Stronger™* now in other states
 - Many non-endorsed providers offer similar programs
- 2011 and beyond: participation by older people in strength training **will** continue to increase.



What is *Living Longer Living Stronger*™?

- Endorsement scheme:
 - Criteria implemented by providers
 - Offered by fitness/leisure centres, community health and community facilities & personal trainers
- Industry change strategy:
 - Culture change for fitness sector
 - More cost-effective use of 'down time' initially an incentive
 - Professional development, support and advice for providers (coordinators & instructors)
 - Specification of minimum qualifications for instructors.



Endorsement scheme criteria

- Group sessions exclusively for people over 50 at regular time slots \geq twice/week
- Individual programs focus on progressive resistance training, plus balance and flexibility
- Programs reviewed regularly
- Low cost and no long term financial commitment
- Supervised by skilled, qualified instructors
- Opportunity for post-session socialising.



Outcomes for participants

National Ageing Research

Institute research² found:

- Significant improvements from baseline in quantitative measures of balance, gait, strength, function and self reported health and well-being measures over eight months
- Findings confirmed in focus groups and exit surveys



2. National Ageing Research Institute, *Effects of a community based strength training program on functional status and quality of life in older adults* 2008

http://www.mednwh.unimelb.edu.au/research/health_promotion.htm



Plus, over the past ten years we have seen...

- A change in perceptions about appropriateness of strength training for older people
- A 'culture shift' in (parts of) the fitness industry
- Greater support and referral by the health sector
- Victorian Government commitment to ensuring strength training is available across the state
- A new career option for older people as strength training/fitness instructors.



The last word from Sonja

“My hair is grey, I can’t see without glasses, I have more wrinkles than a goanna’s hind leg and my teeth are crumbling faster than the Twelve Apostles.

But I can still grow muscle!

At 72, I compete in power lifting, my bone density is still 5% higher than when I started 13 years ago. I can manage my back problems. I am learning to do handstands and balance people on my shoulders.

I am able to be active in my community.

I owe COTA and the LLLS program a great deal.”



Sonja Rutherford: a great supporter



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http://www.cotavic.org.au/healthy_and_active_ageing/living_longer

Living Longer Living Stronger™
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