



Health & Wellbeing



Zoe Birch is a Chartered Physiotherapist and founder of PhysioMotion, who operate three London clinics as well as providing physiotherapy at home. We're very pleased to publish her first article for SEBRA NEWS **W2**.

STAYING STRONG FOR LONGER: RESISTANCE TRAINING FOR OLDER PATIENTS

As we get older, it's important to keep ourselves mobile and strong to maintain our independence and vitality.

The two main causes of older patients becoming physically weaker and losing their balance are sarcopenia and adiposity.

Sarcopenia is the progressive and generalised loss of skeletal muscle mass and strength. Basically, your muscles waste away through lack of use. Adiposity is being severely overweight or obese.



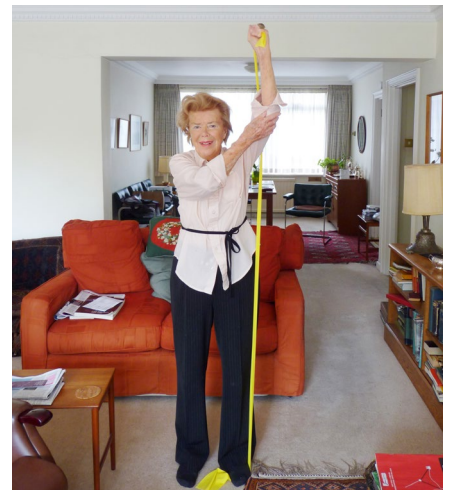
Both of these conditions affect our ability to activate our muscles to perform every-day activities, such as getting out of bed, standing up from a chair, or reaching into the bottom cupboard. The more these become a challenge, the more we avoid doing them and rely on assistance from others or equipment. This result is that our bodies get weaker and weaker and we become fearful of 'challenging' tasks. Often this is what robs us of our independence.

WHY TRY RESISTANCE TRAINING?

According to the latest research, resistance training has shown the greatest benefit to older people for maintaining muscle strength and independence. Resistance training is "a form of exercise that improves muscular strength and endurance when you move your limbs against resistance provided by your body weight, gravity, bands, weighted bars or dumbbells."

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF RESISTANCE TRAINING?

1. Increased muscle strength and mass
2. Reduced risk of osteoporosis
3. Reduced risk of cardiac disease and type 2 diabetes
4. Improved sleep



5. Reduced depression

6. More energy and the ability to move without support

It's never too late to start resistance training! Even if you're already finding some daily activities challenging, these types of exercise can improve your strength and balance.

The photos we've shown here give a couple of examples of exercises that can suit all abilities.

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