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Be Active Your Way: Free Exercise Booklets Available

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To commemorate National Physical Fitness and Sports Month and Older Americans Month “Living Today for a Better Tomorrow”, the Office on Aging has new exercise booklets available by calling **1-800-510-2020**. This 80-page book explains why physical activity is so important, how to begin a routine, contains sample exercises to build and maintain strength, balance, and flexibility, and discusses proper nutrition for older adults.

New recommendations suggest that older adults get at least 2 ½ hours of physical activity each week. That means an average of 20 minutes each day. If you are not able to be active for 20 minutes each day, slowly increase the time spent each day until you reach 20 minutes. Always speak with your healthcare provider before starting any physical activity routine.

Regular physical activity improves overall health and fitness and maintains independence levels. It also can lower the amount spent of medical care, such as office co-pays and medication.

Specifically, exercise helps:

- Reduce high blood pressure
- Reduce high cholesterol
- Increase muscle strength and flexibility
- Improve balance
- Increase energy and endurance levels
- Reduce depression

(newsinhealth.nih.gov)

Increasing physical activity does not have to be complicated. It can be as simple as walking an extra block, dancing, gardening, volunteering to walk dogs, swimming a few more laps, and spending more time playing with the grandchildren. Gyms designed for older adults are starting to open in Orange County.

The County of Orange Office on Aging has many health living handouts, including the exercise guide. Call **1-800-510-2020** or **1-714-567-7500** and the friendly and caring Information Specialists will send the exercise guide in addition to other helpful materials. The Office on Aging Information and Assistance Specialists also have information on all programs and services for older adults in Orange County, including in-home assistance, transportation, health education, caregiver support, counseling, residential facilities, meal programs, health insurance, services for the disabled, ethnic services, exercise classes and much more!