



SORRENTO - ITALY



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Strength Training For All Ages

We're all fairly conscious that the secret to healthy aging is staying active. For a long time, the focus, particularly for heart health, has been cardio-based, or even steps-based with advice to keep moving throughout the day leading to 10,000 step targets. While this is all highly beneficial, research increasingly shows that strength training has the most overall benefits to health for longevity.

The Body Without Strength Training

From the age of 30, the average adult loses 1-2 percent of muscle mass each year, along with significant declines in bone density. In the more extreme cases, muscle weakness leads to higher fall rates, and along with weaker bone structure, multiple fractures, which ultimately significantly degrades quality of life for anyone in this position.

The good news is that studies have shown that even adults in their 70s, 80s, and beyond can make significant strength gains within weeks of starting a well-designed program.

Why Strength Is More Than Muscle Size

Strength training offers benefits far beyond how you look, lift, or build muscle, it also:

- Improves bone density and reduces the risk of osteoporotic fractures.
- Supports joint health by maintaining the strength needed to support knees, hips, shoulders, and the spine.
- Enhances balance and reduces falls in older adults by up to a third, according to some estimates.
- Improves mood, sleep, and cognitive function.
- Helps control blood sugar, blood pressure, and vascular health.

What Strength Training Actually Involves

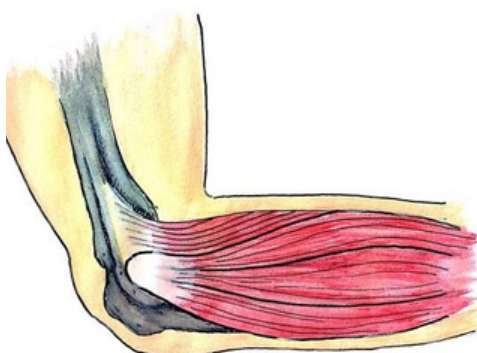
Building muscle doesn't always have to involve heavy weights or a strict gym routine. Effective strength training can include bodyweight exercises, resistance bands, machines, dumbbells, kettlebells, or functional tasks like carrying groceries or climbing stairs.

What matters most is the principle of progressive overload, gradually increasing the challenge so the body continues to adapt. Two to three sessions a week, focusing on the major muscle groups, is enough to produce remarkable benefits.

The Best Time to Start Is Now

A landmark study of adults over 90 years old showed that even frail nonagenarians can nearly double their leg strength in just eight weeks of supervised training. Strength training is one of the few interventions with such consistent, measurable benefits across almost every age group.

A physiotherapist is ideally placed to design a strength program that fits your body, history, and goals, particularly if you have painful joints, previous injuries, or are new to training. Have a chat with us to find out how to get started on your strength building journey in a way that suits you best.



PHYSIO FACT.
THE HUMAN HEART
PUMPS UP TO 200
MILLION LITRES OF
BLOOD DURING
THE AVERAGE
LIFETIME.

Brain Teasers

What can you hold without ever touching it?

You'll find me in Mercury, Earth, Mars and Jupiter, but not in Venus or Neptune. What am I?

Hip Impingement

Hip pain and stiffness with running, squatting and prolonged sitting can be a sign of hip impingement. Your physiotherapist can help diagnose this and guide your treatment.



Pincer Impingement Cam Impingement

Focus on Piriformis Syndrome

What Is Piriformis Syndrome?

The piriformis is a small, pear-shaped muscle buried deep in the buttock. It attaches from the sacrum at the base of the spine to the top of the thigh bone. Its job is to rotate and stabilise the hip, particularly during walking, standing, and changing direction.

The sciatic nerve, which runs from the lower back down the leg, passes very close to (and in some people, directly through) the piriformis. When the muscle becomes tight, overactive, or irritated, it can compress or irritate the sciatic nerve, producing symptoms that mimic sciatica.

What Are the Symptoms?

Piriformis syndrome tends to present with symptoms that develop gradually over weeks, progressively worsening. Commonly reported symptoms include:

- Deep aching or burning in the buttock
- Pain that worsens with sitting, climbing stairs, or driving
- Occasional shooting pain down the back of the thigh

- Pins and needles or numbness in the leg
- Tenderness when pressing into the buttock

What Causes It?

Piriformis syndrome usually develops due to a combination of factors. For some people, they may notice symptoms after spending prolonged amounts of time sitting on hard surfaces or after a sudden increase in activities such as hiking or running.

Predisposing factors include weakness in the surrounding gluteal muscles, forcing the piriformis muscle to activate more than usual.

Stiffness in the hip joint can also lead to increased tension through the muscle and altered biomechanics when moving. Poor sleep positions or asymmetrical daily postures can also contribute to the development of piriformis syndrome.

How Can Physiotherapy Help?

Your physio will perform an assessment to determine an accurate diagnosis and identify factors contributing to the condition, including lifestyle factors, tight and/or weak muscles, and stiff joints.

A clear treatment plan will be developed to address biomechanical issues, including gluteal strengthening to reduce the load on the muscle.

Where sciatic nerve irritation is present, specific nerve mobility work may be included, along with manual therapy and soft tissue release for short-term pain relief while strength is being built.

They will recommend changes to daily habits contributing to the condition, help plan daily movement adjustments, and provide an ergonomic assessment of your home and/or work setup.

None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your individual injury.



Answers: 1. A conversation 2. The letter R

Steamed Broccoli and Almond Salad

Ingredients

- 1 large head of broccoli
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup (35g) slivered or flaked almonds
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 30g Parmesan, shaved
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Sea salt and cracked black pepper, to taste



1. Chop the broccoli into bite-sized florets. Steam over boiling water for 3–4 minutes, until bright green and just tender. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.
2. Meanwhile, warm the olive oil in a small pan over medium-low heat. Add the almonds and cook for 2 minutes, stirring, until lightly golden. Add the garlic and cook for a further 30–60 seconds, until fragrant.
3. Tip the oil, almonds, and garlic over the broccoli and toss to coat.
4. Scatter over the shaved Parmesan, squeeze over the lemon juice, and season with salt and cracked pepper.

Toss gently and serve warm.


feelfit
Physiotherapy

136 Gympie Road
(cnr Brookfield Rd)
Kedron, QLD 4031

For Appointments Call
(07) 3357 1803

www.feelfit.com.au

rosemary@feelfit.com.au

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