

## Exercise Forever

by Maureen E. Hook, Ph.D.

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For those of you who are somewhat reluctant about exercise, as I tended to be, this information may motivate you to become more dedicated and faithful about it. If you grew up in the 1950s, you were active playing games like "kick the can," jumping double dutch, riding bicycles all over your town, etc. Teenagers walked a lot of places, instead of driving. There was no need to engage in structured exercise. Fast forward to life in the 21st century, and everyone knows how things have changed. The latest research is telling us that, even if you've previously been sedentary, the benefits of starting an exercise program or staying active by shoveling snow, pruning the rose bushes, etc. are considerable and will extend your life and its quality to whatever age you end up living to be. So, add this to the list of other factors that will extend your life and its quality--not smoking, moderate alcohol consumption, and having adequate financial resources.

Data backing up this assertion comes from several sources. An Australian study published in fall 2013 found that, men aged 65-83, who exercised 5 or more times per week (30 minutes per session) were significantly healthier than their sedentary peers, even when researchers controlled for factors such as smoking, education level, etc.

Another study from Britain (University College London) which appeared in the Feb. 2014 issue of the British Journal of Sports Medicine looked at exercise benefits for those who began exercising in middle age. Formal exercise was not required. Researchers considered 1 hour per week of activity, engaging in such things as gardening, cleaning, walking at a brisk pace, and even dancing, as being active. The subjects were both men and women, aged 55-73, who were disease-free at the beginning of the study. They then followed the subjects over an 8-year period. What they found is very encouraging. The late-starting exercisers (after the age of 50) had almost as good outcomes as their continually-active peers concerning chronic diseases like diabetes, memory issues, and physical incapacity. Moreover, the late-starters were 7 times more healthy than their sedentary peers. The message here, then, is extremely hopeful. The participants not only lived longer, but their quality of life was also better, too. You can begin exercise at a relatively late point in life (your 50s) and still reap substantial benefits for your longevity and overall quality of life.

Gretchen Reynolds, a writer for the New York Times, commented about the study, "...if you don't already dance, wash your car, and, if your talents allow (hers don't) combine the two." In other words, KEEP MOVING as much as you

## Exercise Forever – Cont'd

can. You don't even have to join a fancy gym. Activity of any kind will suffice and ultimately save you from physical disability, depression, and chronic disease.

([http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/exercise-to-age-well-regardless-of-age/?php=true&\\_ty...](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/exercise-to-age-well-regardless-of-age/?php=true&_ty...))



### Chicken Smarts

**Hook Law Center:** Kit Kat, are chickens smart?

**Kit Kat:** You bet they are! People are always underestimating these smart creatures. That is why factory farming of chickens is such a shame. It stifles many of the natural instincts that chickens have. Factory farming of chickens is the type of farming in which chickens are not allowed to roam free, but are cooped up in tight confinement. When this happens, hens cannot tend to their eggs like they normally would if allowed to roost as they would like. Before they are even hatched, hens that are allowed to incubate their eggs, are communicating with their offspring. They can sense when the egg is cold, which prompts her to shift position or turn the egg. If everything is OK, she knows that, too, by a purring-like sound that the egg emits.

Hens are great teachers, too. If her chicks are not eating the right thing, she scratches the ground and makes a lot of noise. They soon get the point. If danger is near, she also communicates that with a special call, and they come running. Scientists tell us there are 24 different vocalizations that chickens have. Baby chicks watch their mothers carefully. If they see her turn in a direction, they turn in unison like they were all wired with headsets. No matter how many chicks she has, they follow her in the yard like little soldiers. So don't be fooled by the small head size. Chickens are plenty smart. Next time, you are around them, just watch. They will definitely surprise you!

(Ruthanne Johnson, "Who you calling a birdbrain?" [All Animals](#), May/June 2014, p. 31.)

## Upcoming Events

- Andrew Hook and Shannon Laymon-Pecoraro will be speaking on Financial Exploitation at the Virginia Department for Aging Rehab Center on **May 30, 2014** at 9:00 am.
- Jessica Hayes will be speaking on Hook Law Center's Practice Area's at Westminster Canterbury on **July 1, 2014** at 10:00 am.

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