



THRIVE

A newsletter for Volunteer Registry members of the Claude D. Pepper Older Americans' Independence Center and the Institute on Aging



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The Fix-It Study

A new study at the UF IOA will examine why muscles of older adults do not repair themselves as efficiently as they once did.

The old saying goes that “if it ain’t broken don’t fix it.” However, the opposite is also true. We spend countless hours, days, months, and even years fixing things that are damaged or broken. We fix broken water heaters and toilets, repair transmissions and alternators, and mend fences and broken hearts. Repair is an ongoing part of life.

Our bodies are no different; they constantly repair themselves. Many parts of our body - including our liver, kidneys, and muscles - are constantly repairing small areas of old or damaged tissue by re-growing new tissue. This process is known to scientists as regeneration.

Unfortunately, aging often impairs our body’s ability to regenerate tissue, especially in muscles. Scientists at UF’s Institute On Aging, led by Dr. Thomas Buford, believe that these changes contribute to age-related losses of muscle and muscle strength, which are known to contribute to disability. So they’ve decided to do something about it.

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Join us on our Journey of Discovery!

Welcome to the first issue of THRIVE, a newsletter designed to keep you informed of the exciting clinical research studies being conducted at the Aging & Rehabilitation Research Center (ARRC).

The Institute on Aging (IOA) and the Department of Aging & Geriatric Research was recently awarded several large multi-center, multi-site grants that will allow us to expand our research interests to include cognitive and memory studies, fatigue research, and exploration of the effects of aspirin and botanicals.

We also were honored to receive construction funding for a new multi-disciplinary research facility that will, for the first time, house basic science, clinical research and clinical geriatric practice in one building.

We invite you to join us as we search for new solutions to “old” problems!

The Task Specific Exercise Study

Do you avoid sitting on the floor or climbing up and down stairs? Many older adults are having these problems; now researchers are working on ways to help make such tasks easier.

Sometimes as people age they compensate for pain, stiffness and muscle weakness by adjusting the way they complete daily tasks. This is a tell-tale sign of getting older and, for some people, having more difficulties in the future.

Dr. Todd Manini, of the University of Florida Institute on Aging, is conducting a new intervention study to examine whether different types of exercise can improve the ability to do daily chores and, as a result, prevent possible future physical disabilities. His study has two theories. First, that exercises being used in the study will decrease the need to compensate on tasks of daily living, and second, that these exercises carry over to many other factors that help people move more efficiently.

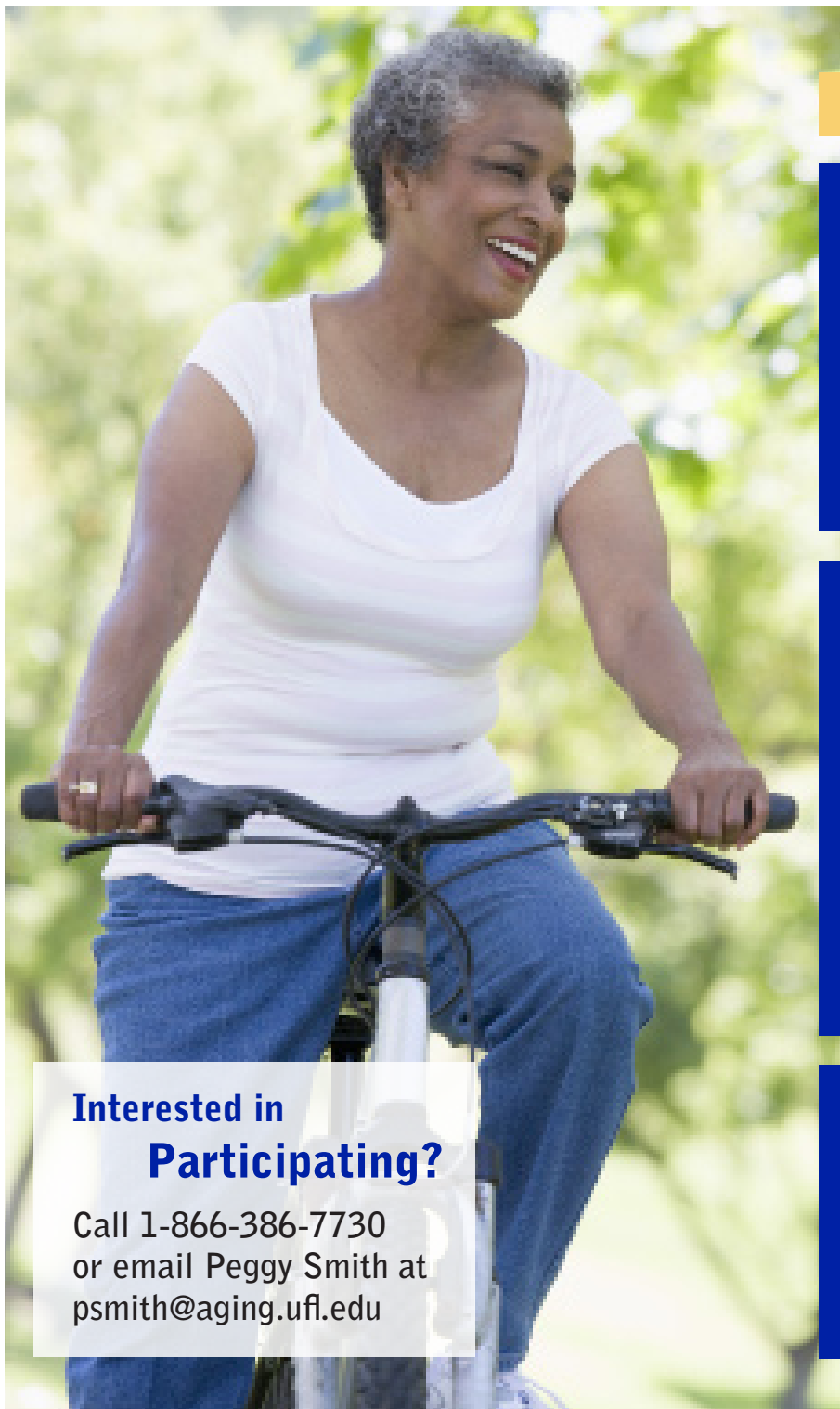
In this study, 72 older adults will do exercises that mimic daily tasks, like using a stair climber at the gym. They will exercise on chairs and do special exercises to improve their ability to get up off the floor. To qualify, people must be community dwellers age 60 or older, non-smokers, without active disease conditions such as cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, liver, kidney, or cardiovascular disease. Also, they must have changed how they climb stairs or get up off the floor since age 40.

To learn more about Dr. Manini’s Task Specific Exercise (TSE) Study, please call toll free 352-273-5919 or 1-866-386-7730, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



“Continuing to complete daily tasks is important for older adults to remain independent and active in their community.”

- Dr. Todd Manini



Other Studies

The Fatigue Study examines two groups of older adults, one experiencing fatigue and the other experiencing high energy and activity level. Participation involves three visits to UF over a one-month period, physical exam and medical history, physical and cognitive testing, blood test, muscle tissue sample, and treadmill testing.

The ASPREE Study (Aspirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly) will investigate whether aspirin can prolong a healthy lifespan in people over 70. Participation involves taking a once daily dose of either aspirin or placebo and annual visits over a period of about five years to assess blood pressure and cholesterol levels, physical ability and memory. All study-related visits and medications are provided at no cost to the participant.

The RIPE Trial examines the effects of the dietary ingredient Resveratrol on cognitive and physical performance in older adults. Participation in this study involves three months of Resveratrol supplementation, blood work, MRI and memory and physical performance tests.

Interested in Participating?

Call 1-866-386-7730
or email Peggy Smith at
psmith@aging.ufl.edu

The Fix-It Study

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The first step is to discover what causes this process to fail, so Dr. Buford and his colleagues are conducting new research to look at the importance of blood flow to muscle regeneration. This study is looking for healthy men and women over 70 years of age with either high or low levels of physical activity. These researchers need your help to find out why our muscles stop fixing themselves as we get older. Financial compensation is provided for participation and travel assistance may be available if necessary.

For more information about Dr. Buford's Regeneration study, please call toll-free 352-273-5919 or 1-866-386-7730, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

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Ask the Experts



Q: What can exercise do for me?

A: Making exercise a regular part of your daily routine will have a positive impact on your health and your quality of life as you get older. Staying physically active and exercising regularly can improve mood and relieve depression, and prevent or delay some types of cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. Long-term, regular exercise can even improve health for some older people who already have diseases and disabilities.

Being physically active can also help you stay strong and fit enough to keep doing the things you like to do and stay independent as you get older. For example, improving endurance can make it easier to work in the garden. Increasing muscle strength can make it easier to lift a grandchild or climb stairs. Improving balance helps prevent falls, and being more flexible can help you reach for items on kitchen shelves.

For more information and to watch the video “Why I Exercise,” visit <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/exerciseforolderadults/faq/faq1a.html>