Couch Potato-ism

My husband is a real couch potato. How can I get him active?

We suggest you have a nice, friendly, and supportive chat with your husband. Tell him you love him, want him around a long time, and are interested in participating in activities with him. Activities like what? Well, a daily walk for starters. Then you could garden together or—depending on your age—develop some exciting and health-promoting activities. Exercise doesn’t have to be boring.

Swimming, or better yet, diving or snorkeling, offers a change; canoeing or kayaking, bike riding, hiking, taking the dog for a walk—all are different and better than sitting on the couch all day.

We recently read about a study reported in The Journal of the American Medical Association as a letter (April 25, 2007, p. 1772). The researchers took a dozen healthy, older adults and put them to bed for 10 days. They were allowed up to go to the bathroom, but did little else. These folk showed a large loss of skeletal muscle, but the loss actually occurred during the last five days.

The older we get, the more important it is to remain active, and weight-bearing exercises assume even greater importance.

So “chivy” that husband of yours, and get him active!

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While this column is provided as a service to our readers, Drs. Landless and Handysides unfortunately cannot enter into personal and private communication with our readers. We recommend that you consult with your personal physician on all matters of your health.