

Stay Strong Stay Healthy Program Returning to Marais des Cygnes District

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Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



The Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (SSSH) exercise program is returning to the Marais des Cygnes district for another session, this time in Osawatomie. This 8-week exercise program from K-state Research and Extension is geared toward older adults and sedentary middle-aged adults. The goal of this evidence-based program is to improve health, quality of life, and maintain independence through strength training. Sessions include warm-up exercises, simple strengthening exercises with or without weights, and cool-down stretches. A successful session was held last Fall in Mound City.

The loss of muscle mass can slip up on us without warning. At some point we realize we can't do the things we used to, but also don't know how to counter the process. Kansas State University has launched Stay Strong, Stay Healthy to help older adults regain strength and improve balance and flexibility and overall health in the process.

Despite compelling research about the benefits of muscle strengthening, the majority of older adults, do not currently perform these exercises. There are many reasons, including: fear of injuring themselves, no experience with lifting weights, lack of access to a professional experienced with older populations, expense of fitness centers, which often aren't geared towards older adults, and few community programs. SSSH addresses these problems by providing a safe, welcoming environment where groups of older adults can learn how to strengthen their muscles from certified instructors.

Sessions meet for one hour, twice a week. A day of rest is scheduled between exercise classes. Participants are encouraged to do the exercises on their own one other time during the week. Over the eight weeks, participants learn the exercises and begin to improve strength and balance. After eight weeks, participants are encouraged to continue this effective program at home or with a community group.

Potential health effects for older adults

Ageing adults can benefit tremendously from strength training. Strength training can be very effective in reducing the risk factors for many chronic conditions and diseases and, may actually reverse the disease process. The benefits of strength training include:

- Increased muscle mass and strength

- Restoration of balance and flexibility
- Improved bone density and reduced risk for osteoporosis and related fractures
- Decreased arthritis pain
- Weight maintenance
- Reduced risk for diabetes, heart disease and depression
- Improved stress management
- Improved self-confidence, sleep quality and physical vitality

Sessions will meet from 9:30-10:30 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from September 12 - November 21 at the Osawatomie Senior Center, 815 6th Street, Osawatomie, KS. Registration is due by September 5th with \$20 registration fee. Call the Mound City Extension office at 913-795-2829 for information on how to register.

Instruction will be provided by trained and certified university extension faculty. For more information on the Stay Strong Stay Healthy Program visit: <http://www.k-state.edu/staystrong/>