



MARCH 2016

Surprising Skills That Improve With Age

ESSENTIAL PHYSIOTHERAPY

Many of us associate aging with a decline of skills and quality of life. However, the truth is not as black and white as this. While certain skills and functions do tend to suffer as we age, surprisingly there are many abilities that actually improve as we grow older.

Recent studies have shown that happiness is U-shaped, proving that the mid-life crisis is real, with the ages between 40-60 holding the highest amount of stress and responsibility for adults. It seems that happiness increases steadily after this period, with the average 80 year old reporting themselves to be as happy as the average 20 year old.

There is also evidence that your beliefs about aging can act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you are positive about aging, then your experience will be more positive than if you have negative beliefs about it.

It's not only good news about your mental health though. Studies have also shown that while your short-term memory might decline, other skills such as creativity can actually increase. One of the biggest reasons for a decline in skill and function is the disuse that comes with retirement from work. Keeping active and mentally stimulated can be enough to keep your skills up to speed.

It has also been shown that confidence grows in both genders as we age. Making decisions becomes easier as we know ourselves better and have a wealth of experience to draw on when a tricky situation arises.

Certain physical skills such as strength and agility might decline, however it seems that other aspects of physical ability might increase, including endurance. There are many triathletes who are in their 70s, 80s, and unbelievably even in their 90s. In the absence of any serious disability, it might be the case that age is an excuse rather than an actual hindrance to being active.

Verbal ability and vocabulary are also skills that improve as we age, which may explain why crosswords are so popular with the elderly.

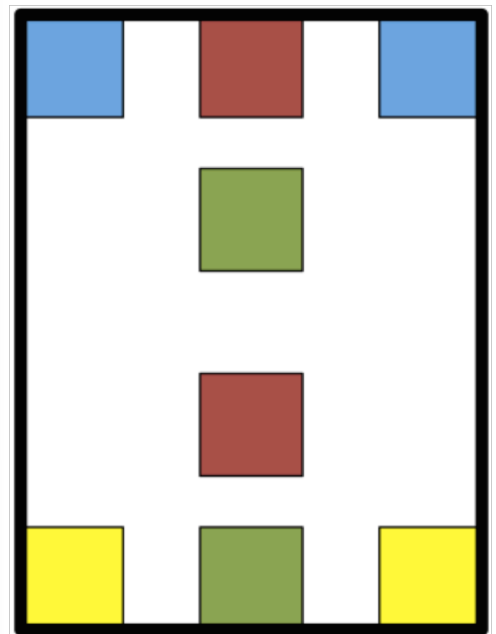
Making the most of your abilities at every age is important, so try not to let age be a barrier to trying new things and keeping active.

Physiotherapists are dedicated to helping people stay active at any age and can help you with achieving your goals. Speak to your physiotherapist for more information.



Brain Teaser

Connect the squares with the same colours to each other without crossing any other lines or going outside of the box.



PhysioTip

If you have to sit for work, set a timer that reminds you to stand up and stretch every 30 minutes.

Golfer's Elbow

(Medial Epicondylitis)

Golfer's elbow is defined as chronic degeneration of the tendon on the inside of the elbow, usually due to overuse. As its name implies, it is a condition common in golfers. However, as with all sporting injuries, this condition can affect anyone. Golfer's elbow is similar to Tennis elbow, occurring on the inside of the elbow rather than the outside.

What are the symptoms?

Typically, someone suffering from this condition will experience pain on the inside of the elbow, forearm and possibly extending down to the hand. The pain will be worst with activities that require gripping of the hand and movements of the wrist. Less common is the experience of pins and needles in the hand.

How does it happen?

The exact cause of this condition is unknown, however it is generally thought to occur when the forces transmitted through the tendon become too great. This can be due to

increased demands on the tendon or reduced quality of the tendon tissues.

As the tendon is attached to muscles that bend the wrist and provide grip strength, activities such as golf, rock climbing or manual work that involve gripping objects can easily create forces that damage the tendon.

Conversely, factors such as poor blood supply or simply the normal processes of aging can reduce the quality of the tendon. If the tissue is not functioning well, then even simple but repetitive movements in an office job can cause Golfer's elbow.

There are a few other known contributing factors for Golfer's elbow, such as poor posture, neck dysfunction, a recent change in activity and a history of trauma, such as a fall onto an outstretched hand.

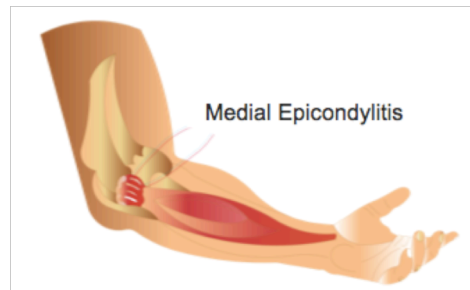
What is the treatment?

Golfer's elbow usually develops slowly, and healing can be a long process. The first step to effective treatment is accurate diagnosis, as many other conditions have similar symptoms and need to be excluded first by a medical professional.

Once a diagnosis of golfer's elbow has been confirmed, treatment is aimed at allowing tissues to heal and regenerate. This will require a certain level of rest, and changes to the forces affecting the tissues, sometimes through bracing or taping.

Specific exercises have been shown to assist tissues in coping with and responding to load; these are called "eccentric" exercises. Other treatments include increasing blood flow to the area to promote healing. In chronic and severe cases, injections of corticosteroids are used, and in severe cases surgery may be undertaken.

The information in this newsletter is not a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for assessment of your individual condition.



Brain Teaser Answers: You're on your own for this one! See if you can race others to work it out first!

Smashed Avocado, Feta and Rocket Bagel

1. Cut the bagel in two slices and place under grill on medium until crispy.
 2. Remove avocado flesh and mix into a bowl with feta cheese.
 3. Spread avocado and feta mix over bagel halves. Cover with rocket leaves.
 4. Garnish with half a fresh lemon and drizzle olive oil over top.
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Ingredients

- 1 whole avocado
- 1 bagel
- 100g feta cheese
- 1 cup washed rocket lettuce
- 1 half lemon
- 1 tbsp olive oil



Solve This

=5

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