



## What are the physiological changes as we age?

### **Metabolism.**

Age sees a decrease in muscle mass and an increase in body fat which causes the metabolic rate to lower meaning calories once used to fuel muscles are now stored as fat.

### **Heart and Lungs**

The size and strength of the muscles of the heart decrease which in turn causes higher blood pressure. Reduced strength of the respiratory muscle, increased stiffness of the chest wall and closures of small arteries make breathing more difficult. The efficiency of the lungs decreases by up to

40-50% by the age of 70; this progressive decline in oxygen uptake may cause a person to feel tired more quickly.

### **Muscles and bones**

Muscle mass decreases by approximately 30% between ages 50 and 70. Joints become stiffer and unstable which together with a lack of flexibility causes greater instability and loss of balance, increasing the risk of a fall. Synovial fluid in the joint capsule decreases causing cartilage and bone to rub and cause discomfort and a loss of calcium and bone mineral cause's brittle bones