

## **Ways to Slow the Ageing of Joint**

A large percentage of the 'aches and pains' that physiotherapists treat can be attributed to ageing joints. Over time the joints in the human body wear down, age and lose their 'shock absorbing' capabilities. Thankfully, many things can be done to slow down the ageing process. Maintaining joint health is more essential than ever as people are living longer lives. The following are several tips to extend the use of your joints:

**Strengthening.** Muscles stabilize joints and work as shock absorbers to prevent unnecessary stress and load on the joints and cartilage.

**Weight.** Maintaining a healthy weight decreases the pressure on joints.

**Posture.** Slumping, slouching or standing unevenly places abnormal stress on joints. Proper posture maintains good joint alignment preventing stress on areas of the joint not meant for carrying load and helps to equally distribute load.

**Choose exercise wisely.** If your joints have already begun to 'creak and ache', avoid high impact activities and exercises that focus on large amounts of jumping. Low impact activities such as biking, tai-chi, elliptical and swimming are just few of many options.

**Technique.** Even a 'good exercise' can become a 'bad exercise' when done incorrectly. Proper alignment and technique with exercises will maximize the gain achieved and prevent undo harm. If uncertain ask a physiotherapist, coach or trainer to review exercises.

**Warm up.** Warming up, and loosening joints prevents unneeded muscle injury and decrease likelihood of muscle injury.

If joint pains have begun, seek treatment. It is easier to treat acute conditions and prevent further harm then addressing chronic conditions.

By: Kendra Usunier, B.M.R., P.T.