Strength Training Can Boost Seniors’ Muscle Strength by 100%

Falls can be dangerous for seniors, and according to one expert those seniors who engage in strength training may be able to gain muscle. By gaining muscle they can become less susceptible to falls, which can lead to injuries such as bruises, lacerations and even fractures.

Falls are leading cause of injury and death in older Americans, according to the CDC. Reduced muscle strength, increased inactivity, more severe chronic health conditions and increased use of prescription medications are put seniors at risk for falls. Additionally, fall injury rates are almost seven times higher for older adults with poor health than for those with excellent health.

Earlier this month, Christopher Sciamanna, M.D. with Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center noted in an article that more than 800 Americans suffer a hip fracture each day. Many of these fractures are caused by falls. And, among those individuals who fell and suffered fractures, the majority of them were seniors with lower muscle mass and bone density.

However, according to Sciamanna, seniors can combat bone and muscle deterioration with strength training. Though this type of exercise may seem intimidating at first, he noted, helping them understand which weights to choose and when to up the resistance/weight can really pay off in the long run.

Strength training can help seniors gain up to three more pounds of muscle each year over those who don’t train, and, people as old as 80 have increased their muscle strength by 100 percent after a year of regular strength training. The training can be beneficial whether it is done in a gym or at home using elastic bands and other equipment. The most important thing is that the training works different areas of the body and keeps progressing over time.

“It’s important because if you can’t walk without a walker, you can’t really spend your golden years doing all the things you wanted to do,” stated Sciamanna.

For more information, click here to read the full article from McKnight’s.
Risk Factors for Depression May Shift as People Age, New Study

Because different types of problems will likely affect people at different times of life, Dutch researchers believe that common risk factors for depression change over time as well. In addition, when a risk factor is not common among peers, such as widowhood or poor health in youth, it can have an outsized effect on depression risk.

“A wide range of risk factors for depression is relevant across the entire life span,” stated lead author Roxanne Schaakxs of VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam. “However,” she added, “some risk factors expected to be strongly related to depression in certain ages, may actually affect other age groups to a larger extent.”

In order to see how risk factors for this complex condition affect people at various stages of life, as well as how much of an effect each risk factor has, researchers examined data from more than 2,000 adults who participated in two long-term studies about depression and anxiety. One study included individuals ages 18 to 65 and the other included participants who were ages 60 to 93 when the study started. Of all of the participants, a total of 1,431 people had major depressive disorder and 784 individuals had no symptoms or history of the condition.

The study included 19 different risk factors for depression, in different age groups, and compared individuals who had never been depressed with people who were suffering from depression at that time. Though most of the risk factors were seen to increase the likelihood of being depressed at any age (like low education, personality traits, unhealthy lifestyle, etc.), there were five risk factors that were more strongly linked to depression in certain age groups.

For seniors, low income was a greater risk for depression than it was in any other age group. Also, individuals who with risk factors that were “unexpected” for their age groups had a higher risk for depression than those found in other age groups where the same factor was more common, according to the research.

“General practitioners and therapists should not overlook risk factors for depression by assuming the risk factor is less relevant at a certain age,” Schaakxs advised.

To read more about this, click here to view the full article from Reuters.

Training Restores Some Vision After Stroke

A new study performed by researchers at the University of Rochester provides the first evidence that training can restore basic vision following stroke damage in the primary visual cortex. Between 250,000 and 500,000 people suffer vision loss to the damage to the visual cortex each year, according a Futurity.org article. It was long believed that patients who encountered vision loss due to a stroke would eventually see a stabilization of these defects after six months, and from there they could not get any better. This new research shows that there is actually hope for these patients to regain basic vision.

“We are the only people in the US currently using this type of training to recover vision lost after damage to the primary visual cortex,” stated study senior author Krystel Huxlin, professor of ophthalmology and director of research at the University of Rochester Medical Center's Flaum Eye Institute. “If you talk to the majority of clinicians, they still believe nothing can be done.”

Visual cortex strokes are viewed in a vastly different light from other types of strokes. Patients who suffer from a visual cortex strok are offered no hope of recovery and are generally advised to learn to adapt to their vision loss. Patients who suffer from other types of stroke, like those that damage the areas of the brain that control movement, are put into treatment/therapy right away and are usually able to recover significant mobility. Huxlin has set out to change that precedent and recently developed a sort of physical therapy for the visual system, which acts as a way of rerouting visual information around the dead areas of the dead primary cortex.

For the study, researchers created personalized software programs for 17 patients who suffered from cortical blindness. These software programs flash small circles of striped patterns or moving dots into areas of the patient's vision where they can no longer see. Patients report what they see—the orientation of the stripes, what direction the dots were moving, etc.
Though patients only guess correctly about half of the time when they first started using the software, over time they began to sense and eventually actually see enough of the patterns to answer correctly 80 percent of the time (on par with individuals with normal vision). Further clinical tests also showed that their blind fields were getting smaller.

“Patients go from nothing to a sensation of motion, to vision, albeit not quite normal vision,” explained study coauthor Matthew Cavanaugh, a student in the Neuroscience Graduate Program. “The hope is that we can now further refine our training methods to train the recovered vision to be even better, clearer, and more useful.”

Researchers are working on verifying these findings by studying how the blind field maps of a larger group of cortically blind patients change over time following a stroke without visual training. The results of this study could strengthen the justification for prescribing visual training to all patients who are capable as soon as possible.

According to the article, Huxlin estimates that any patient—regardless of age, blind field size, or how long ago they had a stroke—could have meaningful improvements in sight in about three months if they train twice a day, for 30 minutes each time, but recommends patients continue to train as long as they continue to improve.

For more on this new development, click here to read the full article.

**Canadian Brain Health Diet Shows Promise in Reducing Risk of Alzheimer’s Disease**

A recent article in Provider magazine discussed a new “brain-friendly” diet for individuals heading toward middle age, or older, which may help reduce the risk of Alzheimer’s disease. The creation of “brain friendly” diets, like the well-known Mediterranean Diet, is a growing field of study in the medical field and, according to the piece, preliminary research by Toronto-based scientists is encouraging.

The Canadian Brain Health Food Guide was created to influence individuals, as well as institutions, to make better food choices—choosing foods like beans, whole grains and nuts over prepackaged foods that lack the nutrients that scientists say are needed to protect brain cells and curb disease.

Carol Greenwood, a professor of nutrition at the University of Toronto and a leader in creating the Canadian brain health guide, told Provider that her group she and her fellow researchers wanted to push the concepts of the Mediterranean Diet further to make it more practical for Western followers. Some foods in the Mediterranean Diet may not be as available to those not living in major metropolitan areas, like certain plants and oils, and older individuals may not be as accepting of giving up their own food choices and instead are directed to limit rather than abstain from things like mashed potatoes, for instance.

“Our primary incentive is that while there has been a fair amount of epidemiological study in terms of relationships between nutrition and Alzheimer’s prevention, many of those studies were modeling the Mediterranean Diet, so much so that the Mediterranean Diet was starting to become the Holy Grail,” she explained.

Greenwood stated that when they examined the Mediterranean guidelines and saw that their push was for more plant-based consumption, her group developed the same style of a brain-friendly diet but in a narrower and more culturally accessible way for those living in places like Canada and the United States.

“The modeling we did was to give more information on foods you should be avoiding and how much of that you can tolerate in your diet. I think it is kind of like getting the ying and yang working in a global way,” she said. The basics on which foods to avoid most include red and processed meats, butter, hard margarine, cream, salty snacks and canned soup, among a longer list.

According to Greenwood, the importance for people in their 50s and well into their 70s to live healthier was extremely important in possibly staving off Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. She also noted that many lifestyle risk factors, such as obesity and high blood pressure, need to be addressed when people start thinking of retirement or even sooner to help prevent Alzheimer’s. Though this can be difficult for long term care centers due to costs and other considerations, Greenwood noted that there are ways to include items like whole-grain pastas and sweet potatoes into diets to improve overall health and possibly limit the chance of getting Alzheimer’s or dementia.
For more information on the Canadian Brain Health Food Guide, access this site. To read the full article from Provider, click here.

### Health Care Workers More Likely to Have Poor Dietary Habits

The *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* published a study earlier this month that shows that health care support workers are more likely to smoke or have poor dietary habits compared to those who work in other occupations.

For the study, researchers from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the University of Alabama at Birmingham studied data from more than 6,000 workers over the age of 45. The looked at clinical measures as well as behavioral risk factors related to heart disease. The findings showed that health care support workers—nursing assistants, therapy aids, etc.—had the lowest prevalence of “optimal” behavioral health habits, like diet, activity and smoking. In addition, health care workers had the highest prevalence (11.2 percent) of workers who smoked non-cigarette tobacco products (e.g. pipes or cigars).

There was some good news for health care workers in the results though—on average they had slightly better scores in regard to physical activity, cholesterol and blood glucose workers. Comparitively, health care practitioners like doctors and nurses, showed some of the best scores in the study.

As noted in an article in *McKnight’s Long Term Care News*, the study’s results “highlight the need for more public health programs targeting cardiovascular disease and related risk factors among workers,” researchers wrote. Among strategies they recommended for improving worker health included universal smoke-free policies, restrictions on mandatory overtime and paid sick leave. To read the full article, click here.

### The Top Five Conditions that Shorten Americans’ Lives—and Are Preventable

According to a recent study, obesity is the leading cause of preventable life-years lost in the United States. It steals more years that diabetes, tobacco, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, which are the other leading preventable health problems that shorten the lives of Americans each year.

Researchers from Cleveland Clinic and New York University School of Medicine studied data from 2014 to identify the main preventable causes of life-years lost. Their findings showed that obesity, diabetes, tobacco use, high blood pressure and high cholesterol were causing the greatest numbers of life-years to be lost. However, they also noted the needs of some individuals may vary a great deal from those of the U.S. population overall. For example, for a patient battling both obesity and alcoholism, the alcoholism may be a more important risk factor than the obesity, in spite of the fact that obesity is a more significant worry in the general population.

“Modifiable behavioral risk factors pose a substantial mortality burden in the U.S.,” said Glen Taksler, Ph.D., internal medicine researcher from Cleveland Clinic and lead author of the study in a recent press release. “These preliminary results continue to highlight the importance of weight loss, diabetes management and healthy eating in the U.S. population.”

According to the release, researchers examined the change in mortality for a series of hypothetical U.S. populations that each eliminated a single risk factor in order to gauge the number of life-years lost to each of the modifiable factors. They then compared the results with the change in life-years lost for an “optimal” population that eliminated all modifiable risk factors. Recognizing that some less common factors might place substantial burden on small population subgroups, they also estimated life expectancy gained in individuals with each modifiable risk factor.

“The reality is,” said Dr. Taksler in the release, “while we may know the proximate cause of a patient’s death, for example, breast cancer or heart attack, we don’t always know the contributing factor(s), such as tobacco use, obesity, alcohol and family history. For each major cause of death, we identified a root cause to understand whether there was a way a person could have lived longer.”

For more information, click here to read the full article from *HealthDay News*. 
IDPH Town Hall Meetings

The IDPH town hall meetings for 2017 have been scheduled. Please see below. Letters will be sent to the individual facilities in the regions prior to each meeting. Instructions for responding (will be included in the letter) or you can RSVP (at least three days before the scheduled meeting) to Lisa Reynolds via email at: lisa.reynolds@illinois.gov. Please include the date and location of the meeting in the Subject Line.

- May 23, 10 AM-Noon | Norridge Healthcare & Rehab Center | 7001 West Collum, Norridge IL, 60706
- June 13, 1-3 PM | Marion Regional Office | 2309 W. Main St., Marion, IL 62959
- July 13, 1-3 PM | CCNH/Brookens Building-Champaign | 500 South Art Bartell Drive, Urbana, IL 61802
- August 30, 1-3 PM | Willows Health Center | 4054 Albright Lane, Rockford IL 61103
- September 19 or September 21 (PENDING) | Friendship Village | 350 W. Schaumburg Road, Schaumburg, IL 60194
- September 28, 1-3 PM | Washington County Hospital | 705 South Grand Ave, Nashville, IL
- October 24, 1-3 PM | Knox County Nursing Home
- November 30, 1-3 PM | Dupage Convalescent Center | 400 North County Road, Wheaton IL 60817

May 2017 Observances

**May 6-12 is National Nurses Week:** The ANA has designated 2017 as the “Year of the Healthy Nurse.” This year’s theme, “Nursing: the Balance of Mind, Body, and Spirit” is all about celebrating nurses who lead the charge for health and wellness. Be sure to take time to celebrate the dedicated and hard-working nurses who help care for your residents each day. Click here to learn more.

**May 7-13 is National Hospital Week:** National Hospital Week celebrates hospitals and the women and men who support the health and wellbeing of their communities through dedication and compassionate care from the heart. For more information, click here.

**May 14-20 is National Nursing Home Week:** This year’s theme for NNHW is “The Spirit of America.” Every skilled nursing care center embodies a unique and vibrant spirit and community for residents, volunteers and staff alike. Acts of kindness, generosity and compassion from proud veterans, immigrants, and hardworking people of different faiths fill the walls of each center. Visit the NNHW page on www.ahcancal.org for more information.

**May 14-20 is National Women’s Health Week:** Each year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office on Women’s Health organizes NWHW in an effort to raise awareness about manageable steps women can take to improve their health. To find out more, visit https://www.womenshealth.gov/nwhw.

**May is Global Employee Health and Fitness Month:** To promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle to employers and their employees, the National Association for Health and Fitness and ACTIVE Life organize this international month-long observance each year. Employers everywhere are invited to participate in GEHFM by challenging their employees to create healthy moments, form healthy groups and more. Click here for more.

AHCA/NCAL Information

**Gero Prep Nurse Sale Ending Soon!**

Nursing Centers with RNs certified in gerontological nursing by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) are twice as likely to receive a 5-Star rating from CMS.

Recent analyses conducted by AHCA/NCAL show that nursing facilities with RNs who have been certified in gerontological nursing by the ANCC are twice as likely (48 percent as compared to 24 percent nationally) to have a 5-star rating from CMS.

AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep is the first step toward achieving ANCC certification. Nurses who complete the Gero Nurse Prep course experience a 96 percent pass rate on the ANCC exam.
Gero Nurse Prep is affordable and comes with 30 expertly developed CEUs for RNs.

Registration for the 68th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo in Las Vegas is Now Open
The excitement surrounding this outstanding event has been building for several months, and the time is now! Register today! Join AHCA/NCAL at the Mandalay Bay, October 15-18, for the event that promises to stack the chips in your favor. They have a great line up of speakers, networking events, plus a two-day Expo! Click here for more information.

2017-2018 AHCA Elections and Solicitation for Candidates
The 2017-2018 election cycle is open for AHCA members in good standing. The AHCA elections are for three officer positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer), one Independent Owner Representative, one Regional Multi-facility Representative and two At-large Representatives. AHCA members interested in running for an AHCA Board position may obtain the necessary candidacy materials online. Applicants must complete and electronically submit the AHCA candidacy materials by close of business on May 22, 2017. To submit completed materials or if you have any questions contact Christy Sharp.

Register Today for the AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing
Join AHCA/NCAL in Washington, D.C. on June 5 & 6 as they take your concerns directly to the Hill. You’ll be able to hear the latest on what's happening in Washington, meet with your Members of Congress IN PERSON and share ideas with you colleagues. Check CB.ahcancal.org for more information. The conference registration fee is complimentary to AHCA/NCAL Members and AHCA/NCAL Associate Business Members, and their spouses, and is accepted on a first-come basis. Register now and make your hotel reservations. Advanced Registration Deadline: May 8, 2017

National Nursing Home Week
Governor Rauner signed a proclamation last week (click here) proclaiming May 14-20 as National Nursing Home Week® (NNHW). This year’s theme is The Spirit of America! This is all about your center’s spirit and sense of community for residents, volunteers and staff alike. Acts of kindness, generosity and compassion from proud veterans, immigrants and hardworking people of different faiths fill every center. Don’t miss the opportunity to celebrate! Order products online or by phone, 800-321-0343. For planning resources and other information check out the official NNHW website.

National Assisted Living Week
The National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) revealed yesterday that “Family is Forever” is this year’s theme for National Assisted Living Week®. The annual, national observance provides a unique opportunity for residents, their loved ones, staff, volunteers, and surrounding communities to celebrate the individuals served in assisted living and learn more about this sector of long term care. For more info about NALW, click here.

IHCA PAC Information

Southern Illinois Golf Outing – April 21 – Thank You to Everyone Who Participated!
IHCA's 3rd Annual Southern Illinois Golf Outing was held at Stonewolf Golf Course in Fairview Heights, IL last Friday. IHCA would like to say thank you to everyone who showed up on rainy spring day to play some golf and support the IHCA PAC. We would also to thank ONR once again for being a title sponsor for this event!
2017 IHCA PAC Events
The IHCA and CDDACS PAC have several other fundraising events this year to promote our political efforts and raise dollars. Please mark your calendar for the following 2017 IHCA PAC events:

IHCA PAC Annual Baseball Outing - July 21
An event that quickly became a crowd favorite, 2017 marks the 5th annual IHCA PAC baseball outing at Wrigley Field in Chicago. Per tradition, we will be hosting our event at one of the famous Wrigley Rooftops, 3619 Sheffield Ave., for a contest between the World Champion Chicago Cubs and perennial favorite St. Louis Cardinals. Pricing is all inclusive. $250/per person.

Fall Golf Outing - September 11
For the flagship IHCA PAC event, we return once again to beautiful WeaverRidge in Peoria for our fall golf outing. Consistently ranked one of the best courses in the Midwest, this is a round of golf not to be missed. Pricing includes greens fees, golf, lunch and drinks. $150 per person/$575 per foursome.

Oksnevad 5K - September 12
The fastest growing IHCA PAC event, the Oksnevad 5K returns for its fifth year in 2017. For the third time, we will be running on the Peoria Riverwalk. Pricing includes registration, runner's goody bag and a sponsor t-shirt. $30 per person.

Please contact Kristin DiCenso at kdicenso@ihca.com or Matt Hartman mhartman@ihca.com to register or sponsor any of these events.

IHCA Information

IHCA Member Surveys
IHCA is continuously looking for ways to improve our customer service. In an effort to make better our association and provide more value for your membership dollar, we are conducting membership satisfaction surveys (for IHCA Member Centers and Associate Members) to gather your input. You should have received an email recently from IHCA Preferred Vendor NRC Health (surveys@myinnerview.com) that contained a link for you to complete the survey. I hope you'll take the few minutes to complete it—deadline to participate is May 19, 2017.

Thank you for your continued membership and support!

IHCA Excellence Awards
The nomination period for the 2017 IHCA Staff & Specialty Awards is now closed. Thank you to everyone who participated in this year’s program. We will be posting a list of all nominees on the IHCA Excellence Awards page in the near future. Winners will be announced during National Nursing Home Week (May 14-20, 2017).

The nomination forms for the new IHCA Excellence Award for Long Term Care Facilities and the LTCNA Nursing Awards will be available May 1. Nominations for these two programs will be due June 16, 2017.

Maitland-Warner Nursing Scholarship Applications NOW Available
Do you know a hard working nurse that could use some scholarship dollars to advance their education? The Maitland-Warner Long Term Care Nurses Scholarship fund is now accepting applications for scholarships for nurses. They will award scholarships of up to $1,000 for the 2017-2018 school year.

To qualify, an applicant:
- Must have completed the prerequisites for and be accepted into an RN or LPN program on a full-time or part-time basis.
- Must be working in an assisted living or long term care facility (either full-time or part-time).
- Must provide proof of satisfactory completion of the semester for which the scholarship is awarded.
- Should be willing to work as an RN or LPN in a long term care facility/program.

Click here to submit your application online (all items must be attached before you can submit) or Click here to download the printable application forms.
Have You Reserved Your Booth for the Annual Convention & Expo in September??

Now’s the time to get on board! The 67th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo, September 11-14, 2017, is a great way to connect with long term care owners, managers, administrators, nurses and more!

If you’re interested in exhibiting, visit the exhibitor page on our website or click here to view the Convention Expo Prospectus.

LTCNA Simulation Education for Nurses! Now Offering A La Carte Sessions!
LTCNA is now offering a la carte competency training sessions with their simulation mannequin, Geri Manikin! Get your nurses the training they need right in your center! The cost will be dependent on the amount of time spent in the center. Charter Memberships are also still available for centers. The fee for the membership is $2,000 and the center will receive 24 hours (4 6-hour days) of simulation time over the course of the year. For more information contact Debbie Jackson at djackson@ihca.com or 800-252-8988.

IHCA Member Spotlight

Calling IHCA Members – We Want to Feature Your Company Here!!!
Are you looking for a way to reach our members? Well, this is a great way to do just that! Our Member Spotlight gives our members a space to let us know what their company (or facility) is all about! (And to brag a little too if you want to!) Your Company Information could be seen here in an issue later this year!!

Has your company recently celebrated a milestone? Accomplished a goal? Undergone a major change? Do you have positive stories or news to share? Would you just like to get your name out there among your fellow IHCA members?

Ready to sign up for a member spotlight?! Contact Ashley Caldwell! Email acaldwell@ihca.com or give her a call today!