

Why I Exercise, Part 2:

Being Active in your 80s

Long-time SCAN member (30+ years) Betty Leatherwood literally walks the talk. At 86 years of age, Betty has exercised nearly six days a week for the last 11 years (we're impressed)!

For Betty, the benefits of exercise extend beyond physical rewards. She never imagined that after joining Curves® gym she'd find additional support and motivation in the nearly

20 friends she's met over the years. These friends are now like family. They regularly meet up to exercise, eat meals, grab an occasional coffee, and even celebrate each other's birthdays.

Having a great support system helps you get motivated and step outside of your comfort zone. Betty's group of friends continues to grow because they understand the importance of friendly support. "We welcome in anyone who wants to join us," she says.

Do What You Can

Although Betty has been active for most of her life, being active in her 80s has presented some challenges. Betty has had her fair share of health issues (like a pinched nerve in her leg and recent hip replacement surgery), but she doesn't let that keep her down. "I can't walk too far, nor can I stand too long anymore, but I do what I can."

Betty knows that a positive attitude is key. "If you become a couch potato, you end up only thinking about your aches and pains. Regardless of how you feel, you should always try to get up and move. Just think to yourself, today is a great day! I'm going to keep moving!"



"You have to keep moving. Just tell yourself go! Go and do it!"

Betty's Exercise Tips

Feel the Rhythm: Dancing is Betty's top tip for working your entire body while having fun. "You may not be able to move as well as you once did, but don't let that stop you from trying."

Get a Dog: Any pet can be a sweet companion, but a dog provides extra incentive to get out and walk. Betty faithfully walks her dog every morning!

Find a Workout Buddy (or 20!): Having a great support system gives Betty extra reason to get out and move.

Are you motivated to improve your quality of life and become more active? If it's been a while, talk to your doctor. Get recommendations based on your interests, comfort level, and any physical challenges. After that, start moving!

What Can Being Active do for You?

If the prospect of a new circle of friends doesn't motivate you to get active, there are many more benefits to exercise. Here are just a few:

- Prevent or delay diseases related to aging (e.g. heart disease, colon cancer, stroke, diabetes).
- Improve mental health, which helps you beat depression and fight Alzheimer's disease and dementia.
- Boost your metabolism and encourage a healthy digestive system.
- Strengthen your bones, which can reduce osteoporosis risk.

