

Keeping Fit and Active



An Exercise Guide

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Why Exercise?

As you get older you may become aware that normal everyday activities are more difficult than before. For example, you may feel that going to the kitchen to make a cup of tea begins to take more effort. Although this is a common occurrence in older people it is not an unavoidable consequence of ageing, and it is possible for you to do something about it.

Research has shown that regular exercise no matter what age you are, can result in muscles getting stronger, joints becoming less stiff, and improve balance and co-ordination.

Taking regular exercise can lead to everyday tasks becoming easier and reduce your risk of falling – which can result in serious injury.

Regular exercise does not necessarily mean going to the gym as there are plenty of activities you can do at home to keep yourself fit. In fact, this booklet has been designed to give you a gentle exercise programme that you can do in your own home and gives you general advice on keeping active.



Before You Begin

You can do the following exercises at home, at any time of the day that suits you.

Before starting your exercises there are some important points to remember.

- Make sure you are wearing well fitting, supportive footwear.
- Use a firm and upright chair. For most of the exercises you will be sitting away from the back of the chair.
- Pace yourself, only do as many of the exercises as you feel comfortable with.
- Always do the warm up first.
- Make sure you have enough space.
- Make sure you have a solid piece of furniture for support, e.g. kitchen sink or worktop
- Do the exercises slowly and in a controlled manner.
- Make sure the room is at a comfortable temperature.
- Keep breathing properly and don't hold your breath during the exercise.
- If you begin to feel unwell during the exercise programme, do not continue. If this happens again tell your GP.

Tips:

While exercising make sure you maintain good posture.

Head up, shoulders back, tummy in.

Warm Up

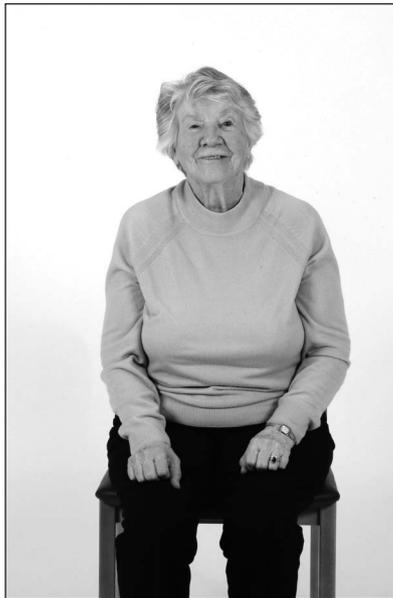
Before you begin exercising, it is important to do a few movements first to warm up. This will prepare your muscles and joints for the exercises and help to prevent injury.

All of the warm up exercises are done sitting in your chair, and should be done in a slow controlled manner.

1. Neck Mobility

- Gently turn your head to look over your right shoulder.
- Then turn your head to look over your left shoulder.

Repeat the movement 5 times to each side (or repeat ___ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 2. Shoulder Mobility

- Shrug your shoulders up towards your ears.
- Drop them back down again.

Repeat both movements 5 times (or repeat ___ times).



- Next lift both shoulders up to your ears, draw them backwards and then down and relax.



Instructor Comments:

□ 3. Arm Mobility

- Put your hands on your shoulders.
- Stretch your arms out to the side then back to your shoulders.
- Stretch your arms up towards the ceiling then back to your shoulders.

Repeat 5 times (or repeat ___ times).

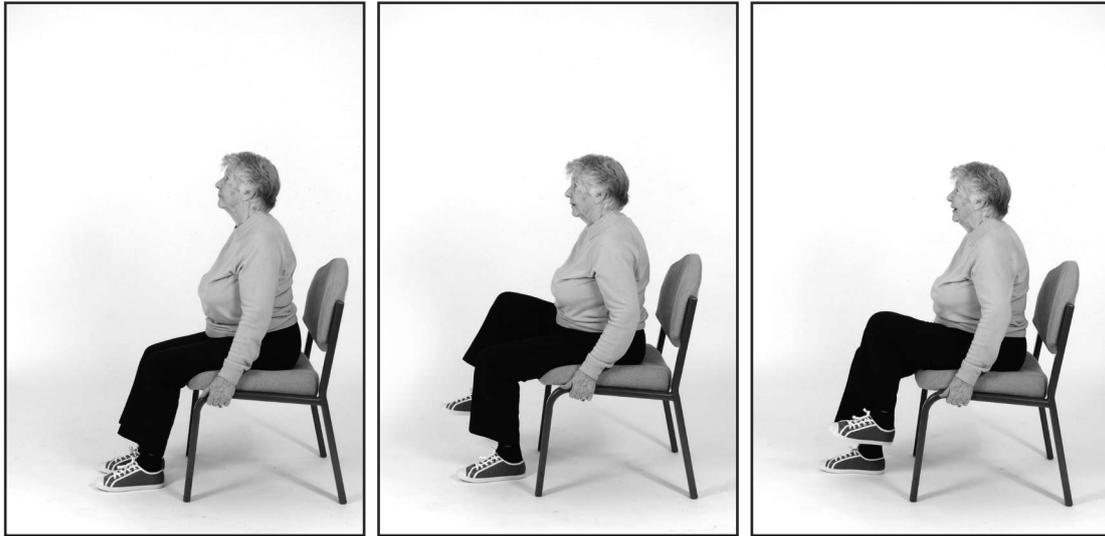


Instructor Comments:

4. Hip Mobility

- Lift your feet one at a time off the floor – as if you were marching (but sitting down).

Repeat 10 times on each leg (or repeat ___ times).



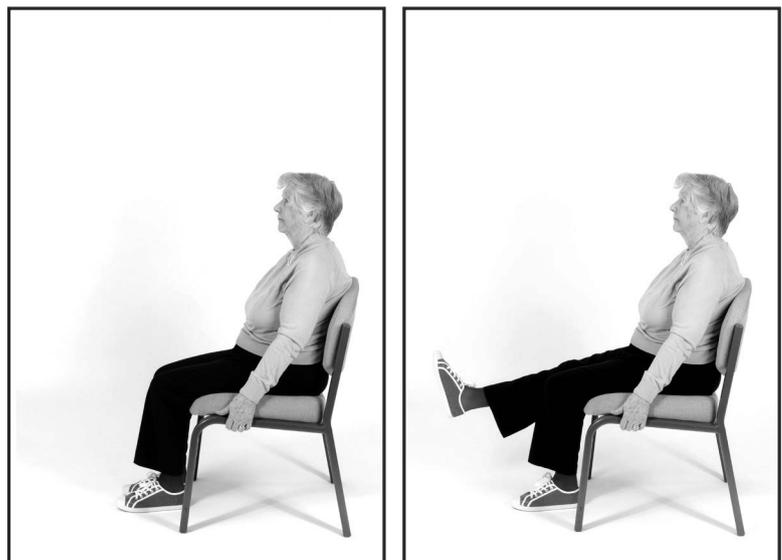
Instructor Comments:

5. Knee Mobility

- Straighten your leg as much as you can – keeping your foot off the floor.

Repeat 10 times on each leg

(or repeat ___ times).



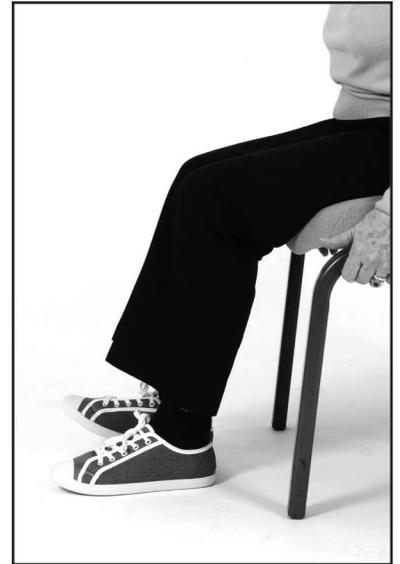
Instructor Comments:

6. Ankle Mobility 1

- Tap your toes on the floor – without lifting your heels up.

Repeat 10 times

(or repeat ___ times)



Instructor Comments:

7. Ankle Mobility 2

- Circle your ankles.

Repeat 10 times (or repeat __ times)



Instructor Comments:

Stretching Exercises

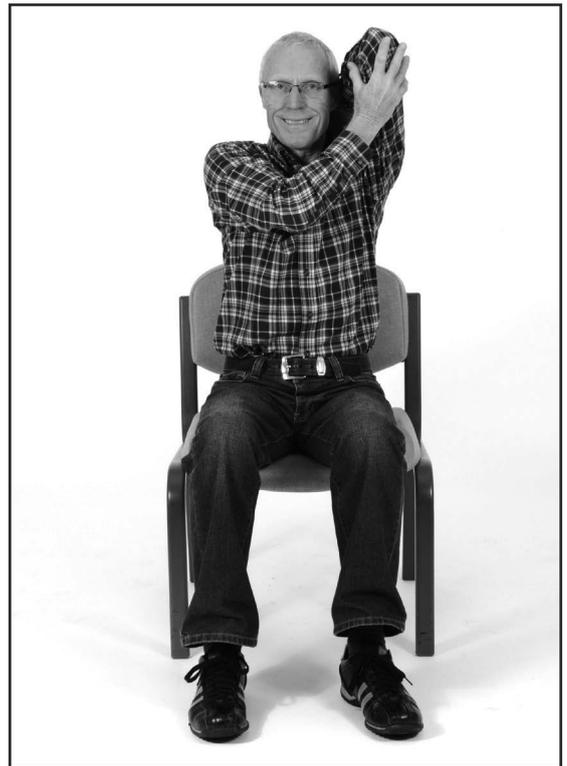
It is important after a warm up to do some very simple stretches to prepare your muscles for exercising.

□ 8. Upper Arm Stretch

Reach up in the air with your right hand, then bend your elbow and reach down the back of your neck.

Use your left arm to push the elbow towards the ceiling.

- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**
- Repeat using your left arm.
- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**

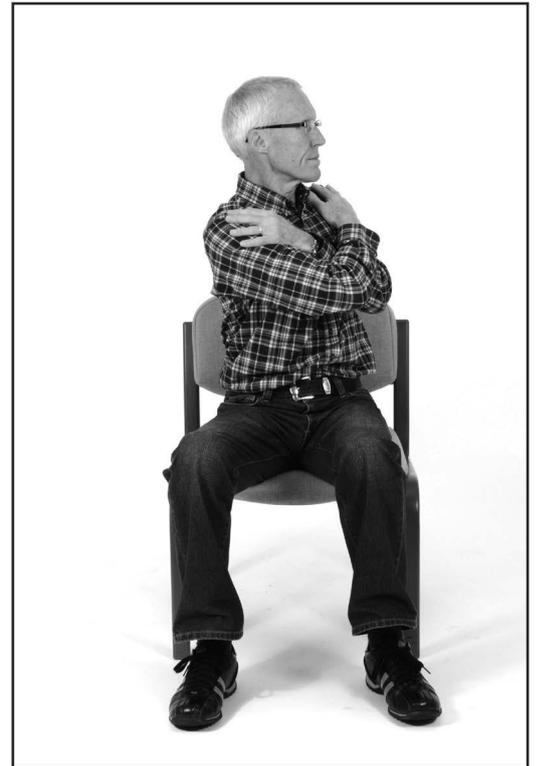
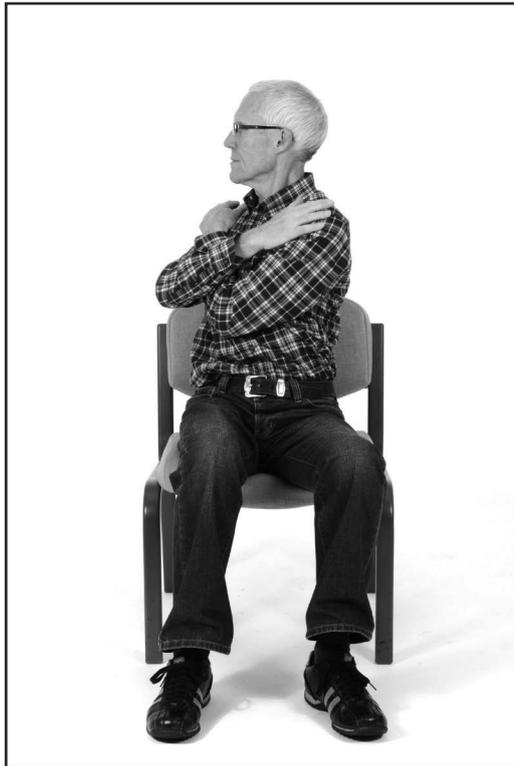


Instructor Comments:

□ 9. Body Stretch

Cross your hands over your chest, turn slowly to look over your right shoulder.

- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**
- Repeat to your left side.
- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**



Instructor Comments:

□ 10. Calf Stretch

Sit at the edge of the chair and straighten your right leg.

Sit up tall and pull your toes towards you with your heel on the floor.

- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**
- Repeat using the left leg.



Instructor Comments:

□ 11. Leg Stretch

Sit at the edge of the chair – straighten your right leg, keeping your heel on the floor.

- Keep your hand placed gently on your left leg.
- Bend your top half slowly forward.
- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**
- Repeat using the left leg.
- **Hold this position for a count of 10.**



Instructor Comments:

Strength and Balance Exercises

Remember:

- Do not begin the exercise programme until you have completed the warm up exercises.
- If you feel tired during the exercises, stop and rest.
- During the exercises, be aware of maintaining a good upright position.

□ 12. Back Strengthener

- Sit at the front of your chair with your hands by your sides.
- Gently turn your thumbs out and reach your arms backwards.
- Then squeeze your shoulder blades together and push your fingertips towards the floor.
- Keep your shoulders down and your hands low.

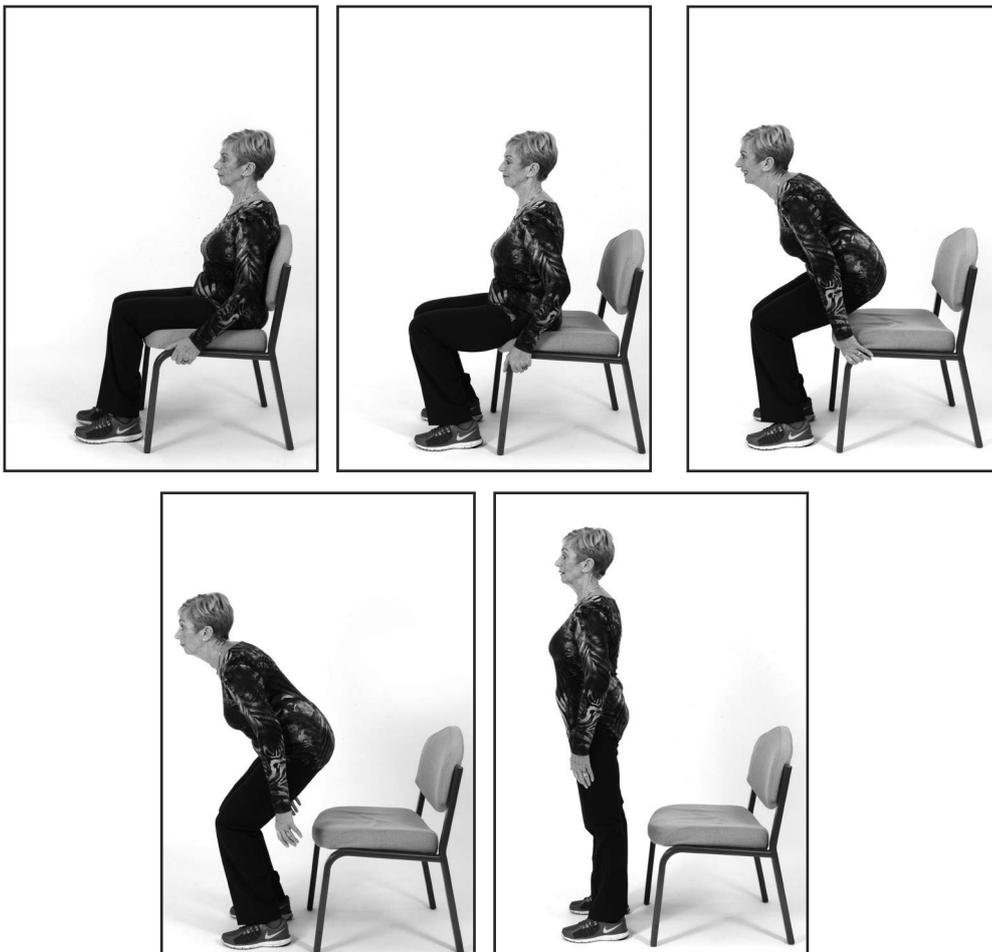
Count to 5. Repeat 10 times (or repeat ___ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 13. Sit - To - Stand

- Come to the edge of your chair.
- Put your hands on the chair. Make sure your knees are not touching.
- Stand up.
- Stand for a moment.
- Step back to make sure you can feel the chair behind your legs.
- Reach your hands back for the chair (if needed) and sit down in a slow and controlled manner.
- Repeat the exercise 10 times (or repeat __ times).



Instructor Comments:

Important

When doing the exercises at home, make sure you are holding on to a solid piece of furniture for support (e.g. kitchen sink or worktop).

As you improve in these balance exercises, you may find you can reduce your hand support and hold on more gently.

□ 14. Marching On The Spot

- Lift your feet up and down on the spot. Alternating right and left feet.

Repeat 10 times on each leg (or repeat _____ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 15. Side Stepping

- Step your right foot out to the side. Take your weight through that leg.
- Bring foot back to centre.
- Step your left foot out to the side. Take your weight through that leg.
- Bring foot back to centre.

Repeat 10 times on each leg (or repeat _____ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 16. Stepping Foot Behind

- Step your right foot backwards.
- Bring foot back to centre.
- Step your left foot backwards.
- Bring foot back to centre.

Repeat 10 times on each leg (or repeat ___ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 17. Heel Raises

- Go up onto the balls of your feet and keep your weight over your big toes.
- Count for 5 seconds.
- Gently lower your heels back down.
- Do both feet together.

Repeat the exercise 10 times (or repeat ___ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 18. Heel-Toe Stance

Remember to hold onto something for this exercise:

- Put your left foot directly in front of your right foot, as if standing on a tight-rope.
- Count to 5.
- Bring your feet back level with each other again.
- Put your right foot in front of your left foot, as if standing on a tight-rope.
- Bring your feet back level with each other again.

Repeat the exercise 10 times. (or repeat __ times).

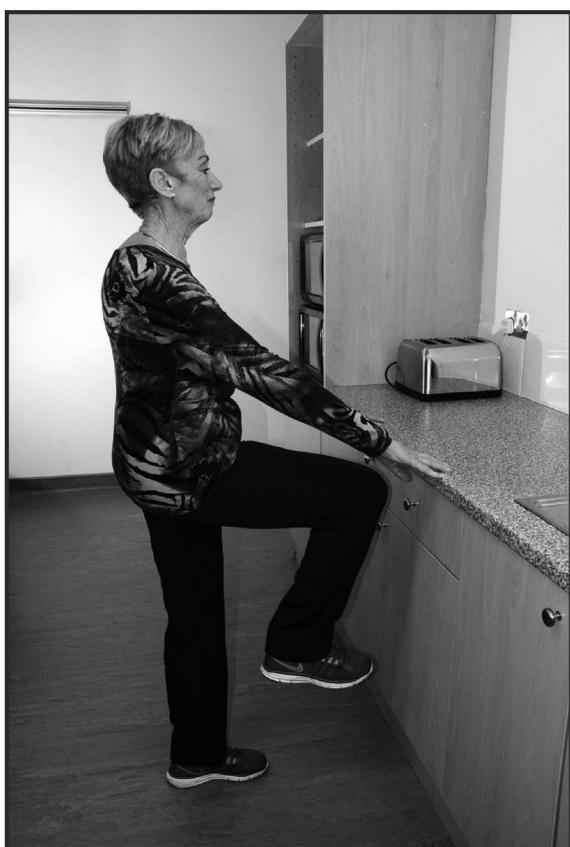


Instructor Comments:

□ 19. Standing On One Leg

- Remember to hold onto something.
- Lift one foot off the floor.
- Keep your balance. Stand up tall and maintain good posture.
- Count to 5.
- Slowly put your foot back on the floor.

Repeat on each leg 5 times (or repeat __ times).



Instructor Comments:

□ 20. Wall Press

- Standing facing the wall.
- Place your hands flat on the wall at shoulder height.
- Lean gently towards the wall bending your elbows. Keep your back, hips and knees straight. Push your body back away from the wall by pushing through the heel of your hands.

Repeat the exercise 10 times. (or repeat ___ times)



Instructor Comments:

Cool Down

Now that you have completed your exercises, please return to page 12 and complete the stretches again.

To cool down properly do exercises 8, 9, 10 and 11 and hold these cool down stretches for 15 seconds.

General Advice

One of the best ways to keep fit and active is to get up from your chair and walk about several times a day. Even if you don't feel you can walk very far you should avoid sitting for long periods as this can lead to muscles becoming weak and joints becoming sore. Try to develop a habit of keeping active and incorporate the exercises into your daily routine.

Personal Notes

To be completed by your physiotherapist or instructor if applicable:

This revised version was updated by the Community Falls Prevention Programme Physiotherapy Department.

This booklet was produced by the Falls Physical Activity Subgroup of the Greater Glasgow Osteoporosis and Falls Working Group. Based on the booklet produced by the Physiotherapy Department, Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

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