

## Tennis and keeping fit

Listen to Phil talking about how taking up tennis when he retired has improved his health.

### Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

#### Vocabulary

1. ..... to keep fit
2. ..... to take something up
3. ..... medication
4. ..... morale
5. ..... blood pressure
6. ..... social
7. ..... exercise
8. ..... squash

#### Definition

- a. physical activity
- b. relating to activities in which you spend time with other people, outside of work
- c. medicine or drugs taken to improve an illness
- d. to begin to do something
- e. to stay healthy and strong
- f. a sport that involves hitting a ball against a wall
- g. the pressure at which your heart sends the blood around your body
- h. confidence and satisfaction

## Tasks

### Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. What did the doctor tell Phil?
  - a. He was fit and healthy.
  - b. His blood pressure was too high and he would soon need medication.
  - c. His blood pressure was too low and he would soon need medication.
2. What did Phil say to the doctor?
  - a. He would take medication.
  - b. He would get more sleep.
  - c. He would take more exercise instead of taking medication.
3. Why didn't Phil just go running?
  - a. He gets very tired.
  - b. He finds it boring.
  - c. He isn't very good at it.

4. Apart from being good exercise, what is the other advantage of tennis for Phil?
  - a. You can meet new people and socialise.
  - b. You can win a lot of competitions.
  - c. You can watch matches on television.
5. How is Phil's blood pressure now?
  - a. The same as before he started playing tennis.
  - b. It has gone down since before he started playing tennis.
  - c. It has gone up since before he started playing tennis.
6. What sport did Phil play when he was younger?
  - a. Squash
  - b. Rugby
  - c. Badminton
7. How old was Phil when he started playing tennis?
  - a. In his early 50s
  - b. In his early 60s
  - c. In his early 70s
8. How does Phil say that his tennis has improved?
  - a. He has watched YouTube tutorials.
  - b. He has watched a lot of professional tennis matches on TV.
  - c. His friend has given him tips.

## Task 2

Put the words and phrases in order to make sentences.

1. which was    also keep him fit.    of exercise    enjoyable and    Phil had    which would  
to find some form
2. where you    aspect to it,    join a club and    Tennis has    you meet    a very good  
social    lots of other people.
3. needed    Phil    for his    blood pressure.    to have    any medication    has never
4. He used    he got lazy.    but then    to take    younger,    when he was    exercise

5. transformed Phil's    than    eight years ago.    he was    Tennis has    much fitter  
   life. He's

6. his fitness.    his morale    as well    as    It's    improved

### **Discussion**

What do you do to keep fit and exercise? Would you like to take up a new sport?

## Transcript

**Interviewer:** Good morning, Phil.

**Phil:** Morning, Jo.

**Interviewer:** Erm, what would you like to talk about today?

**Phil:** Er, I thought I'd just say a little bit about the importance of, erm, trying to keep your body fit when you're getting older. I was, er, I had, my blood pressure was getting higher and the doctor was saying it was getting close to needing medication to improve it. And I said to him, 'I think I'd rather not have the medication but I will try and take more exercise.' So, I had to find some form of exercise which was enjoyable and which would also keep me fitter. So, I chose to take up playing tennis. I, erm, I'm quite good at hitting a ball or catching a ball so that wasn't any problem. And I get very bored if I just go running. But tennis has the advantage that you have a ball to chase around for an hour, you're stopping and starting, and it also has a very good social aspect to it where you join a club and you meet lots of other people who are, a lot of them are the same age as you, and you soon find some friends to play with. And you can go and play a game regularly, and then afterwards have a cup of coffee and a conversation with people. So, it gets you out of the house and meeting other people, and I think it has a whole lot of advantages. And it's certainly worked for me because I started playing regularly about eight or nine years ago and I have never needed to have any medication for my blood pressure. In fact, my blood pressure now is lower and more healthy than it was before I started playing. I really just got rather lazy. I used to take exercise and play, I used to play squash and other games when I was younger but then I got lazy. My knees got a bit creaky and I stopped playing anything until I took up tennis. And I think, really, it's transformed my life. I'm so much fitter than I was eight years ago. I feel healthier for it. I've made a lot of new friends who I have a lot of fun with. And I think it has tremendous benefits.

**Interviewer:** Great! How old were you, may I ask, when you started playing tennis?

**Phil:** I think I was in my early sixties. I was between about, I was probably about 63, between 60 and 65. And I'm now 72. And, erm, I have, my tennis in that time has improved a lot. I have a friend who is a retired tennis professional who I play with quite a lot, and he's given me quite a few tips on how to improve my tennis. And now I even occasionally get invited to play by some of the better players in the tennis club, which I think is rather good. It improves my morale as well as my fitness.

**Interviewer:** Ah, that's great! Thank you very much.

**Phil:** You're very welcome.

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. e
2. d
3. c
4. h
5. g
6. b
7. a
8. f

### Task 1

1. b
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. b
6. a
7. b
8. c

### Task 2

1. Phil had to find some form of exercise which was enjoyable and which would also keep him fit.
2. Tennis has a very good social aspect to it, where you join a club and you meet lots of other people.
3. Phil has never needed to have any medication for his blood pressure.
4. He used to take exercise when he was younger, but then he got lazy.
5. Tennis has transformed Phil's life. He's much fitter than he was eight years ago.
6. It's improved his morale, as well as his fitness.