

Better Strength Through Muscle Balance
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Physical strength. Some people clearly have it; others may seem to be lacking it. What does a person do to improve it? Common answers to that question include: “Do resistance training.” “Join an exercise class.” But what if there is another solution? All muscles have a limited ability to grow and gain strength. This capability tends to deteriorate, as a person gets older. What does this mean? Even with consistent training or exercise, the strength a single muscle is able to generate will diminish with age.

Despite this decline, there is the potential to maintain physical strength and in some cases actually improve it. Overall strength is dependant on several muscles working together to create as well as control an action or movement. The more efficient and better coordinated a group of muscles is, the more strength can be developed. Therefore, the more balanced the muscles are, the more strength they can produce when working together.

When considering how muscles generate strength, it is important to remember that they need a stable foundation. It doesn't matter if arm muscles are strong in isolation if the shoulder or upper back muscles are weak or imbalanced. In other words, strength of movement comes from efficient and balanced muscle integrity throughout the body.

Sometimes limited strength results from certain motions or positions being restricted by muscle tightness, not weakness. Once the restrictions are released, movements can be smoother and stronger. Remember also that your strength in your arms or legs or your grip may be hampered by limitations in the muscles of your shoulders or neck or back or hips. Thus, the key to strength is the stability and integration of many body parts working together as a whole and not being hampered by non-integration, rigidity, and inflexibility.

Strength is important. It allows one to “play hard” and to do great things, like holding a grandchild or building a tree house for the kids. Much time and money is spent to acquire more strength with often frustrating results. Consider the need for muscle balance to attain your goals. Professional guidance with stretching and strengthening different muscle groups is always available.

Sometimes the answer is right there in front of us, we just need to step back and shift our focus a bit to more clearly see it.