

At Home Physical Activity **Routine**

Most people tend to focus on one type of exercise or activity. This is a great start, but research has shown that it is important to get all four types of exercise: endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility. Each one adds its own different benefit to your life! Doing one kind also can improve your ability to do the others. When we add variety into our physical activity routine it can help us avoid getting bored of the same thing too quickly and help us prevent injury.

*As always before starting something new please consult your physician.

Endurance

Endurance activities, often referred to as aerobic activities, increase your breathing and heart rate. Endurance exercises aim to keep your heart, lungs, and circulatory system healthy. They can also help by delaying or preventing many diseases that are common in older adults such as diabetes, colon cancers, heart disease, and others. Physical activities that build endurance include:

- Brisk walking
- Yard work (mowing, raking)
- Dancing at family weddings
- Swimming
- Biking
- Climbing stairs or hills
- Nature walks
- Playing tennis
- Pickleball
- Playing with grandchildren at the park

Build up to at least 150 minutes of activity a week that makes you breathe hard. Try to be active throughout your day to reach this goal and avoid sitting for long periods of time.

Safety tips

- Listen to your body: endurance activities should not cause dizziness, chest pain or pressure, or a feeling like heartburn.
- Be sure to drink liquids when doing any activity that makes you sweat. If your doctor has told you to limit your fluids, be sure to check before increasing the amount of fluid you drink while exercising.
- If you are going to be outdoors, be aware of your surroundings.
- To prevent injuries, use safety equipment, such as a helmet when out on the bike.

Strength

Strong muscles help you stay independent and make everyday activities feel easier. With strong muscles you can carry groceries, walk upstairs, vacuum, and many more daily activities with ease! When you are strong you are less likely to fall. Strength exercises include lifting weights, even your own body weight, or using a resistance band.

Lifting weights

Try to do strength exercises for all of your major muscle groups at least 2 days per week. It is important to note that we do NOT exercise the same muscle group 2 days in a row. If you're just starting, you might need to use 1- or 2-pound weights, or no weight at all. Your body will need to get used to the strength training exercises and at first body weight will be enough. You can use common objects from your home, such as bottled water or soup cans if you

do not have dumbbells when the time comes to add weight. You can also do this at the local gym when the situation allows. The use of proper form for safety is **MUCH MORE IMPORTANT** than how much weight you are using so start small. To prevent injury, don't jerk or thrust weights into position. Use smooth, steady movements. Avoid "locking" your arm and leg joints in a tightly straightened position so blood can freely flow while you are moving the weight.



Using a resistance band

Resistance bands are stretchy elastic bands that come in several strengths, from light to heavy. You can use them for strength exercises instead of weights. When just beginning to use the resistance bands, it is important to try the exercises without the band or use a light band until you are comfortable with the movements. Hold on to the band tightly (some bands have handles) or wrap it around your hand or foot. If the band comes loose it can cause injury so be sure to have a good grip on the band or go to a lighter band. Again, **FORM IS MORE IMPORTANT** than the strength of the band you use. Do the exercises in a slow, controlled manner, and be careful not to let the band slip.



Safety tips

- Don't hold your breath during strength exercises, breathe regularly.
- Breathe out as you lift or push, and breathe in as you relax.
- Talk with your doctor if you are unsure about doing a particular exercise.

Balance

Balance exercises help prevent FALLS!
Falls are a common problem in older adults that can have serious consequences. Now it is time to use the strength that you have gained and increase your balance! Beginner yoga is a great way to start gaining balance.

Examples of balance exercises

- Try standing on one foot, then the other. If at first you need support, hold on to something sturdy. Work your way up to doing this movement without support.



- Get up from a chair without using your hands or arms.
- Try the heel-to-toe walk. As you walk, put the heel of one foot just in front of the toes of your other foot. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch.



Safety Tips

- Have a sturdy chair or a person nearby to hold on to if you feel unsteady.
- Talk with your doctor if you are unsure about a particular exercise.

Flexibility

Stretching can improve your flexibility and your balance. It is easier to catch yourself when you are about to fall if you are flexible enough.

Moving more freely will make it easier for you to reach down to tie your shoes or look over your shoulder when you back your car out of the driveway.

Examples of flexibility exercises

- Try the calf stretch exercise. Stand facing a wall slightly farther than arm's length from the wall, feet shoulder-width apart. Step forward with the right leg and bend the right knee. Keeping both feet flat on the floor, bend the left knee slightly until you feel a stretch in your left calf muscle. Hold the position for 10 to 30 seconds,

and then return to the starting position.
Repeat with the left leg.



- **Try the ankle stretch exercise. Sit securely toward the edge of a sturdy, armless chair. Stretch your legs out in front of you. With your heels on the floor, bend your ankles to point the toes toward you. Hold the position for 10 to 30 seconds. Bend your ankles to point toes away from you and hold for 10 to 30 seconds.**



Safety tips

- Stretch when your muscles are warmed up.
- Stretch after endurance or strength exercises.
- Don't stretch so far that it hurts.
- Always remember to breathe normally while holding a stretch.
- Talk with your doctor if you are unsure about a particular exercise.

No matter your age, you can find activities that meet your fitness level and needs!

Sample workout

What you'll need -

- Tennis ball
- Towel
- 2 equal weights (cans, water bottles)
- Sturdy chair

For this workout start by warming up, this can be a walk around the block or a walk around the house. Then move onto the strength and balance exercises and then finish with a cool down walk and the flexibility exercises.

Remember safety comes first ALWAYS. Drink lots of water, stop if there is any pain, slow and steady, breathe regularly, and HAVE FUN!

1) **Arm Circles** – while holding tennis balls or weights and your arms out parallel to the floor. Move your arms in a forward circle 5 times then reverse the direction for 5 times.

2) **Wall Push-Up x 5** – stand in front of a wall hands outstretched the further you are away from the wall the heavier you will feel. Lower yourself to the wall and push yourself back up away from the wall.



3) **Overhead Arm Raise x 5** – can be done with or without weight



4) **Back Leg Raise x 5 each leg** – stand in front of a wall and with a straight leg extend it straight backward.



5) **Side Leg Raise x 5 each leg** – stand with a hand on a sturdy chair or another place to keep your balance and lift your leg straight out to the side.



6.) **Toe Stand x 5** – while standing near a sturdy chair starting from a flat-footed position you will then go onto your toes and then back onto flat foot.

7.) **Heel-to-Toe Walk 10 yards x 5** – walk heel-to-toe for ten yards while making sure to keep trunk musculature tight and engaged.

Cool down walk for 10 minutes to bring the heart rate down slowly and safely.

Now flexibility –

Let's start to increase your flexibility.

Ankles – sit in a chair with both feet flat on the floor bring one toe up toward your shin until you feel a restriction hold for 20 seconds, lower the foot back to the floor and then switch sides.



Thighs – while holding onto a sturdy chair bring one foot behind you and hold onto your ankle if you cannot grab your ankle you can place it onto a stool.



Back – while sitting on a chair you will turn from one side to the other until you feel a comfortable stretch.



Shoulder - to stretch our shoulders hold a towel in one hand put it over your shoulder and with your free hand grab it behind your back.



Here is a Template that you can use to create your own workout routine from the exercises we have given you! Remember 150 minutes a week of activity will help prevent disease and allow you to live the life you love!

Pick one activity a day and plan your week! Remember to plan a rest day every 3-4 days to allow your body to recuperate and regain the energy needed for the next day's activities.

| ACTIVITY TYPE | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Endurance | | | | | | | |
| Upper-Body Strength | | | | | | | |
| Lower-Body Strength | | | | | | | |
| Balance | | | | | | | |
| Flexibility | | | | | | | |

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/exercise-and-fitness-as-you-age.htm>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity>

*For entry into the Virtual Fall Health Fair prize drawings, please complete this form:

<https://forms.gle/rhF3Jo4NCSJHcBQN8>