

# wellness



## MAKE AGING SLOW DOWN

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS KEY TO YOUNGER CELLS — AND A MORE YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE

**F**or decades, we've known exercise promotes health, but new research points to its ability to actually slow the aging process.

While genetics, illness and injuries can play a part in aging, Dr. Anne Friedlander, who visited from Stanford University to present at Vail's Living Well conference in mid-September, says people can choose their path regarding health and aging.

Left unchecked, aging results in muscle wasting and weakness; decreased endurance, energy and brain function; and increases in abnormal blood lipids, weight, blood pressure and risk of diabetes. But when people add 150 minutes a week of moderate activity, high impact interval training (HITT), or both, the tables begin to turn: endurance,

muscle mass and cognitive function improve, while risk factors decrease, Friedlander says.

"You have this very powerful element in your control that can change the trajectory of aging," she says.

Studies show that telomeres, which are located on the end of chromosomes and involved in cell division, remain longer in people who exercise. One study by Cherkas et al compared 2,401 twins. Overall results showed the most active twin of the pair maintained longer telomeres. This is significant, because when telomeres become too short through the process of cell division, the cell dies.

"Physical activity actually impacts the age of the cell," Friedlander says, citing other research that indicates

how endurance and strength training "can change the repair mechanisms of mitochondria ... so it looks more like a younger person," she says.

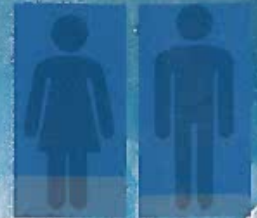
The good and bad news is: Your body is highly adaptable in both directions. That means when you begin a new activity or training program, it will become easier as you continue. It also means if you sit at a computer all day, your body adapts to a sedentary lifestyle.

"You'd be surprised how quickly four or eight hours of sedentary behavior can change the trajectory," she says. "Sitting has become an independent risk factor for disease, even if you exercise. It impacts BMI (body mass index), fat, glucose, and diabetes and cardiac risks, and it does it really rapidly."

Her take-home message:

"Your body is watching you. It's registering how you act during the day and reacting," she says, suggesting people take stairs instead of elevators, walk more and interrupt long sitting patterns. "Do sweat the small stuff — think small; it's more useful than you think. Physical activity is powerful medicine." - **KIMBERLY NICOLETTI**

## Snapshot of the Nation's Activity Level



**1988**  
20% OF WOMEN and  
11% OF MEN reported  
doing NO physical activity



**2010:**  
52% OF WOMEN and  
44% OF MEN reported  
doing NO physical activity

### One possible solution:

A study by Lee et al in 2014 showed non-active people gained large benefits from just 5 minutes of running daily.



Placement.  
Lighting.  
Ambiance.  
Warmth.  
Detail.

Selling? Let me  
showcase your home to  
its full potential.



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