Grown ’n Healthy

Don’t let aging’s aches and pains keep you from staying strong.

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As we age, many factors can put a dent in our fitness: extra weight, decreasing strength and energy, surgically replaced knees and hips, and arthritis. *Real Health* asked three veteran trainers to recommend exercises that work around and even relieve some of these challenges.

PROBLEM Back, knee and hip injuries; excess weight
Fitness Fix Water Aerobics “Water’s buoyancy makes it an excellent medium for exercise if your back, knees or hips are damaged,” says Robin Bandura, an aqua physical therapist in Philadelphia. The more submerged you are, the less pressure on your joints.
Bonus Benefit Alleviates circulation problems
Getting Started Not a swimmer? No sweat. Water aerobics can be done in the shallow end of the pool.

PROBLEM Bone loss (osteoporosis); muscle weakness
Fitness Fix Strength and Resistance Training “Weight lifting builds bone as well as muscle,” says Philadelphia fitness consultant David Sylvester. “You can do it at home—use light free weights or resistance bands to build and shape your muscles.”
Bonus Benefit Lowers cholesterol and blood pressure
Getting Started Begin by standing up out of a low chair a few times to strengthen legs and hips. As you get stronger, move to full squats.

PROBLEM Stiff joints; arthritis
Fitness Fix Yoga It increases flexibility, endurance and strength, and connects your body, mind and spirit. “Don’t be intimidated—hard poses can be modified,” says army reservist and Yoga guru Michele Spencer.
Bonus Benefit Helps with muscle weakness, fatigue, depression
Getting Started Can’t find a class in your area? Try a video, such as *Lilias!: AM & PM Yoga Workouts for Seniors* (DVD, $14.98), and zone in on your Zen at home.

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