

ed our lives...

taken by these three women show how prioritising your health will let you enjoy the benefits of more energy, an improved social life and a more positive outlook.

I gained 29kg over the course of about five years. I felt so tired, like I didn't have the energy to get up in the morning.

But about five years ago I had a wedding to go to and couldn't find anything to wear because I was so

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overweight. I knew I had to act, so I joined Energize gym on Sydney's northern beaches.

It was

a scary step because I always assumed you had to be young and fit to work-out, but I soon discovered it was a really supportive environment. I started doing two personal training sessions a week, plus going a third time with my daughter. Knowing I have people to meet there keeps me motivated.

I've now lost 23kg, but my proudest achievement is my strength. I'm stronger than I've ever been, and can do 40kg deadlifts. I have enough strength to run around after my four grandchildren, plus maintain my job working in childcare. If I hadn't got fit and healthy, I don't think I'd be able to do this job because I'm on my feet all day.

Exercise is now part of my lifestyle – it keeps me mobile and healthy. I'm the only parent left, and I'm so much happier in the knowledge that I will be around a lot longer for my children and grandchildren.

Florence Stewart

When doctors told Florence she would need surgery on her arthritic knee, she took matters into her own hands and at 70 she's never felt stronger.

“ Five years ago, I was in agony when trying to walk up and down stairs. My knee kept swelling up, so I went to see a surgeon. He told me the cartilage in my knee was wearing away and that I would need to have invasive surgery to help repair it.

He suggested I come back to see him when my knee got so painful I couldn't possibly live with it – it wasn't a comforting prospect.

I went to see a chiropractor at Active Seniors Health Center in Gordon, in the northern suburbs of Sydney, and they gave me some corrective exercises and suggested I start working out in their gym three or four times a week.

I've never been an athletic person – I always thought gyms were for young people and I was too terrified to set foot in one. But this gym was just for seniors and I felt really comfortable. We all had wobbly bums!

I started working out the prescribed three to four times a week for 30 minutes each visit. I do cardio on the stationary bike, cross trainer and rowing machine, leg weight lifting, upper body strength with weights and step-up boxing movement with weights. I've asked for body strengthening exercises.

70s



I quickly learnt if you want strong knees, you have to strengthen the muscles around the knee to support you so the joint doesn't have to take all the strain. With a bit of exercise and chiropractor treatments, the pain cleared up in about six weeks.

These days, I have virtually no knee issues, and I'm stronger than I've ever been. When my mother was 60, she was an old woman, but I don't feel old at all.

I'm fit enough to travel – a few years ago, my husband and I went to Turkey and camped at Gallipoli for Anzac Day.

We also did a 12km hike up the side of a mountain – in the snow – in Canada a couple of years ago.

We're off to New Zealand and Tasmania next, then Hawaii and Ireland for Christmas.

I'd never have done these things without strong knees. There's a lot you can do to help your health, and I'm glad I learnt that before having surgery. It feels wonderful to be as healthy in the body as I feel in the mind! ●

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60s