

An Assisted Living Retirement Community

SENIORS GETTING PHYSICALLY FIT!

By Kathy Ryan, Executive Director, The Saybrook at Haddam

Walking, lifting weights, stretching, rowing, biking... the list of fun things seniors do today to stay physically fit keeps growing. In fact, “working out” is becoming a bigger part of daily life for today’s senior citizen, and the benefits are piling up.

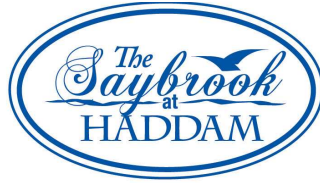
Seniors who work some level of physical fitness into their routines are taking positive, proactive steps to maintain (or even improve) their quality of life. Regular exercise builds muscle – which can be accomplished at every stage of life. Stronger muscles allow seniors to be more self-sufficient and manage daily tasks on their own.

Regular exercise helps keep seniors “in balance” and flexible, which, in turn, helps them avoid falls and injuries that can lead to greater complications. It also increases endorphins, improves cardiovascular health, and helps lower blood pressure – which all contribute to improved overall wellbeing. Senior often find themselves socializing more by taking group exercise or workout classes, or by simply going on walks with friends.

Daily exercise does not have to be a formal process. Many seniors find themselves getting a lot of exercise simply by their circumstance. For instance, if they live in a community such as The Saybrook at Haddam, they walk back and forth to their dining room three times a day, and they walk to activities, to the in-house hair dresser, to meet up with friends, and for many other purposes throughout each day. They always have the option to take stairs instead of the elevator, giving them even more of a workout. In nice weather, many residents and their guests enjoy walking outdoors.

The Saybrook at Haddam recently added a new gym so residents can really build muscle and tone their bodies. Residents who would like to use the gym receive individualized training on each of the different pieces of equipment – which include weight machines, rowing machines, and self-propelled treadmills. The walls of our gym are lined with mirrors so residents can watch their posture and be sure they are using the machines correctly. We placed treadmills facing our large windows that overlook the courtyard so everyone can take in the roses in the summer, the foliage in the fall, and the picturesque snow in the winter (while staying warm inside!). The gym is open all day long, so residents are able to create their own exercise regime into any time of day – in addition to enjoying our daily morning stretch and exercise classes.

Our residents are surprised to find themselves in better shape than they were before moving into our community. They don’t realize the level of physical activity they take on each day, but they certainly



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notice how great they feel. That is why we encourage as much movement and engagement as possible. Their families, too, are happy to see their loved ones getting exercise and staying active.

Most important to us, we want residents to be able to enjoy their hobbies and interests, do more with their children and grandchildren, and have the best quality of life possible. We know physically fit seniors have a more positive outlook on life, as they are able to be more independent longer. To put it simply, they are having more fun with their lives. And that is our hope for every senior!

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PHOTOS ATTACHED:

Photo caption 1: Residents at The Saybrook at Haddam (l-r: Bill Wassell, Harry Archambault, and Marian Marston) enjoy the new gym, where they use exercise machines to stay physically fit.

Photo caption 2: Residents at The Saybrook at Haddam, Bill Wassell (L) and Harry Archambault (R) work out at the new gym.

Photo caption 3: Marian Marston uses the rowing machine while Bill Wassell and Harry Archambault, make use of weight machines in the new gym at The Saybrook at Haddam.