



## MEMBER UPDATE

### ReFresh

March 9, 2022

---



---

#### This week...

#### ***Weight Bearing Exercise – is this part of your fitness routine?***

From improving your cardiovascular system, to strengthening muscles and bones, to reducing the symptoms of depression – exercise is a critical anchor in your health and well-being routine.

#### **Types of Exercise and Their Health Roles**

There are varying types of exercise and each kind has specific benefits for improving health. These include:

**Range of motion exercises:** the goal of range of motion exercises is to move each of your joints through its full range of motion daily.

**Endurance exercises:** endurance exercises raise your heart rate and are important for improving your cardiovascular fitness.

***And our focus today...***

**Strengthening exercises:** this type of exercise helps by both building strength and improving joint mobility. Strengthening exercises can be broken down into two categories:

- Weight-bearing exercise: activities that work muscles and bones against gravity.
- Resistance exercise: activities that make muscles work against a weight or force. Different forms of resistance training include using free weights, weight machines, resistance bands, and your own body weight.

### **Benefits of Weight-Bearing and Resistance Exercise**

I admit, as I have 'matured', I have become more of a cardiovascular exercise enthusiast, likely due to the minimal equipment and time involved. It is so easy to strap on a pair of shoes to go on a hike, walk, or bike ride, rather than finding time to head to the gym.

Yet, the importance of weight-bearing and resistance exercise cannot be overlooked and should be included in exercise plans because this type of exercise has important health benefits, including:

- building and maintaining healthy bones
- enhancing cognitive function

### **Healthy Bones**

During weight-bearing exercise, bones adapt to the impact of weight and the pull of muscle by building more bone cells. Consequently, the bone becomes stronger and denser. In addition to improving strength and joint mobility, weight-bearing exercise can reduce your risk of fractures as well as your risk of conditions such as osteopenia and osteoporosis. The muscles you develop with this type of exercise also provide a great amount of support to your bones, and help protect your joints by increasing your body's coordination, balance, and flexibility.

### **Cognitive Function**

Lifting weights has also been strongly associated with better brain performance, as those who regularly perform this type of exercise improve their overall cognitive functions. According to an analysis of more than 20 published studies in 2019 from the journal **Psychological Research**, people

who performed resistance exercises such as lifting weights experienced enhanced attention, reasoning, and memory.

As well, research has shown that lifting weights can slow or even halt degeneration, over a long period, in brain areas particularly vulnerable to Alzheimer's disease.

### **Types of Exercises:**

Now that you know the importance of  weight-bearing exercise, here are examples to incorporate into your workout regime!

- Brisk walking, jogging and hiking (Yeah!)
- Yoga
- Dancing
- Step aerobics and stair climbing
- Soccer & basketball
- Racquet sports like tennis, racquetball, pickle ball, & badminton
- Golf – *yes, swinging that club and packing that bag qualify – woohoo!*
- Tai Chi

[Click here](#) and watch this 2 ½ minute video on 5 weight-bearing exercises to do at home.

I invite you to introduce more weight-bearing and resistance training activities into your fitness routine over Spring Break, and return to school stronger 😊

### **Sources**

CBC | [Weight training may fix age-related 'potholes' in brain's highways](#)

Eat This, Not that! | [One Secret Side Effect of Lifting Weights You Didn't Know, Says Science](#)

Harvard Health Publishing | [Slowing bone loss with weight-bearing exercise](#)

Prevention | [4 Best Exercises You Can Do For Strong Bones](#)

University of Sydney | [Strength training can help protect the brain from degeneration](#)

Very Well Health | [Weight-Bearing Exercises and Their Health Benefits](#)

WebMd | [Weight-Bearing Exercise: 8 Workouts for Strong Bones](#)

If you would like to contribute, or have ideas about what you would like to see in the **ReFresh** series, we would love to hear from you: contact [rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca](mailto:rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca).



