

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for January 15, 2024**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about muscle loss as we age, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

I am finding that the adage "Use it or lose it, really is true." I hurt my back in September. Nothing too serious, but it took me out of my regular exercise routine for about twelve weeks. Now that I am back to using small dumbbells, I'm realizing how much my strength has decreased in just that short amount of time.

When I worked for Abbott Nutrition, one of the teams I was a part of focused on nutrition for aging adults. A challenge our dietitians wanted to tackle was sarcopenia. Sarcopenia is the loss of muscle mass and strength that occurs with advancing age. A 2012 journal article, "Nutrition and Sarcopenia: A Review of the Evidence and Implications for Preventive Strategies" gives a great overview of this topic.

According to authors Robinson, Cooper, and Sayer, preventing sarcopenia starts when we are young. Muscle mass and strength in later life are a reflection of both the rate of muscle loss and the peak attained in early life. But how does this begin to happen as we age?

Adults will consume 25% less food from age 40 to 70. There are a variety of reasons, like eating less often and eating smaller meals. The concern is that older adults are not consuming the nutrition they need to maintain muscle mass. The nutrients that have been most consistently linked to sarcopenia and frailty in older adults are vitamin D, protein, and antioxidants like carotenoids, selenium, and vitamins E and C.

Protein is essential, because protein is made up of amino acids, and amino acids are the building blocks of muscle in our bodies. We often think of protein as meat, like lean cuts of beef, pork, and lamb and lean poultry. Other great sources are fish, beans, and eggs.

The mechanics of how vitamin D relates to normal muscle strength is more complex and there are both direct and indirect roles that vitamin D plays. Vitamin D deficiency is common among older adults. It will not surprise you that dairy products are a good source of vitamin D, because

they are fortified. Surprisingly, fish is a great way to get vitamin D. Rainbow trout is highest in vitamin D followed by salmon and tuna. Mushrooms can also be a good source.

There are many research studies about the best time of day and the best amount of time of sun exposure to produce vitamin D. This is because too much exposure to UV light increases the chance for skin cancer. There seems to be agreement that the best time of day for vitamin D production is close to noon. Studies show between 5 and 30 minutes a few days a week is optimal.

Fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants. Carotenoids include beta-carotene, lycopene, and lutein. Make it a goal to eat different colors of vegetables- spinach, kale, corn, orange bell peppers, tomatoes, watermelon, pink grapefruit, cantaloupe, broccoli, and carrots.

Most research shows a benefit to incorporating physical activity, specifically resistance exercise training. One important consideration is that muscle mass later in life is affected not only by the rate of muscle loss, but also the peak attained earlier in life. Therefore, increasing muscle strength early in life and maintaining it during adult life are important factors.

If weights make you nervous or just don't seem to be worth the investment, remember that your own body weight is a great place to start. Gravity is a strong force. Planks, pushups, squats, lunges, and abdominal crunches are all a way to build your strength.

And now let's see what's new from OSU Extension: The next series of ServSafe Manager training will be February 7, 14, and 21 with the proctored exam on February 28. Are you looking for some help to better Manage Your Money? Join our online class Thursday evenings, February 1, 8, 15, and 22 to be empowered to take control of your financial situation. Registration for all these programs is available on our facebook page or our website [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu).

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and empower our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). Make it a healthy day!