



DYNAMIC AGING

Move It or Lose It!

My husband and I were using Roget's Thesaurus to come up with a title for this column, which began in the October 5 issue of the Bridgton News. We were amazed at the adjectives for the word "aging": crumbling, declining, developing, fading, fermenting, getting on, maturing, mellowing, senescent, slumping, stale, waning, wasting away, wearing out.

These terms are all dynamic which means they are states of change. At first we laughed yeah, we can relate to some of these changes, as I'm sure you all can. However, upon closer examination there is only one of Roget's adjectives that is a positive dynamic when it comes to the health of our bodies: "developing". And, I'll add another: "building". So, let's focus on building up and developing as we age. No matter what condition you start out in, or how out of shape you are, or what chronic disease you may be living with, there is a way to get healthier. We can't change our starting place, but we can choose which way to move forward from here.

"One of the best ways to build and maintain healthy bones is through exercise," notes Professor Helmut Minne, International Osteoporosis Foundation Board member. Minne is also the author of the 2005 report: Move it or Lose it, which kicked off a three year lifestyle campaign to fight osteoporosis.

"Because bone is living tissue, which renews itself continuously, it requires regular stimulation from physical activity. Like muscles, bones should be used regularly or they will deteriorate. Weight bearing and high impact exercise (dancing, walking, jogging, sports, strength training) is required to stimulate bone formation, and to help prevent the loss of density".

There are several FREE exercise venues in the Lake Region to stimulate the bone formation the experts talk about. Join Bea MacDonald at the "Step into Fitness Walking Program" every Monday or Friday, 5 7 pm, at Lake Region High School in Naples (6473 212). Each Wednesday morning, 10 11 am, at the Casco Village Church, Bev White (627 4179) leads "Hep The Step" Women's Hop. Or, join Frances Nemo (647 4134) in the exercise class that runs every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 10 am at the Bridgton Town Hall.

The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine tells us that putting stress on the bones through physical activity and exercise encourages the bones to increase their calcium content. Exercise does more than increase calcium. It may also slow down mineral loss, help maintain posture and improve overall fitness to reduce the risk of falls. So, move it don't lose it, when it comes to bone health!