F.I.T. WITH LYNNE

# The Not So Secret “Secret” to Aging Well



**Written by: Lynne Rutledge**
Personal Trainer and owner of F.I.T. with Lynne

As you age, staying active and maintaining a healthy lifestyle becomes increasingly important. It’s no secret that as you age your body naturally experiences a decline in muscle mass, bone density and physical function. The not so secret “secret” is that building in a simple exercise routine can slow this decline and help you to continue living independently and doing the things you love. Regular exercise certainly has many benefits for your physical health but also has a profound impact on your mental health and sense of well-being! Did you know that regular exercise can prevent or delay diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, or osteoporosis? Exercise is also key for falls prevention. It is never too late to start moving.

> **Frailty can be reversed!** In a study involving nursing home residents (average age of 88), a simple strength training program done for 14 weeks showed remarkable results. The program included 8–12 repetitions of 6 different exercises, 2 days a week. On average the participants added 4 pounds of muscle and lost 3 pounds of fat and increased lower body strength by 80% and upper body strength by 40%. These gains in strength enabled participants to do less wheelchair sitting and more walking. Their quality of life and daily functioning was significantly improved. (Westcott 2009)

If you have never done any formal exercise, it can feel extremely overwhelming to know where to start. It is important to consult with your doctor before beginning especially if you are inactive or have a chronic illness. That being said, it is safe for most adults over 65 years old to exercise. Start slowly. Sit less, move more! Set realistic goals for yourself. For example, begin with 5–10 minutes of walking most days of the week and build from there. Find movement you enjoy! Having a friend to exercise with can help you stay motivated as well.

Each person’s goals are unique. Think through why you want to exercise. Do you want to improve your balance to prevent falls? Do you wish to be strong enough to get out of a chair, out of bed, or manage stairs safely? Do you want to be confident walking outdoors? Perhaps you want to build a strength training program that is sport specific for golf or pickleball.

If you are unsure of what to do when it comes to exercise, hire a personal trainer. Hiring a personal trainer can provide many benefits such as personalized workout plans tailored to your specific goals and needs, and guidance for proper form to prevent injuries. A personal trainer can

offer support and encouragement to help you reach your fitness goals faster and more effectively than going it alone.

**The “secret” is out – start moving today!** All of the little changes you make can add up to one big difference!

If you would like help getting started, feel free to contact me. I provide one-on-one exercise training in the comfort of your own home!

**Lynne Rutledge**

fitwithlynne@gmail.com

226-751-2994