

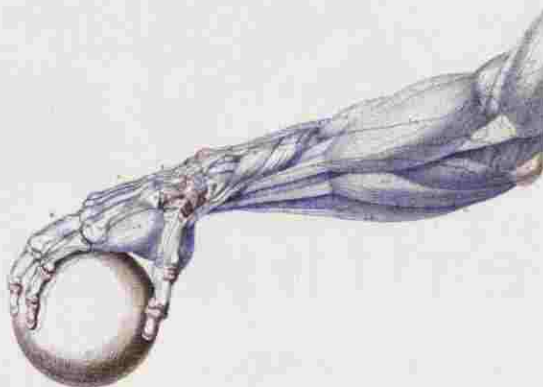
# alive files

## fitness

### Active lifestyle lowers risk of gallstones

When the bile within the gall bladder collects and settles it has the potential to form gallstones. Although most gallstones dissolve on their own without producing symptoms, about 15 per cent of people with stones experience pain that, in some cases, requires surgical removal. A recent study confirms that exercise helps reduce the risk of developing gallstones. Regular activity may “shake up” the bile, preventing it from crystallizing into stones.

Researchers looked at rates of physical activity and the occurrence of gallstones in more than 25,000 adults aged 45 to 79 and found that the more exercise they performed, the lower the risk of developing gallstones. The study took into account exercise habits, obesity, alcohol use, and reproductive history. Compared to a sedentary lifestyle, those who were active decreased their risk of gallstone formation by about 60 per cent.



### A simple weight to strong arms

If you are looking for stronger, more toned arms, a single set of weight-training exercises is a good way to start. A recent study reported in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* shows that a single set of repetitions is as good as three sets when starting out. The study participants were placed in a single set group or a three-set group. By the end of the study, those who performed just one set of each upper body exercise per workout had gained just as much strength as those who had performed three sets. A single set will help build initial strength before moving on to a more demanding weight-training plan.

### Flexible benefits

Retaining your flexibility as you age with gentle, low-impact exercises will help to keep you limber and able to meet daily demands, and also encourage strong bones and healthy joints. Those who engage in activities such as tai chi, yoga, and traditional stretching are benefiting in many ways. These activities help increase

strength and flexibility without placing a strain on the joints. The findings of a study reported in the *Journal of Rheumatology* concludes that flexible people tend to have better bone-mineral density and are also less likely to develop arthritic joints compared with those who are less flexible. So, get up, get moving, and reach for the sky.



### Exercise trains your brain, too

Research into the impact of regular activity on brain function, shows that exercise benefits both short-term and long-term memory. Natural aging processes in the brain allow for decline in brain density. But recent studies show that this decline can be slowed with higher levels of physical fitness. Current information published in *Neurobiology of*

*Aging* reveals that exercise enhances brain function in the regions associated with memory. Anatomical differences in grey and white matter are found between fit and unfit people. So, keep your brain fine-tuned by scheduling in some time for exercise each day—a walk at lunch, a swim in the evening, or a bike ride with your children or grandchildren.



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