

## Topic 2

# Age no bar to a strong and healthy body

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**Between the ages of 30 and 80, we lose about one-third of our strength if we don't do anything about it. Muscle mass is replaced by fatty and connective tissue. An unwelcome development because the weight we have to carry tends to increase whereas muscle strength decreases.**

### **Age is no excuse for physical weakness.**

“Old and strong” – at first glance that seems like a contradiction in terms. Many people associate ageing with frailty and weakness. Although geriatricians have long recognised the problems associated with a major loss of muscle mass, it was felt that strength training would endanger the health of the elderly. However, in recent years, scientific evidence has shown that the elderly – both those with and without existing physical limitations – can achieve a quantifiable increase in muscle strength and greatly improve their everyday functional mobility by doing targeted strength training. In addition, it may be appropriate to do supplementary coordination training as well as strength training.

Studies have shown that health-oriented strength training even by the very elderly can stimulate muscles and strength. The greater the loss of strength the more impressive the training results. After 12 weeks training, elderly residents in a care home showed average strength increases of more than 100 % and an improvement in functional mobility of more than 20 %. (Connelly, D. M.: Resisted exercise training of institutionalized older adults for improved strength and functional mobility: a review. Topics of Geriatric Rehabilitation, 15 (2000): 6-28).

Strength training can help the elderly retain their independence and mobility and is therefore a guarantor for quality of life.

### **Should older adults train differently than young ones?**

Not necessarily because the biological principles are the same for both young and old. However, there are several points to be borne in mind. As we get older, tissue loses its elasticity. This applies in particular to blood vessels, which lose water. Such a process can be clearly seen in our skin which develops wrinkles as we get older. The same applies to other tissue such as tendons, ligaments and muscles, where the loss of water makes them less flexible. In addition, metabolic activity declines and fewer hormones are produced. For that reason, older adults should start off more gently and increase the weights more gradually than younger adults. The introductory phase, which is partly designed to restore natural mobility, should, therefore be somewhat longer. The medical evaluation offered by Kieser Training or your own doctor can help resolve any uncertainties.

The basic tenet is: Whatever your age, it's always the right time to start health-oriented strength training.

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