

WHY Muscle IS MEDICINE

Well, I just love this topic. As the owner of a specialized resistance band strength-training studio and health coach, I fully believe, witness in my clients, and personally experience, that the key factor in vitality, in aging without chronic pain, degenerative illness, depression, osteoporosis and so much more is building

muscle through strength training. Science and studies prove that having some muscle on the body is a crucial factor to a healthier life in every way.

When it comes to our optimal health, most think cardio health and nutrition reign supreme, and while vital components to our wellbeing, so, too, is our muscle mass.

I'm not talking about an incredibly lean, sculpted body-builder or pro athlete physique. Simply adding some muscle to your body can be a real game changer in your overall health. Ultimately, it's the gift that keeps on giving, both today and in the years to come.

By the age of 30, our overall muscle mass begins to diminish and by the age 60 even faster, diminishing by 3 to 5 percent each year. And in our 80's, we begin to lose 50 percent of our muscle mass. Loss of muscle makes performing everyday tasks more challenging but it also makes us more susceptible to chronic disease and a host of health challenges.

Why is muscle the key to our longevity, vitality and well-being? First, our muscle mass is directly linked to our overall bone health and our joints. When we contract our muscles, it places force on the bone, which stimulates the bone to strengthen. Simply put, muscle helps reduce osteopenia, osteoporosis, and sarcopenia (the loss of our skeletal muscle mass and strength). Sarcopenia is the muscle-wasting process, is a natural occurrence as we age, and lends to a host of health challenges. Additionally, as we age, we naturally become more carbohydrate intolerant and insulin resistant. Building muscle helps maintain healthy blood sugar levels. Our muscle works together with our insulin to clear glucose (sugar) from our blood to maintain healthy levels. Muscles secrete chemicals that help our immune system, hormonal health, and metabolic health too. Dr. Tyna Moore describes this as literally "building a suit of armor" to "protect and bolster our immune system." So maintaining muscle mass can be a real game changer in our overall ability to fight off acute or chronic illnesses.

Heading into our 30s and beyond, muscle mass is truly medicine for our body. We can offset chronic illness and our ability to fight various diseases by putting on muscle mass beyond just an attractive physique. It's a crucial component to fight against the effects of aging and the challenges of illness.

Another fabulous benefit is that muscle burns fat. The afterburn after a strength-training session lasts for hours compared to the time engaged in cardio activity. In running, for example, our calorie burn is the duration of our run. The metabolic afterburn after a session of strength training lasts for hours, and even at rest, our bodies are burning more calories with muscle mass. Strength training lowers blood pressure, improves cardio health, reduces

pain, and helps our overall immune function, energy, and even our sleep.

Finally, strength training and building muscle is a potent antiaging mechanism. With adequate muscle, we simply stay looking and functioning younger longer. It benefits our joints, our brain, mobility, metabolism, mood, hormones, energy, and sleep, all while maintaining healthy skeletal muscle that helps our overall vitality and longevity. It's ultimately medicine for our body, and truly the gift that keeps on giving as we resist the inevitable passage of time.

If you are new to strength training, seek out the help of a professional to guide you in proper form and best practices. It requires proper form to prevent injury, and the best practices of adequate nutrition, hydration, rest, and recovery. It need not be a daunting endeavor. Just two to three short sessions per week, when fully maximized, can provide fun, confidence, and amazing benefits to truly improve every aspect of your life.



Carlene Murray is a Certified Health/Wellness & Life Coach, Nitro Nutrition health pro, and

owner of Board30 Naples, a unique full-body approach to fitness specializing in HIIT resistance band training. Also a Florida REALTOR®, Carlene brings her passion to Real Producers, serving her clients and community to help others achieve optimal health and wellness of mind, body, and spirit.

CarleneMurray.com
Board30Naples.com
239.260.5653

