

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Keeping active at home

Exercises and education for patients over the age of 65



Further sources of information

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King’s Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET n@nhs.net

If you need this information in a different language or format, please contact the PET (as above). This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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Introduction

Keeping active is important to help stay healthy and independent. Taking part in regular exercise has been proven to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, some cancers, depression and dementia. Being active does not always mean doing exercise. There are lots of ways to stay active taking part in activities you enjoy.

This booklet aims to provide education and practical advice to help stay active at home. The advice provided in this booklet is aimed at people over the age of 65.

If you have not taken part in any physical activity for a while, have any pre-existing health conditions or any injuries, please consult your GP before taking part in any activities.

The exercises and recommended repetitions provided in this booklet are only examples. Please only complete exercises that you are comfortable with. If any of the exercises cause pain then please stop and seek medical advice if necessary.



Getting started

Choosing to take part in exercises will have lasting positive effects on your body. Here are some tips on how to get started.

Do something you enjoy

You are much more likely to stick to doing exercise if you enjoy doing it. Try out different activities to learn new skills and find out which activities you enjoy the most.

Do it with a friend or family

Why not take up a new hobby with friends or family so you can share experiences and motivate each other?

Keep a diary

Keep a diary of what exercise you did and how it made you feel. This will allow you to keep track of your progress.

Start slow

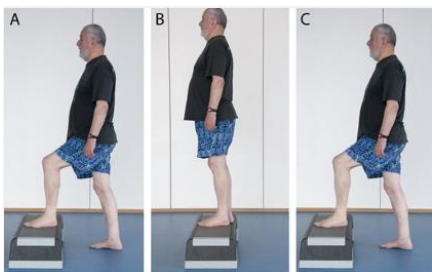
If you haven't taken part in any exercise for a while then start gently and gradually increase the amount of time you take part in exercise per week. This will prevent you from injuring any joints or muscles.

Cardiovascular exercises



These are ideas of exercises that aim to raise your heart rate. Try to complete each exercise for as long as you can at an intensity that you are comfortable with.

Step ups



Walking/hiking



Cycling



Physical activity



This section aims to explain what is meant by physical activity and how often we should be taking part in this.

What is physical activity?

Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. This can vary from walking to gardening to taking part in a sport.

How much exercise should I be doing?

Adults over the age of 65 should aim to do some form of activity every day. Daily chores like shopping, cooking or housework do not count towards your daily exercise because the effort is not hard enough to raise your heart rate, although they do help break up sedentary time.

Current guidelines state the people over the age of 65 should:

- Aim to be physically active every day, even if this is just light activity.
- Do activities that help improve strength, balance and flexibility 2 days a week.
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise a week.
- Reduce time spent lying or sitting down and break up long periods of inactivity with some exercise.

Types of physical activity

Light activity

Light activity is gentle movement that is done at a steady pace that does not cause you to break a sweat or become short of breath.

Examples of light activity include:

- Getting up to make a cup of tea.
- Moving around your home.
- Walking at a slow pace.
- Cleaning and dusting.
- Vacuuming.
- Making the bed.
- Standing up.

Moderate activity

Moderate activity will raise your heart rate, and make you breathe faster and feel warmer. One way to tell if you're working at a moderate intensity level is if you can still talk, but not sing.

Examples of moderate intensity activities:

- Brisk walking.
- Pushing a lawn mower.
- Hiking.
- Dancing.
- Riding a bike.
- Water aerobics.

Balance exercises



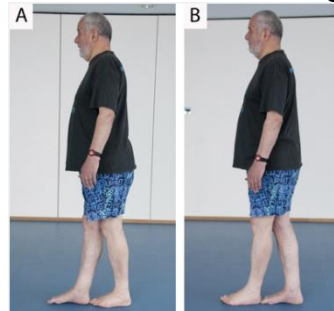
These exercises should be completed standing up and near to a stable surface that you can hold onto if required. It may be useful to have another person present when completing the exercises for the first time to support you if necessary.

Side stepping



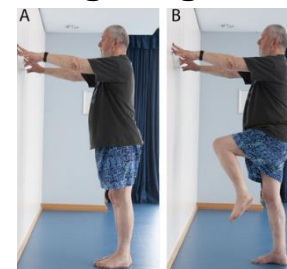
Completed 5-10 steps in both directions. Repeat 2-4 times.

Heel to toe walking



Complete 5-10 steps forwards and backwards. Repeat 2-4 times.

Single leg stand



Aim to balance as long as you can. Repeat 2-4 times on each leg.

Grapevine walking



Completed 5-10 steps in both directions. Repeat 2-4 times.

Strengthening exercises



In order to gain the benefits from strength exercises, you should do them to the point where you need a short rest before repeating the activity.

There are many ways you can strengthen your muscles, whether you're at home or in a gym.

Examples of muscle-strengthening activities:

- Carrying heavy shopping bags.
- Yoga.
- Pilates.
- Tai chi.
- Lifting weights.
- Working with resistance bands.
- Bodyweight exercises such as squats, press ups or sit ups.
- Heavy gardening such as digging and shovelling.

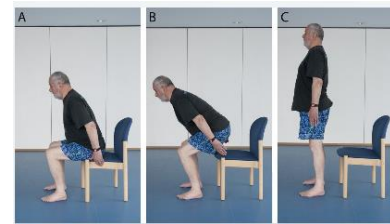
For examples of strengthening exercises please go to the chair based exercises, upper limb strengthening exercises and lower limb strengthening exercises pages. If you don't have any weights at home, you can use household items such as tins of beans or bottles of water.

Lower Limb strengthening exercises

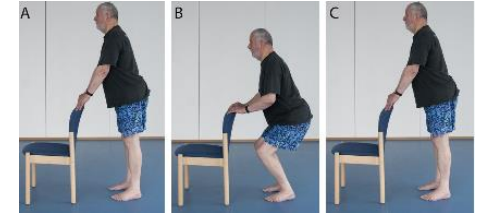


These exercises are to be completed standing up. A chair can be used to help support with balance.

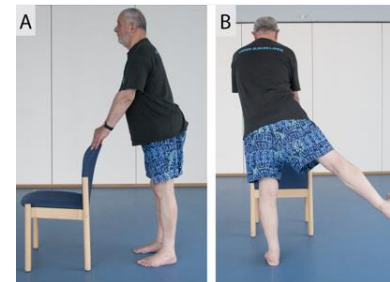
Sit to stand



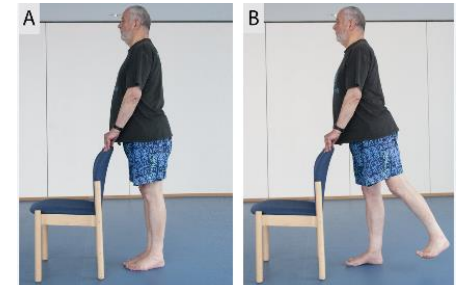
Mini squat



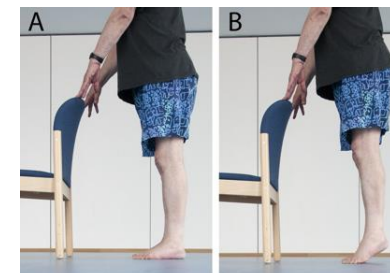
Side raise



Leg extension



Calf raise



Aim to do between 8-12 repetitions of each exercise. If this is painful, do however many is comfortable for you. To make these exercises more challenging you can hold onto a heavy object or use resistance bands.

Chair based exercises



These exercises are to be completed sat in a chair. The exercises focus both on upper limb and lower limb strengthening.

Marching on the spot



Knee kicks



Knee out to the side



Bicep curl



Shoulder flys



Arm raiser



Aim to do between 8-12 repetitions of each exercise. If this is painful, do however many is comfortable for you. To make these exercises more challenging you can hold onto a heavy object or use resistance bands whilst doing the exercises.

Importance of staying active



Being active has both positive effects on the body and on the mind.

Here is a list of benefits of taking part in physical activity:

- Up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease.
- Up to a 35% lower risk of having a stroke.
- Up to a 50% lower risk of getting type 2 diabetes.
- Up to a 50% lower risk of having colon cancer.
- Up to a 50% lower risk of having breast cancer.
- Maintaining healthy bones.
- Up to a 30% reduced risk of having dementia.
- Up to a 30% lower risk of having depression.
- Making friends and socialising.
- Up to a 83% lower risk of having osteoarthritis.
- Better wellbeing.
- Up to a 63% lower risk of having a hip fracture.
- Up to a 30% lower risk of having a fall.

Preventing falls



Falls in the home can be very common for older people. Most falls are preventable and are not a natural part of aging.

Here are a few tips on how to prevent falls:

- Remove all trip hazards such as rugs, wires and clutter.
- Wear well fitting shoes.
- Do not walk on slippery floors in socks or tights.
- Use no-slip rugs and mats.
- Get a regular eye test.
- Do not wear loose-fitting or trailing clothes which you may trip over.
- Take care of your feet by regularly cutting your toe nails or seeking help from your GP or a chiropodist if you have any problems with your feet.
- Make sure all rooms and hallways are well lit.
- Ask for help with things you are unable to do safely on your own.

Another way to help prevent falls is to work on your strength and balance. Please go to the upper limb strengthening exercises, lower limb strengthening exercises and balance exercises pages for tips on exercises.

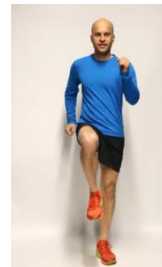
Before and after exercising



It is always important to do a gentle warm up and cool down after exercising to prepare the body for exercise and to prevent injuries to the joints and muscles.

Warm up (these can be done in standing or sitting)

Marching on the spot



Heel digs



Shoulder rolls



30 seconds each.

Cool down (these can be done in standing or sitting)

Quad stretch



Hamstring stretch



Calf stretch



Shoulder stretch



Aim to hold for 30 seconds to 1 minute each side.