Sarcopenia: Muscle Loss With Age

Losing muscle as you age, and what reverses it

Tips from your exercise physiologist at Ace Sports Medicine

ACE SPORTS MEDICINE
UPPER MOUNT GRAVATT

Sarcopenia is the age-related loss of muscle mass, strength and function. It arrives quietly, it is common after 60, and it responds to strength training at any age.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SARCOPENIA

1 WHAT IT IS

A loss of muscle mass, strength and physical function beyond what normal ageing explains. It affects how you climb stairs, rise from a chair, carry shopping and recover from illness.

STRENGTH IS THE MEASURE THAT MATTERS MOST.

2 WHEN IT STARTS

Muscle mass declines by roughly 1 to 2 percent per year after the age of 50, and strength falls faster than mass. Inactivity and low protein intake are the treatable drivers.

IT STARTS EARLIER THAN MOST PEOPLE EXPECT.

3 HOW COMMON

A meta-analysis of general-population studies found about 10 percent of adults over 60 meet the criteria for sarcopenia, regardless of sex.

ONE IN TEN OVER 60, AND OFTEN UNRECOGNISED.

4 THE THREE TESTS

Grip strength, walking speed and the five-times sit-to-stand test are the simple clinic measures used to screen for sarcopenia and track progress.

MEASURABLE, REPEATABLE, AND QUICK.

5 WHAT REVERSES IT

Resistance training in older people with sarcopenia significantly improved grip strength, gait speed and muscle mass across randomised trials. Progressive, supervised strength work two to three times a week is the core.

LIFTING WORKS, AT ANY AGE.

6 FUEL IT

Adequate dietary protein spread across the day supports the training response. A sports dietitian can set targets that suit your health and appetite.

PROTEIN PLUS TRAINING BEATS EITHER ALONE.

DO I NEED A SCAN?

Usually not. Sarcopenia is screened with strength and function tests in the clinic. Body composition measures can add detail, but the programme is built on what you can lift, how fast you walk and how easily you stand from a chair.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

- Stairs, chairs, jars or shopping bags getting harder
- A fall or a near fall
- Recovering from illness, surgery or a hospital stay
- Living with osteoporosis, diabetes or heart disease
- Noticeably thinner arms or legs
- Unexplained weight loss or rapid weakness

Unexplained weight loss or rapid weakness should be reviewed by your doctor.

WHAT CAN AN EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST DO?

- Measure grip strength, walking speed and sit-to-stand
- Design a progressive resistance programme
- Supervise technique and load if you are new to lifting
- Work alongside osteoporosis, diabetes or heart conditions
- Coordinate protein targets with the dietitian
- Track and re-test your progress

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

If you have noticed your strength slipping, start here:

Time five sit-to-stands from a chair

Add strength work two to three days a week

Spread protein across every meal

Book an exercise physiology assessment

Muscle responds to training at every age. Please discuss specifics at an appointment.

Helping You Perform at Your Best

ACE Sports Medicine | Upper Mount Gravatt

90 Klumpp Rd, Upper Mount Gravatt QLD 4122

07 3349 5733 | admin@acesportsmedicine.com.au

Need support with age-related muscle loss?

Book your appointment today

acesportsmedicine.com.au