



How it started

Mary Swanson founded the SilverSneakers[®] Fitness Program, now a product of Healthways, Inc., on the premise that for health care to be viable in the long run, cost-effective, preventive benefits needed to be incorporated into the care continuum. With her unique business model of an accountable, population-based exercise program, she quickly carved a niche between managed care and insurance companies throughout the United States and realized her vision of improving the health and well-being of everyone her program touches.

Mary's inspiration was drawn from her own father who, after surviving a heart attack at age 51, pledged to improve his quality of life with regular physical activity. His commitment, coupled with her determination to see him succeed, laid the foundation for the exercise program that would become the nation's leading exercise program for older adults. This unique program allows older adults to take charge of their health and maintain an active, independent lifestyle.

SilverSneakers is now available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico at approximately 10,000 fitness and wellness centers across the country (such as YMCAs, 24 Hour Fitness[®], Curves[®], Gold's Gym, Lifestyle Family Fitness and others) as well as community centers and even churches. Through a unique reciprocity agreement, SilverSneakers members also have access to all of the sites in the country.

With the SilverSneakers premier network, members have a complimentary membership with access to a variety of participating locations throughout the country. Many sites offer amenities such as fitness equipment, treadmills and free weights, and the signature SilverSneakers Fitness Program classes, designed specifically for older adults and taught by certified instructors. Additional signature classes, such as YogaStretch, SilverSplash[®], and Cardio Circuit, may be available at select locations as well as health education seminars and other events that promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Each location has a designated staff member to assist members along the way.

Do programs like SilverSneakers work? According to the latest research and member testimonials, they do. In a nationwide study of more than 9,000 SilverSneakers members, 14% reported having diabetes. Forty-one percent of diabetic members reported having improved health after one or more years of participation and 46% reported improved body weight. High-risk sedentary behavior was reduced by 59% with SilverSneakers participation. Additionally, other research has shown:

SilverSneakers participants utilize preventive care more often, are admitted to the hospital less often and have lower overall healthcare costs.ⁱ

Older adults with diabetes who participate in SilverSneakers are also admitted to the hospital less often, have lower inpatient care costs, and see significant reductions in their overall health care costs after only a year.ⁱⁱ

Greater participation in SilverSneakers is associated with significantly lower risk of depression.ⁱⁱⁱ

“Right away, I began feeling much better,” said SilverSneakers member Laura McDougal of Fort Worth, Texas. “My weight has improved and my diabetes is under control. Meeting new friends and the physical activity has reduced my feelings of depression and anxiety.”

In addition to helping older adults stay physically healthy, SilverSneakers offers a great way for them to socialize, meet new friends and have fun. To find out if you are eligible for SilverSneakers, please contact your health plan. For more information on the program, please call toll-free at 1.888.423.4632 or visit the SilverSneakers website at www.silversneakers.com.

About Healthways

Healthways is the leading provider of specialized, comprehensive Health and Care SupportSM solutions to help people maintain or improve their health and, as a result, reduce overall healthcare costs. Healthways’ solutions are designed to help healthy individuals stay healthy, mitigate and slow the progression of disease associated with family or lifestyle risk factors and promote the best possible health for those already affected by disease. Our proven, evidence-based programs provide highly specific and personalized interventions for each individual in a population, irrespective of age or health status, and are delivered to consumers by phone, mail, internet and face-to-face interactions, both domestically and internationally. Healthways also provides a national, fully accredited complementary and alternative Health Provider Network, offering convenient access to individuals who seek health services outside of, and in conjunction with, the traditional healthcare system. For more information, please visit www.healthways.com.

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ⁱ The study, “*Managed-Medicare Health Club Benefit and Reduced Health Care Costs among Older Adults*,” was funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and conducted by Group Health and the University of Washington (UW). The full report is available at www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2008/jan/07_0148.htm.

ⁱⁱ Study published in *Diabetes Care*, the journal of the American Diabetes Association; <http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/vol31/issue8/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Studies published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*; [http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S0749-3797\(08\)00381-4/abstract](http://www.ajpm-online.net/article/S0749-3797(08)00381-4/abstract)