Resistance training and bone density:

We've got a bone to pick with you!

From around the time we turn 30, one of the unfortunate side effects of aging is the beginning of bone density loss. Bone density, of course, is responsible for the strength and integrity of our bones and the higher your bone density, the more resilient they are, the less likely they are to break when it comes to a fall or accident and the more likely they are to carry you proudly into old age and keep you doing the active things you love.

Although diet and lifestyle factors play key roles in maintaining the health of your bones, did you know there is only one way to actually build new bone (increase bone density) and at any age? This miracle is called resistance training, which is exercising against a weighted load or resistance. Probably the most common form of this is weightlifting, but technically resistance training can come in many forms, some of which may surprise you.

You don't have to lift a fridge over your head or pull a truck to get the benefits of resistance training, although this would be quite impressive. Things like your own body weight, bands, weight room machines, dumbbells and barbells do the trick just fine. Even common every day objects like a water jug or a bag filled with books will work if used properly.

We at the Penticton Community Centre are committed to helping our older population age in a safe, fun and healthy way. Along with an array of different resistance equipment for all levels, we offer fitness orientations that provide an introduction to the weight room and equipment, personal training for those looking for an in-depth fitness session geared toward their fitness goals, and fitness and nutrition plans catered to each individual's unique lifestyle and aspirations. As well, we offer safe lower intensity classes such as older adult fitness, chair yoga and gentle yoga. The common denominator? Each option has some component of resistance that will help keep those bones strong. So keep up with your dancing, walking, swimming and biking, but remember that an often forgotten part of living a long and comfortable life is getting that resistance training in! Figure out what is feasible for you and add some resistance to your life, even if just a little.

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For activity and program options, please visit www.penticton.ca/recreation.

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