

# Elderly

---

## Activity Box 1.4

### Module 1: Target Group



**INCLUSIVE.  
INSPIRING.  
SPORT FOR ALL.**

## Key Facts

- Between 2015-2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12% to 22% (30)
- 150-300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity (running/fast walking); or at least 75-150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week can produce substantial health benefits in aged groups (177)

## Specific groups this Activity Box applies to:

- Adults 65+ years
- It also applies to earlier ages when a person is already suffering the effects of getting older.

## Why is it so important

### Contribution

Sport and physical activity can provide tremendous benefits to the elderly both in body and mind:

#### Mental benefits:

- Reduces social isolation by involving them more in local communities
- Improves quality of sleep
- Releases endorphins. The elderly involved in physical activity will feel happier and cheerful
- Increases global cognition, brain functionality and helps in combating diseases such as depression, Alzheimer's and dementia

#### Physical benefits:

- Strength elderly's ability to sit, stand and walk significantly easier.
- Reduces different forms of mortality: cardiovascular disease, incident hypertension, incident site-specific cancers, incident type-2 diabetes.
- Conditions like obesity, underweight and malnutrition may also improve in seniors.
- Prevent falls and falls-related injuries and declines in bone health and functional ability.

## International endorsement

### WHO Global action plan on physical activity

**Action 3.4:** Enhance the provision of appropriately tailored programmes that increases physical activity and reduces sedentary behaviour in older adults in different settings to support healthy ageing.

INCLUSIVE.  
INSPIRING.  
SPORT FOR ALL.

## Barriers to Sport that should be overcome

- Lack of Sport background in case old people hardly exercised when they were younger.
- Spread information about elderly programmes: These groups barely use resources such as mailing and social media.
- Non-inclusive infrastructure in case elderly needs to use a lift, walker, wheelchair, etc.

## Tips and key success factors

### Consider levels of physical activity and health preconditions

- It may be risky to start a programme with people who have not been physically active for more than a year.
- They should obtain approval and recommendations from a physician to assess whether some of these diseases exist: Arthritis, heart or circulatory disease, kidney disease, lung disease, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's.

### Understanding particular situations that may affect the elderly:

- **Fluids:** In advanced age, thirst is only a late sign of poor hydration and elderly generally drink less than necessary. Aging skin tends to thin, increasing basic fluid loss beyond that caused by perspiration.
- **Temperature:** Advancing age increases sensitivity to both cold and heat.
- **Urinary Incontinence:** Male-aged participants require to go to the bathroom more often than participants from other ages due to prostate problems.
- **Use of walking aid:** Wheelchairs, walkers, rollators are often used by these groups. Sport facilities should include preferential access for this kind of device.

### Physical activity routines performed properly and that do not cause injury

- Include exercises that focus on restoring strength, flexibility, and endurance that are lost with aging.
- Use slow and controlled movements to avoid muscle strain and bone fractures.
- Be aware of introducing enough time for conversation, reflection, observation and perception in programmes.
- Motivation for the elderly can also be increased by assigning them responsibilities.
- Older adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities at a moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, to achieve additional health benefits (31).

### Collaborating with senior homes and local associations

- Community networks already exist and take care of the elderly
- Some already have specialists that may engage the elderly in physical activity
- Others will welcome bridges with Sport clubs, coaches, and specialists that may bring new activities

**INCLUSIVE.  
INSPIRING.  
SPORT FOR ALL.**

**Other tips**

- Basic "Equipment" includes a comfortable dress that secures safe body temperature and proper footwear that prevents muscle strains and even bone fractures
- Home-based programmes should be controlled
- Measure physical results since physical fitness and quality of life are interrelated
- Adapt accessibility to Sport facilities and other spaces such as toilets, drinking stations, etc.
- Consider professional guidance to ensure proper technique and safety when working with the elderly
- Do not start a programme without addressing age, gender and level constraints
- Detect situations of overworking. Body expressions such as face colour and excessive sweating

**Available Resources**

- Health Harvard: Mind and mood in aged people. [Click Here](#)
- Well-being through group Sport: Taiwanese rugby union club. [Click Here](#)

# Sample Case

## Tackling Alzheimer's (International Table Tennis Federation and ITTF Foundation)

- Weekly sessions and training development coach and clubs
- Regular discussions with caregiver/caretakers
- Launch of a coalition of clubs ready to get involved in such an initiative

### More information:

Tackling Alzheimer's, Levallois Club: France. [Click Here](#)

### TAFISA OFFICE

c/o Commerzbank / Filiale Höchst  
Hostatostraße 2  
D-65929 Frankfurt am Main  
Germany  
Email: [info@tafisa.org](mailto:info@tafisa.org)  
Tel: +49 (0) 69 973 935 990  
Fax: +49 (0) 69 973 935 995

