



## Grip Strength

It's important to maintain a healthy level of physical fitness to keep your cardiovascular system in tip-top shape, keep your body strong, and improve the overall quality of your life. Measuring grip strength is a helpful screening tool to estimate overall muscle strength:

- > A strong or weak hand grip can help measure the risk for all-cause mortality.
- > Muscle strength plays an important role in decreasing the odds of developing an Activities of Daily Living (ADL) disability.

### GRIP VS. MUSCLE STRENGTH

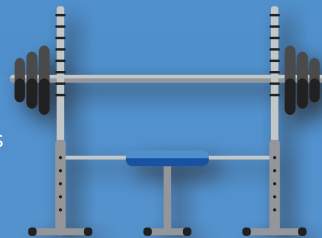
Weaker hand grip is related to muscle strength. Compared to stronger muscle strength, weaker muscles can make less favorable health outcomes more likely when coupled with a chronic medical condition.

### BENEFITS OF GRIP STRENGTH

- > Grip strength is a reliable indicator of quality of life at an older age.
- > Muscle and connective tissues that are strengthened are more injury-resistant.
- > Healthy behaviors practiced earlier in life may help retain strength and function.
- > Increased physical activity improves muscle strength, mental and physical health, and life expectancy.

### INCREASE HANDGRIP STRENGTH

- > Train each major muscle group two to three days per week. Try a variety of methods including weight training machines, free weights, resistance bands, or use your own body weight.
- > Exercises requiring your hands to grip, hold, or pull will be most effective at increasing your grip strength.
- > Push-ups, planks, and lunges work most of the body's muscle groups. Two to four sets of each will help improve strength. Increase gradually and wait at least 48 hours between strength training major muscle groups.
- > Stretching your hands and wrists, holding each stretch for at least five seconds.
- > Using a rubber band, extend your fingers apart then back together.



## MEASURING GRIP STRENGTH

Score \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Average Grip Strength (lbs.)	
Male	Female
70-160	40-100

## ACT & TRACK

Choose a few strength training activities and experiment. Determine when you will complete these activities and connect them to a prompt (something that reminds you to do the activities). Use the box below to track your activities. Make notes on which ones you liked and any you did not. This will allow you to discover the best exercises for you. At the end of the week, review the exercises and make changes as needed.

**REMEMBER: Exercise and a healthy diet are the keys to good health.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

### Resources:

Lee, W., Peng, L., Chiou S., & Chen L. (2016) Relative Handgrip Strength is a Simple Indicator of Cardiometabolic Risk among Middle-Aged and Older People: A Nationwide Population-Based Study in Taiwan. PLOS One. 1-11.

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Mathiowetz, Kashman, Volland, Weber, Dowe, & Rogers. (1985). Grip and Pinch Strength: Normative data for adults. Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation. 66. 69-74.

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Rantanen T., Masaki K., He Q., Ross G., Willcox., & White L. (2011). Midlife muscle strength and human longevity up to age 100 years: a 44-year prospective study among a decedent cohort. AGE. 34. 563-570.