

# Fitness: Muscle-Strengthening Activities

Making strength training a part of your whole fitness routine will help you carry, lift, and pick up things as you go about your day.

And muscle fitness can help protect your joints, lower stress, and build stronger bones.

Muscles get stronger when you use them. And stronger muscles are an important part of overall health.

Resistance training means using weights, exercise bands, equipment, or certain body exercises that stress your muscles slightly but not to the point of serious damage or injury.

You can also use your own bodyweight such as doing planks, push-ups, squats, or yoga to increase your overall strength.

Doing heavy housework and yard work on a regular basis can build muscle. This may include carrying groceries, washing walls, or pulling weeds.

Learn the proper form for each exercise, and then always use it. This helps you get the most out of each exercise. And can prevent injuries.

When you start slowly and use the right techniques, resistance training can be enjoyable and effective.

Remember to change things up. Variety keeps your interest up and injuries down. For example you can switch working the muscles in your upper body and lower body.

Now, if it's been a while since you've been active or have health problems, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before adding strength training to your routine. Your doctor will help you know how often and how long to exercise.

You can also get help setting your long-term exercise goals.

From using water bottles as weights to doing planks, you may be surprised by all the activities that count as strength building.

Find what lifts you (or what you can lift) and make it a fun part of every day.