

FITNESS FACTS

Three Ways To Stay In Shape As You Get Older

by Gary Player

(NAPSA)—As a professional golfer, it has always been important to me to stay in shape—and you can do so, too. As a matter of fact, my commitment to health and fitness has been a big part of my success in golf, winning tournaments over the course of five decades. However, as I get older, I realize that it takes a little bit more stretching, a little more training and a little more recovery time to keep in shape.

Most older people face such struggles, no matter how athletic they have been throughout their lives.

Importance of Staying Fit

Staying fit is extremely important at any age, and not just for athletes. It can lead to improved sleep, weight control, concentration and mood.

Unfortunately, the current generation of U.S. baby boomers has higher rates of obesity and related health conditions than members of the previous generation, according to a recent study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. It's important for you to keep active as you get older to help stave off high blood pressure and cholesterol, heart disease, stroke and diabetes, as well as other medical conditions that seniors often face, such as osteoporosis and depression.

Keeping in shape can also reduce the likelihood of falls and help you remain independent for years to come. For instance, regu-



Golf legend Gary Player says you can be fit at just about any age.

lar jogging increases men's life expectancy by 6.2 years and women's by 5.6 years, the Copenhagen City Heart Study found.

Fortunately, you can get in shape at just about any age. Consider the more than 10,000 adults over the age of 50 who participate every two years at the National Senior Games presented by Humana. They're an excellent example of people who not only recognize the importance of fitness but excel at multiple athletic activities.

Three Tips

You don't need to be a super-athlete to stay in shape but it's important to get out there and do something. Here are three tips to help you keep fit:

Fitness Classes. Many health plans offer fitness classes—such

as SilverSneakers through Humana Medicare Advantage—or yoga to give older individuals a fun, easy way to stay in shape. Staying fit in a group setting can be motivating and help you stay social.

Health Screenings & Annual Physicals. Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, all Medicare members now have access to one free annual wellness visit. Many preventive screenings, including type 2 diabetes and various cancers, are now also covered. Meeting with your primary care physician will give you more detailed, personalized information on what you can do to get and stay in shape.

Exercise Like a Kid. Just because you're older doesn't mean you can't exercise like a kid. After all, a recent American Cancer Society survey found that women are more likely to be physically active if it feels more like play and less like work. Simply jump on a bike or play an interactive video game, such as Wii bowling or—my favorite—Wii golf. You can also find multigenerational playgrounds across the country to help stay in shape.

Learn More

You can find further facts and tips on fitness online at www.humana.com.

• *Mr. Player, a well-being ambassador for Humana, is the most successful international golfer of all time, and is an avid supporter of physical fitness for all ages.*