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## The Slow Creep of Muscle Weakness



**M**ost of us have heard about the dangers of osteoporosis, an age-related condition that results in weakened, easily broken bones. But as we age, we don't think much about losing muscle strength. **Sarcopenia**, the medical term for **muscle loss**, develops gradually. It begins around age 35, but at first the loss is slow—about one-half of one percent per year—and most of us are strong enough that we do not notice significant loss of strength for another

10–15 years. Then, somewhere in our 60s, the groceries start getting heavier, stairs feel a little steeper and jars become harder to open.

**Loss of strength happens to everyone**, even world-class athletes. Scientists say that muscle loss starts when nerve cells that stimulate muscle cells die. The muscle cells no longer function, and soon they die, too. As we age, we also make less of the hormones that promote muscle growth, and the rate at which we make muscle protein slows. This process is accelerated in people with little physical activity in their lives.

The good news is that **loss of muscle strength can be slowed**. Aerobic exercise such as walking, swimming and bicycling won't do it, though. The key is **resistance (strength) training**. Resistance training causes microscopic tears in muscle cells. When the body heals these tears, the cells are made stronger and more functional than they were before.

No one is too old to benefit from resistance training. Regardless of your present condition, we can design **a personalized strengthening program that will help slow or even reverse muscle loss**. You will learn how to use resistance equipment safely and effectively. Strength gains can be seen in as few as four weeks, and often balance and mobility improve, too. Talk to us today so that muscle weakness doesn't creep up on you.