

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2009

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Get Back to Golf and Turn Back the Clock

SMH's golf conditioning program aims to improve physical fitness, which can delay aging

PLYMOUTH—Anyone watching Tiger Woods win the 2008 U.S. Open understands golf is a game requiring physical fitness and endurance. Maintaining aerobic fitness through middle age could delay biological aging by 12 years, according to a study published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. The study shows aerobic exercise improves the body's oxygen consumption and its ability to generate energy, which, in turn, leads to the slowing, and possible reversal, of the natural decline of our body's function as we age.

So get in the swing with Speare Memorial Hospital's *Back to Golf* conditioning program offered by Rehabilitation Services. Although the program was developed to prepare golfers for the upcoming season, it benefits anyone seeking to improve their level of fitness and flexibility. "If we, as a population, even just walked briskly 30 minutes a day, healthcare as we know it would change drastically in the United States," says Nancy Scothorne, physical therapy assistant at Speare. "Our program is just what some people need to jump start their return to activity as the weather promises to improve."

The eight-week program will run from March 2 to April 22, meeting on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 – 8 p.m. at the SMH Rehab Services department, located at 20 Highland Street (aka Citizen's Bank) in Plymouth. The cost of the program is \$95 and may be reimbursable by insurance. Participants will need to bring an exercise ball, mat and water bottle. Space is limited, and registration is requested by calling SMH Rehabilitation Services at 603-238-2225.

The many benefits of daily exercise include the reduced risk of several life-threatening diseases, including:

- Cardiovascular disease and atherosclerosis (thickening and hardening of the arteries due to fibrous fatty plaque build-up)
- Type 2 diabetes, even in persons at high risk
- Stroke
- Breast Cancer
- Lower resting blood pressure
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Depression among elderly adults

The *British Journal of Sports Medicine* study concluded that a regular exercise program can slow or reverse the loss of aerobic fitness - typical of behavior observed in middle-aged and retirement aged people --reducing the individual's biological age and prolonging independence.

"A regular routine of moderate exercise has incredibly positive effects on both physical and mental well-being and increases one's quality of life," reports Gillian Cavezzali, physical therapist and director of Rehabilitation at Speare, and adds, "awareness of proper posture and the importance of fitness and flexibility are just as important for weekend golfers as they are for the pros. Golfers can spend thousands of dollars each year on new or improved equipment, but their most essential piece of equipment is their bodies."

The exercises in the program have been chosen to improve the body's range of motion, strength through patterns of stretching and toning and balance skills. "We will strive to ensure each participant has individualized attention so that they work at their own pace, progressing at a rate that is comfortable for them" adds Scothorne.

Speare Memorial Hospital is a 24-hour, acute care, non-profit community hospital and health care provider serving Plymouth and the communities of central New Hampshire for more than a century.

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