

# IMPACT

University of Idaho  
Extension

Bingham County, 208.785.8060, Fax: 208.785.2511  
583 W Sexton St., Blackfoot, ID 83221

## StrongWomen™ program benefits Bingham County women

### AT A GLANCE

**StrongWomen™ program participants in Bingham County improved strength, balance, and flexibility. They report preventing falls and minimizing injuries because of the program.**

### The Situation

Strength training is physical activity that increases muscle strength and mass. Adults that strength train have fewer fall-related injuries, maintain a gain of more muscle and have less functional decline. They are less likely to have signs and symptoms of arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, back pain, and depression.

However, only 22% of men and 18% of women in the United States participate in strength training the recommended twice or more per week. Common barriers to strength-training are lack of time, feeling intimidated by strength-training exercises, lack of self-motivation and confidence, and fear of injury.

### Our Response

*StrongWomen™* is a national evidence based resistance-activity program developed by Dr. Miriam E. Nelson at Tufts University. In May 2008, the University of Idaho Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension Educator in Bingham County certified to teach *StrongWomen™*. She began teaching the six-week, twelve class program in September 2008 and has taught it several times per year since then. Over 100 women have participated in one or more sessions. Bingham County participants served as subjects in research projects on the short- and long-term effects of *StrongWomen Stay Young™* and *StrongWomen Strong Bones™*.



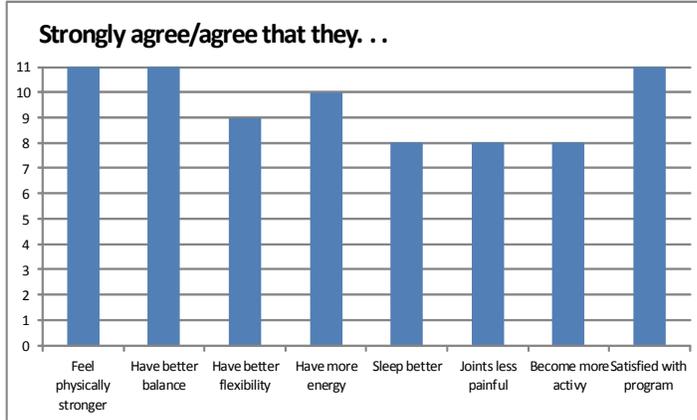
*StrongWomen™* participants in Bingham County doing the overhead press. Photo by Marnie Spencer.

### Program Outcomes

Participants in the spring 2014 session evaluated the effect of the *StrongWomen™* program on several aspects of their health. A 5 point Likert scale (with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree) was used. Eleven of thirteen (85%) participants completed the survey. Results noted on the chart (next page) indicate the number of participants that strongly agreed or agreed about the benefits they attributed to the *StrongWomen™* program.

Additionally, 10 of the 11 respondents felt they had avoided falls or prevented or minimized other injuries because of their participation in the *StrongWomen™* program. Each participant shared a narrative about how the program has impacted her life. One woman said, "The program keeps exercise a part of my daily thought. I walk, do stairs, and use my upper body exercise machine." Another said, "I'm more confident in my ability to stay fit. I feel better."

Three women in Bingham County besides the FCS Extension Educator have been certified to teach the *StrongWomen™* program and will continue to offer it several times per year. Water damage prevented continuation of the program in the Extension office, but participants were so committed to the program that they found another location for the classes.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Marnie Spencer**, Extension Educator  
University of Idaho Extension, Bingham County  
583 West Sexton  
Blackfoot, ID 83221  
Phone: 208.785.8060  
Fax: 208.785.2511  
E-mail: marniers@uidaho.edu

**Debbie White**, 4-H Coordinator  
University of Idaho Extension, Bingham County  
583 West Sexton  
Blackfoot, ID 83221  
Phone: 208.785.8060  
Fax: 208.785.2511  
E-mail: dwhite@uidaho.edu

20-14mspencer-SWbingham.pub  
10/14