

# 4 LIFE FITNESS NEWS

Heart Health | More Rewards Prizes | SMR Update

## Newsletter

- "This is Your Heart on Exercise."
- Update on the SMR & Stretch classes.
- The "Fuzz" Speech Video.
- More Prizes added to the Tier 1 Rewards Program.

## Birthdays

**A Very Happy Birthday** to:

**Barbara Cook - Feb 1**

## New Members

### **WANTED:**

Fun loving adults 50 or older who are looking for the perfect fitness community. Where they can enjoy safe and age-appropriate workouts with expert instructors so they can reach or surpass all of their fitness goals. Where they can hang out with the most delightful members and the most experienced personal trainers no matter which type of training they choose.

*Members, if you have friends who might be interested, please pass on our info!*

## American Heart Month

*Be My Valentine*



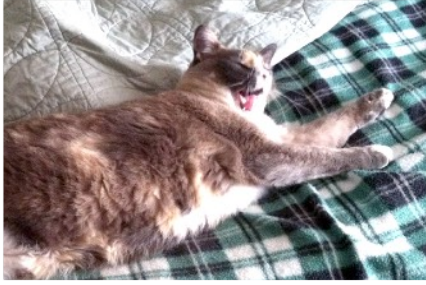
## This is Your Heart on Exercise

February is not only a time to celebrate Valentine's Day. It's also a time to honor your marvelous human heart. It's a fist-sized, hard-working, muscular organ which lies in the center of your chest, tilted slightly to the left that will beat 100,000 times today.

American Heart Month was first designated in 1964 and proclaimed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The goal of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA) was to educate people about the number one cause of death in both men and women: cardiovascular disease (CVD). CVD is a class of diseases that involve the heart and blood vessels and includes heart attacks and strokes. In the U.S. alone, it claims over a half a million people every year. That's 1 in every 4 deaths. And CVD is the leading cause of death around the world. By 2030, it's estimated that 23.6 million people globally will succumb to this disease.

The bright side of these frightening statistics is regular exercise is proving to be the single most important key to heart health. Something to think about the next time you plan on skipping class! But to be fair, regular exercise is just one of the habits we are urged to include in a heart healthy lifestyle. Other healthy habits include: quit smoking (including e-cigarettes), maintain a healthy weight, eat healthy foods (avoiding trans fats), reduce sodium intake, reduce stress, get 7 to 9 hours of sleep, manage any health conditions (especially high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes), avoid long periods of sitting, and exercise at least 30 minutes most days of the week at a minimum.\*

*(continued on page 3)*



## What our cats can teach us about stretching!

If you're serious about staying mobile well into your senior years, then you'll need to make time for stretching. There is a fantastic video on YouTube called [The "Fuzz" Speech](#) by Gil Hedley. He talks about fascia and what happens to it when we don't stretch.

Please be aware the video is a bit graphic since he shows small sections of human cadavers. But even if you can't watch, listen to what he has to say. His reasons for why we need to stretch are very compelling.

## Added More Tier 1 Prizes

In January's Newsletter we introduced the Agile 4 Life/WellnessLiving Rewards Program. On page 3 of the Newsletter we included a list of prizes each member can receive by redeeming their rewards points. As a reminder, Reward Points are earned by renewing memberships, attending classes, writing reviews, sharing on social media, referring friends, or having a referral become a member.

The Tier 1 requires redeeming just 2000 points. The two new prizes we added are: a yoga mat and a short foam roller. This now brings the total number of Tier 1 prizes to 18.

A downloadable list of the prizes is coming soon. We'll be sure and let you know when's it's ready.



## Updates on SMR and Stretch Class

We are happy to announce that Blake now has six SMR videos in the Agile 4 Life Fitness video library which you can access through WellnessLiving. The videos are under SMR and the titles are:

1. Intro, Ankles & Feet
2. Knees
3. Hip Flexors
4. Hip Extension
5. Hip Abduction (leg going away from the body)
6. Hip Adduction (leg going toward the body)

In case you missed the December Newsletter, SMR is Self-Myofascial Release. It's a form of stretching that treats skeletal muscle immobility (commonly known as a muscle knots) and can relieve the referred pain which may be caused by muscle immobility. SMR relaxes contracted muscles, improving blood and lymphatic circulation, and stimulating the stretch reflex in the muscles.

In each video, Blake has plenty of review to help you with your technique, great explanations of the moves, a good dose of anatomy (don't worry you're not going to be tested!) and what items are needed for each class.

The members who have been taking the SMR class are giving it rave reviews and loving the results. Classes are held live on Mondays and Fridays 9:00-9:45am.

---

Joy has also done some updating on her Stretch Class. Normally the Stretch Class is a combination of Static Stretching where you hold a stretch for a set time, Dynamic Stretching where you stretch while moving, and PNF (Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation) where you use a stretch, contract, relax sequence.

Joy will still use a combination of different stretch techniques. The change will be on the static holds for major muscle groups. The hold times will go to one-minute. This allows a tight muscle to properly lengthen. Members who have been using this new timing say the longer hold time definitely gives them a more lasting stretch. Stretch Class is live on Wednesdays 12:30-1:00pm.

*(This is Your Heart on Exercise, continued from page 1)*

So why is exercise so good for the heart? Believe it or not, science hasn't figured it out completely. But, enough great studies and observations have been done to prove there are huge benefits for our heart and our whole circulatory system when we exercise regularly.

To appreciate the benefits of exercise on the heart, it's important to remember that the heart is absolutely essential for our body's overall health and function. The heart, complete with its own electrical system, pumps blood in and out through its four chambers. It carries vital oxygen and nutrients through the circulatory system to feed the 1.5 trillion cells that makeup our organs and tissues. (Everywhere but to our corneas.) Amazingly the heart weighs in at only around 7 to 15 ounces. But everyday it pumps around 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels. And remember, this is non-stop, 24/7, every... single...day!

The heart itself is made of muscle tissue. And, just like resistance training helps strengthen our skeletal muscles, aerobic exercise and resistance training helps strengthen the heart and improve its function. As the heart gets stronger, its stroke volume improves. That's mainly because of the left ventricle. And this is good because the job of the left ventricle is to pump oxygen-rich blood out to the body's general circulation. So when your left ventricle can hold more blood, the heart becomes more efficient at moving larger volumes of blood while beating less often. It also means the vascular system (all 60,000 miles) is able to move more blood because it's more relaxed from being used and not stiff from plaque buildup from being under used. Where you start to notice these improvements is tracking your blood pressure.

As you exercise and your muscles and lungs need more blood and oxygen, your blood pressure (BP) will actually increase. Most noticeable the systolic pressure. This is the top number and lets you know how much pressure the blood is exerting against the artery walls when the heart is pumping blood out that left ventricle. This rise will be proportional to how hard you are working. But it is only temporary. Two to three hours after exercise elevated BP begins to drop. Over the long run with continued exercise, blood pressure levels will actually lower at rest throughout the day. These changes may be fairly minor in people with an already normal BP but someone with an elevated blood pressure could have more significant changes.

And, these benefits aren't reserved for the young. The heart healthy benefits from exercise can be experienced at any age. Even if you have not been active for many years.\*\*

As the trainers at Agile 4 Life Fitness see it, exercise shouldn't be seen as a luxury. It's actually the smartest health care interventions you can work on. That it happens to be fun, makes you feel better, look younger, boosts your energy, clears your mind and allows you to hang out with some of the nicest people you'll ever meet, well that's just an added benefit. Happy Heart *Health Month* everyone!

\*For specific recommendations on exercising see *Activity Benefits* in the News/ Blog section of the [Agile 4 Life Fitness](#) website.

\*\*If you haven't been exercising regularly, please check with your doctor or health care provider before starting any new exercise program.

---

*If you have any topic(s) you'd like us to highlight in the monthly **4 Life Fitness News**, please don't hesitate to send us an email. We love hearing from our members.*

*If you are having trouble getting to the video library, please don't hesitate to contact us. [blake@agile4lifefitness.com](mailto:blake@agile4lifefitness.com) or [joyAgile4lifefitness.com](mailto:joyAgile4lifefitness.com).*

**Please share our newsletter with your friends or family.**

