

Home Based Strength Training for Older Adults

This poster gives you a safe, simple and effective strength training program to do in your own home. Evidence from around the world clearly identifies that strength training benefits both women and men of all ages and fitness levels. Strength Training will help you increase strength, maintain bone density, improve mobility, balance and decrease risk of falls.

The following questions have been designed to identify people who need medical advice before starting these exercises. Common sense is the best guide when you answer these questions. Please read the questions carefully and answer each one honestly. Being active is safe for most people, however, there are a small number of people who may be at risk when participating in an exercise program.

BEFORE YOU START TRAINING

Please answer 'yes' or 'no' for each question below;

1. Do you suffer from a chronic medical condition such as heart disease, blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, or a lung disorder?
2. Do you feel pain in the chest when at rest or when you do physical activity?
3. Do you sometimes feel dizzy, lose your balance, or faint?
4. Do you have bone or joint problems made worse by a change in your physical activity?
5. Are you recovering from a recent illness, injury or surgery?
6. Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity?

YES TO ONE OR MORE QUESTIONS

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please see your doctor before starting these exercises. Tell the doctor you want to start these exercises and ask if there are any problems with this.

NO TO ALL QUESTIONS

If you answered no to all questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can begin these exercises. If you have any concerns about starting these exercises, please consult your doctor before you begin.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Exercises should be done slowly
- If any exercise causes pain, stop doing the exercise
- If you can do these exercises easily, follow the suggested progression under each exercise
- Do each exercise 10 times, then rest for 30 seconds to a minute and then do another 10 times
- Always stand up tall - good posture is very important
- Breathe normally - **DO NOT HOLD YOUR BREATH**

- Wear loose comfortable clothing and flat nonslip shoes
- If your health changes so that you then answer yes to any of the above questions, consult your doctor before continuing with these exercises
- If you are not feeling well because of a temporary illness, wait until you feel better

If you would like to join a Strength Training class, call your local health service or gym to see if a class is available in your community.

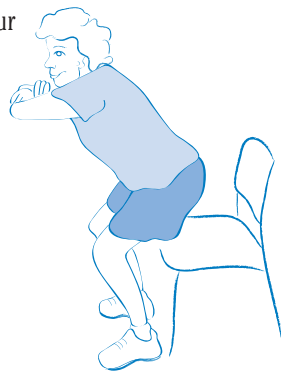
Before doing the exercises below, warm up by walking on the spot for 1 minute swinging your arms. If you have poor balance, hold onto the back of a chair or bench and just move your legs.

SQUATS

Purpose: Strengthening leg and buttock muscles to help with walking, balance and stair climbing.

Instructions: Stand in front of a chair with feet shoulder-width apart and arms crossed out in front. Place your weight more on your heels than on the balls of your feet. Bend your knees, as you lower your buttocks towards the chair as far as you can comfortably without sitting. Keep your back straight and your knees over your feet. Slowly stand up straight before repeating.

Progression: Hold some weights in your hands.

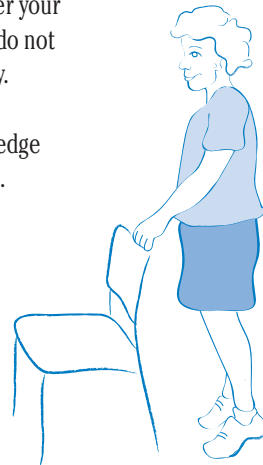


HEEL RAISE

Purpose: Strengthening the calf muscles to improve walking, balance and to reduce falls risk.

Instructions: Hold onto the back of a chair with feet shoulder width apart. Slowly rise up onto your toes. Hold for 2 to 4 seconds, then slowly lower your heels back to the floor. Ensure that you do not lean on the chair - use it for balance only.

Progression: Do this exercise on the edge of a secure step, holding onto a handrail.

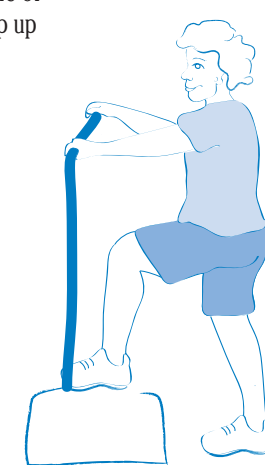


STEP-UPS

Purpose: Strengthening leg and buttock muscles to help with getting out of a chair, walking and climbing stairs.

Instructions: Stand close to a secure step of comfortable height. If necessary, hold onto a handrail for balance. Keeping your back straight, put the whole of your left foot on the step above and step up and down with your right foot. Repeat 10 times and then change feet.

Progression: Use a higher step or step up 2 steps instead of one.

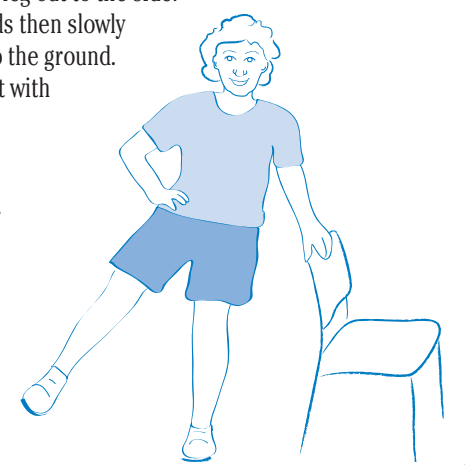


SIDE LEG RAISE

Purpose: Strengthening the hip muscles to help with balance and walking.

Instructions: Hold onto the back of a chair with feet shoulder width apart and toes facing forward. Slowly take your right leg out to the side. Hold for 2 to 4 seconds then slowly lower your leg back to the ground. Repeat the movement with your left leg.

Progression: Lie on your side and lift your top leg up a short distance.

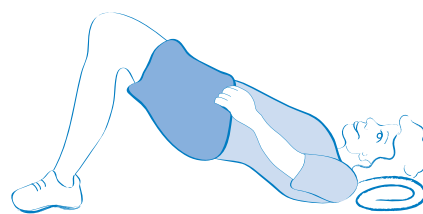


BRIDGE

Purpose: Strengthening buttock muscles to help with walking, balance and climbing stairs.

Instructions: Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet resting on the floor. Rest your hands on your stomach. Slowly raise your buttocks from the floor, keeping your stomach tight. Hold for 2 to 4 seconds, then slowly lower your buttocks back to the floor. If you have difficulty lying on the floor, do this exercise on the bed.

Progression: Lift one foot off the floor before raising your buttocks.

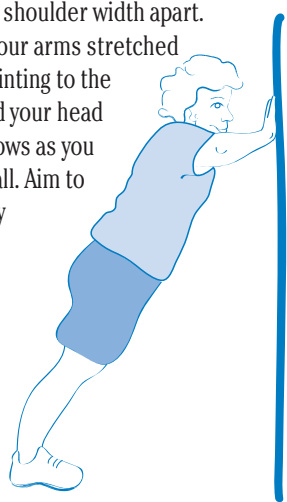


WALL PRESS

Purpose: Strengthening the arms shoulders and chest to help with lifting objects, attending to household tasks and getting out of low chairs.

Instructions: Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Place your hands against a wall, with your arms stretched out in front of you and your fingers pointing to the ceiling. Keeping your back straight and your head looking forward, slowly bend your elbows as you lower your upper body towards the wall. Aim to lower yourself a couple of inches away from the wall and then push back to your starting position.

Progression: Increase the level of difficulty by moving your legs further away from the wall or by performing the exercise as a floor push up.

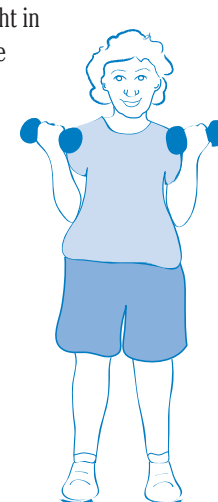


BICEP CURL

Purpose: Strengthening the upper arm muscle to help with activities such as carrying bags, cooking and household tasks.

Instructions: Stand with feet shoulder width apart and your arms at your side, with a small weight in each hand. Slowly bend your elbow, lifting the weights towards your shoulders. Keep your upper arms and elbows close to your side. Pause, then slowly lower the weights back towards your thighs. Keep your wrists straight throughout the exercise.

Progression: Increase the amount of weight you are lifting.

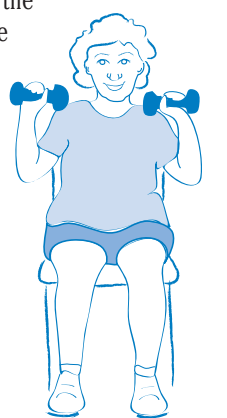


OVERHEAD PRESS

Purpose: Strengthening shoulder and back muscles to help with overhead activities, reaching for objects in high cupboards, dressing and tasks around the house.

Instructions: Sit in a chair holding onto a light weight in each hand. Raise your hands with your palms facing forward, until the weights are level with your shoulders. Slowly push the weights up towards the ceiling, until your arms are fully extended. Make sure you don't lock your elbows. Pause, then slowly lower the weights back to shoulder level, bringing your elbows down close to your sides.

Progression: Increase the amount of weight you are lifting.

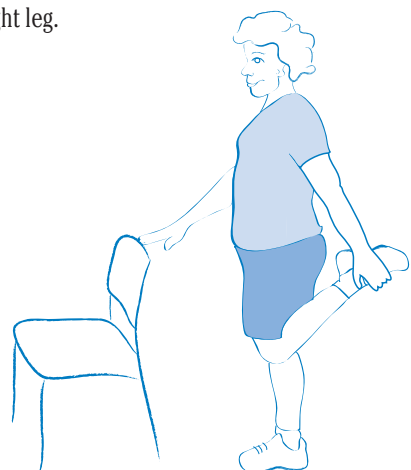


COOL DOWN - STRETCHES:

Do the following stretches after your strengthening exercises. Hold each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds, being careful not to bounce.

QUADRICEPS

While holding onto a chair, grasp left your ankle with your hand and slowly pull your heel up towards the buttocks. Keep knees close together. Hold. Repeat with the right leg.



CALF

Stand facing a chair 1 metre away. Take 1 step forward with your left foot. Place your hands on the chair in front of you. Keep your elbows slightly bent and your shoulders, hips and feet pointing directly towards the chair. Bend your left knee slowly, using the movement to control the amount of stretch you feel in your right calf muscle. Both heels should stay on the ground. Keep your right knee (back leg) straight and hold. Switch legs and repeat the stretch for the left calf.



HAMSTRING

While sitting on the edge of a chair, straighten your left leg in front of the body with the heel on the floor. Sit up straight and gently lean forward until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of your left leg. Hold. Repeat with the right leg.



CHEST AND ARM

Stand with your arms at your sides and your feet shoulder-width apart. Extend both arms behind your back and clasp your hands together. Squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold.

