

May | 2021



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ASPEN *happenings*

Exercises That Can Make A Difference in Your Life

The Older We Get the More Functional Fitness Matters

Regular exercise has long been known to improve health, mood, and even life expectancy. Doing the right exercises can also help you manage your activities of daily living and stave off declines in independence as you age. Experts call this functional fitness.

“The older we get, it really is the functional fitness that matters,” says David Marquez, Ph.D., an associate professor of Kinesiology in the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

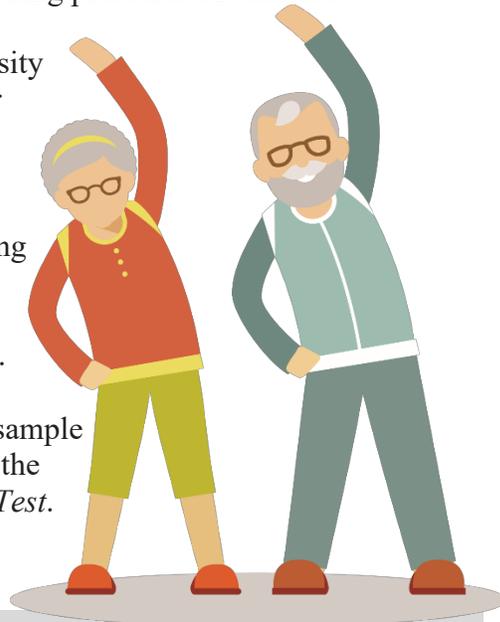
Functional fitness involves the combination of strength, flexibility, balance, endurance and aerobic fitness that allows you to complete the activities of your daily life. Functional fitness helps prevent injury and reduces the risk for falls and frailty associated with aging.

How is functional fitness measured? And how can you improve your functional fitness level? The *Senior Fitness Test*, sometimes known as the *Fullerton Functional Test*, was developed as part of the LifeSpan Wellness Program at Fullerton University,

by Dr. Roberta Rikli and Dr. Jessie Jones. The test is a simple, easy-to-use battery of test items that assess the functional fitness of older adults. The test items involve common activities such as getting up from a chair, walking, lifting, bending, and stretching. They were designed to be safe and enjoyable for older adults, while also meeting the scientific standards for reliability and validity.

“You can take these test items and actually turn them into exercises,” says Susan Kaplowitz, Ed.D., an assistant teaching professor of exercise gerontology at Rutgers University and the founder of the Rutgers Center for Exercise and Aging. Practicing them regularly can help make daily life easier.

See page 3 for sample test items from the *Senior Fitness Test*.



Visit aspennofbrookhaven.com to view the Aspen activity calendar.

HOW FUNCTIONALLY FIT ARE YOU?

30-Second Sit to Stand. Sit on a sturdy chair with your feet hip-width apart and your arms crossed in front of your chest. From here, press through your heels to stand up. Count how many times you can stand up and sit back down in 30 seconds. If needed, you can use your arms at first to help keep you steady as you build up strength.

Arm Curls. See how many times you can curl a light weight (5 pounds for women, 8 pounds for men) in 30 seconds. Try it first with your left arm, then your right. If you don't have weights, you can practice with soup cans.

8-Foot Get-Up-And-Go. Stand up from a chair, walk to an object you've placed 8 feet away, go around it, then go back and sit down. Time how long it takes to complete one round. As you practice—carefully—see whether you can do this more quickly.

Back Scratch. Reach your left arm over your left shoulder and the other behind your back. See how close you can bring your hands together. Repeat on the right side. You can improve your performance on the back scratch by holding a towel in one hand and pulling at it with the other gently. Don't push too hard if this hurts.

Chair Sit and Reach. Sit on a sturdy chair with your feet hip-width apart. Extend one leg straight out in front of you, toes pointed toward the ceiling. The opposite foot should remain flat on the floor. With one hand on top of the other—and your back straight—reach as far toward your toes as you comfortably can, making sure not to bounce to go deeper into the stretch. Hold the farthest position for two seconds. Perform the test twice on both sides, and record how many inches your finger tips are from or past your toes – take your best result for each leg.

March In Place. March in place for two minutes, bringing your knees to mid-thigh level with each move. You can put a piece of tape on the wall next to you to mark how high you should raise your knees. Count how many times your right knee is lifted in the two-minute period.

Test	What it Measures	How Did You Do?*
30-Second Sit to Stand	Lower body strength and endurance	10 – 19 Reps
Arm Curls	Upper body strength	11-22 reps
8-Foot Get Up and Go	Agility and mobility	3.8 – 7.4 seconds
Back Scratch	Upper body flexibility	Hands are 9 inches apart
Chair Sit and Reach	Lower body flexibility	4" from toes to 5" past toes
March In Place	Aerobic endurance	68 to 115 marches per side

*The average adult score, ages 60 – 79; Use these scores to set goals for yourself

SOURCES: *Silversneakers.com* and *Consumer Reports On Health*



9th - J. Gove
20th - G. Salter
28th - P. Warren

May Trivia



- 1: What is May's birthstone?
- 2: What was May named after?
- 3: What is the May zodiac sign?
- 4: What does the emerald symbolize?
- 5: Is May considered a good month to get married?
- 6: What was Maia the goddess of?

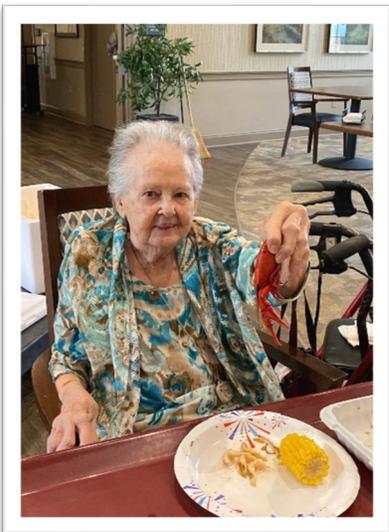
In order: Emerald, Greek Goddess Maia, Taurus, success & love, No - there's a saying that says, "merry in May & you'll rue the day," Fertility.

HEALTHY YOU

Due to the pandemic, the kickoff of our resident wellness program, Healthy You, was postponed. We are happy to announce that April 15, 2021 we were able to begin the quarterly wellness assessments. These check ups include comprehensive evaluation completed by our nurses with nurse practitioner consulting as needed. The assessment process will identify health issues or declines in functional ability more quickly, allowing us to provide the very best care of our residents. Following the quarterly assessment we will develop a wellness plan for the resident.

The *Senior Fitness Test* published in this newsletter may be used to establish a baseline and to track functional improvements or declines. Wellness activities will be available for residents each month.





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A community enriched by you.

