



## Exercise yourself to good health in retirement

by *Bill MacKenzie*

My name is Bill and I'm a cycling addict.

Just put me on my bicycle with a couple bags filled with gear and send me down the road. It's OK if sunshine engulfs me, sheets of rain pummel me or brutal cold tries to seep through my layers of clothing.

Riding my bicycle takes me worlds away from what people experience when travelling encased in a car.



When I retired from Intel in early 2013, I knew that physical activity and exercise is important to people in their retirement years. Making exercise and physical activity a regular part of your life can improve your health and help you maintain your independence as you age.

Physical activities include such things as gardening, walking the dog and taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Planned exercise can include weight training, yoga, or an aerobics or spinning class.

Including physical activities that keep you active and physical exercise in your life will provide you with health benefits that can help you feel better and enjoy life more.

During my working years, I took early morning spinning classes at a nearby health club and cycled, often riding 40-miles round trip to Intel, but retirement has given me opportunities for extended trips.



Arriving at the Atlantic Ocean after riding X-country

My first big adventure after retiring was cycling 3500 miles across the U.S. from Los Angeles to Boston. On that trip, organized by Crossroads Cycling Adventures, I rode with 26 other cyclists from around the world. Most were in their 60s, the oldest 76. He regularly came in near the end of the line, but he rode every day with enthusiasm and joy.

That X-country trip encouraged me to seek out another challenge. So I rode solo 1,857 miles from the Canadian border down the entire magnificent Pacific Coast, finishing at the Mexican border this past July.

I had detailed turn-by-turn route maps from the Adventure Cycling Association to guide me all the way, but the journey



was still filled with delightful uncertainty, spectacular scenery and friendly, welcoming people.

My cycling journeys may be a bit much for a lot of seniors, but there are a lot of other activities that can help you enjoy retirement and stay healthy.

For the most part, illness and lost mobility doesn't happen because you've aged, but because you've ceased to be active. Regular physical activity can also help manage stress, improve your mood and maintain some aspects of cognitive function.



So get up and move.

As for me, I'm 72 and plan to keep cycling for years to come. Next up --- a solo ride across the U.S. on a 3,053-mile route known as the Southern Tier from San Diego, California to St. Augustine, Florida.

