



THE {FULL} LIFE

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All In: Fitness for the Mind and Body

Physical activity can deliver a multitude of benefits and is a must for continued health—especially for those over 65. Exercise can help keep bones strong, reduce pain from osteoarthritis, and lower blood pressure. It can also help prevent bone loss and chronic disease, and several studies show it improves mental health.

One of the simplest and most impactful ways to experience the benefits of physical exercise is walking—all you need is yourself and a pair of sneakers! Health & Fitness Manager Tracy Divincenzo notes how Touchmark’s indoor walking path and the outdoors when weather permits are a great way to reap the rewards of this deceptively simple exercise. “Residents find that even a short walk before a meal or as an afternoon pick-me-up really boosts the mood. At the same time, it benefits the body even though it may not feel like the workout you would get with a group exercise class or personal training.”

Don’t worry about how fast you are going as long as you are moving. Aim for around 10 – 20 minutes if you feel capable of it. Your pace and distance will increase as you continue and your body gets used to the aerobic exercise, which helps strengthen the heart and increase ability.

During the new year when thoughts of resolutions and achievements for the months ahead are top of

mind, improved health frequently tops the list of goals. While it's certainly something that should be taken seriously, you don't have to address it somberly. From a simple walk around the track with friends before dinner to a brisk jaunt on a winter morning, there are many ways to celebrate and encourage healthy living!

Team Member Spotlight

John Pulkrabek

How long have you worked at Touchmark and what do you find most rewarding?

I have worked at Touchmark for over three years. I find my role quite enjoyable because the residents are very upbeat and motivated—the folks who show up really want to be there. I play music from the 1960s, which residents like a lot. After class, people will come up to thank me, so I know they are enjoying it, which is fulfilling for me.

What inspired your interest in teaching and physical fitness?

I worked as a paramedic for 20 years, so I know that you always have to keep yourself in good shape. You never know when you'll have to get up at 3 am to work and be physically active. After serving as a paramedic, I went into education in the paramedic program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

What advice would you give to people who are interested in joining you for a class but may be hesitant to get started?

Well, people should know that even though I'm guiding class, each individual can do as much or as little as they feel comfortable with. When we weightlift, there are different weights to use depending on how comfortable you are with them. Additionally, I always let participants know exactly

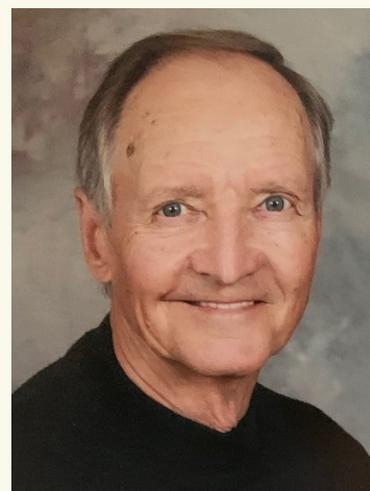
what movements to be doing because I don't want anyone to hurt themselves. Other class participants can help as well by demonstrating movements, and

newer attendees can observe and get caught up and understand what I'm talking about. Then once you get the hang of it, you get to enjoy the feeling of becoming stronger, and the camaraderie that is present when everyone is all in it together.

Can you speak to the sense of community you've found at Touchmark?

The people I work with are very motivated in the same way I'm motivated—they're there for the residents and you know they are going to take very good care of them. There are three of us who work closely and there is a wide range of ages between us, but we all enjoy each other and work well together.

I also like getting to know the residents. Some will stay after class and chat a bit, or we'll get coffee. It's great because residents can get in shape and stay in shape together doing all sorts of activities on campus, like socializing or playing shuffleboard.



Community Highlights

Enriching lives through fun and vibrant community events!





The Three-Legged Stool: A Rock Solid Approach to Fitness

Do your new year’s resolutions involve fitness? If so, make them sturdy so you can lean on them and stick to your goals all year long. One way to do this is to think of fitness as a three-legged stool, with the legs making up the individual components including stress management, fitness, and diet. Together, these facets create a sturdy foundation for health gains to be made and sustained.

Joining the mind and the body together in exercise has shown remarkable results, especially when tasked with a challenge or game. For example, when you’re out for a walk, you could challenge yourself to think about all the different pets you’ve had, or all the streets on which you’ve lived. You can also try counting backward from 20 by twos or listening to a new genre of music as you explore a new walking path. It doesn’t have to be big—these exercises are simply meant to task your brain and body at the same time to help ward off memory loss and keep our minds nimble. By working the mind and the body at the same time, you can manage and even lower stress levels.

Another way to stay accountable and hone your skills and strength is to work with a personal trainer. Not just for professional athletes, a personal trainer will work with you to create a customized plan that factors in your current abilities and future goals, and they can be tremendously helpful when it comes to motivation and accountability.

Complementing these two facets of fitness is the third leg of the stool: diet. Eating balanced meals that include seasonal fruit and vegetables and as many locally sourced ingredients as possible is just as important. If you make your own meals, look for recipes that include nutritional content and values. If you regularly dine in one of Touchmark’s venues, you can rest assured that each meal is carefully chosen by one of Touchmark’s chefs to ensure quality when it comes to taste and health.

Remember that wellness is a journey, not a destination. Approaching your goals from multiple dimensions and having a comprehensive plan that incorporates stress management, fitness, and diet can make all the difference in pursuing goals that feel worthwhile.

Brain Teaser

Enjoy this three-legged stool riddle!

Two legs sat on three legs by four legs. One leg knocked two legs off three legs.

Two legs nudged four legs with three legs. What happened?

A farmer (2 legs) sat on a 3-legged stool beside a cow (4 legs) in preparation for milking the cow. The cow kicked the farmer off the stool, which made the farmer angry, so he nudged the cow with the stool.

Riddle from braingle.com

