

# Active Bodies

## **Always listen to your body**

Exercise should never hurt or make you feel worse.

Stop exercising immediately if you feel dizzy or short of breath, develop chest pain or pressure, break out in a cold sweat, or experience pain. If you regularly experience pain or discomfort after exercising, try exercising for less time but more frequently throughout the day.

## **Start slow and build up steadily**

If you haven't been active in a while, build up your exercise programme little by little starting off with small movements and progress over time as you feel able. Try spacing workouts so you don't over-do it.

Below are some great exercises that focus on stretching, strength, and coordination.

# Exercise Session 1

## **Stretch and Flex Movements - *Repeat this section twice***

### **Shoulder Roll -**

Rotate shoulders in a forward direction making big circles with them and then rotate them backwards. Keep your back straight and breathing normal. (4 on each side)

### **Buttercup Stretch -**

Stretch out to the side, reaching down with one arm and reaching over your head with the other. You will feel a stretch down the elevated arm. (4 on each side)

### **Knee Push Away -**

Lifting one knee up and extending the knee slow and controlled. Focusing on stretching the leg out. (4 on each side)

### **Chair Pull with Rotation -**

Hold the side of the chair with one arm and rotate around with your whole torso as far as feels comfortable. (4 on each side)

# Exercise Session 1 - Continued

## Strength Movements - Repeat this section twice

### Diagonal Toe Tap -

Bringing one knee up towards your body and kicking out diagonally to the opposite side. Placing the toe on the floor and return your foot back to the centre. Alternate this movement on each leg. (8 on each leg)

### Knee Lifts -

Lift each knee up in turn as high as feels comfortable. (8 on each leg)

### Rowing -

With feet firmly on the ground. Lean forward from the hips and reach both arms out. Bring your body back to the centre and pull your arms in as if you are rowing. (16 times)

### Seated Cycle -

Lift one leg up and rotate in a forward circular motion as if cycling with one leg. Try and keep your foot from hitting the floor. (4 on each leg)

## Coordination Movements - Repeat this section twice

### Double Reach Through -

With one hand extended out the other hand will go over and under. Start the movement slow and see if you can speed it up. (8 each side)

### Knee Lift -

Lift each knee up in turn as high as feels comfortable (8 on each leg)

### Sit To Stand Test -

Using the sides of your armchair for support. Time how long it takes you to go from seated to standing safely.

# Exercise Session 2

## Stretch and Flex Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Reach and Pull -**

Reach across your body as far as feels comfortable, with your hands flexed open. At the end point, grip and pull back to the centre position. Repeat with the other arm. (8 on each side)

### **Hip Opener -**

With one leg out as your base, rest your other leg on top with a slight bend at the knee. Gently push down on the knee to feel a stretch on your upper leg. (4 on each side)

### **Chair Hold Plus Side Reach -**

Bring one hand across your body and hold on to the chair for support, then raise the opposite arm above your head and reach to the side. (8 on each side)

### **Cat Stretch -**

While seated in a chair, round your shoulders forward and nod your head downwards. Slowly move your head back up and gradually tilt back, looking upwards. Bring your shoulders back and lift your chest forward. (10 times)

## Strength Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **High Knees Step Up -**

Hold on to a chair for support. With one leg at a time, raise your knee up to complete high knee steps. This can be done seated as a knee lift. (8 on each leg)

### **Hip Extension -**

Hold on to a chair for support. Using one leg at a time, swing your leg backwards from your hip. (8 on each side)

### **Rowing -**

With feet firmly on the ground, lean forward from the hips and reach both arms out. Bring your body back to the centre and pull your arms in, as if you are rowing. (16 times)

### **Sit to Stand -**

From a sitting position, raise up to a standing position (without using your hands to support you into standing if possible) (No more than 3 times)

## Coordination Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Cross Crawl -**

Lift one knee and your opposite arm up together, then lower them down and lift the opposite knee and arm together. (do 15, have a rest, do 10, have a rest, do 5, have a rest)

### **Knee Lifts -**

Lift each knee up in turn as high as feels comfortable. If you can, twist the upper body and touch your knee with the opposite elbow. (8 on each leg)

# Exercise Session 2 - Continued



Soft Cardio Movement - *Repeat this section twice*

**Walk/jog like nobody is watching -**

Put on your favourite song or radio station. When it's the chorus of the song you walk/jog. When it stops, rest. See if you can do the full song!

# Exercise Session 3

## Stretch and Flex Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Single Arm Reach Out -**

Reach forward with one arm to as far as feels comfortable and return back to the centre. Do this 8 times, then repeat with the other arm. (8 on each arm)

### **Diagonal Leg Stretch -**

Lift your leg up and stretch it out diagonally away from you. Focus on holding at the end point before returning back to centre. (3 times on each leg)

### **Shoulder Tap Reach Down -**

Cross the arms and tap the shoulders, then extend the arms beside your body. (10 times)

### **Ankle Rotation -**

Sitting upright in your chair, lift one foot and start to slowly rotate in one direction. Do this on each foot. (5 times on each foot)

## Strength Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Side Reaches -**

Starting with both arms up as if you were going to start boxing. Stretch one arm out to the side and return to the centre of your body. Repeat on the other arm. (8 each side)

### **Side Steps -**

Starting with both feet flat. Step one out to the side and return to the centre. Repeat on the other leg. (8 on each leg)

### **Single Leg Kicks -**

Sitting upright. Kick one leg out forwards, straight in front of you, then return to centre. Repeat on the other leg. (8 on each leg)

### **Double Arm Reach Ups -**

Reach both arms above your head and return to your knees. (8 times)

*If you found that easy, try to put the movements together, so the arms and legs move together - one side at a time.*

# Exercise Session 3 - Continued

## Coordination Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Pass Through -**

Pass a small object through your legs making a figure of 8 shape. This can be done with a ball of socks or any 'easy to grab' object. (Alternate each side)

### **Brain Aerobics -**

Touch your nose with your right hand and cross your left hand over to touch your right ear. Swap them over. When this is done correctly it creates an overlapping technique. See if you can gradually get quicker!

### **Body Scan -**

Tap each joint from the bottom of your body (ankles) to top (above head) and back down. Begin with tapping the ankles, knees, shoulders and finishing with a double arm reach up. Then making your way back down the body. Start slow and see how fast you can repeat this up to 5 times.

### **Guidance notes:**

You may notice your heart rate increase - this is normal.

# Exercise Session 4

## Stretch and Flex Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Forward Lean Stretch -**

Start by sitting up tall. Keep your hips still and lean your body forwards. Bring yourself back upright in your chair and repeat. (10 times)

### **Seat Stretch -**

Lift one arm out straight to the side and rest your other hand on your shoulder. Rotate the straight arm round in a small, backwards circular motion. (5 on each side)

### **Shoulder Hip Opener -**

Sitting up right. Bring your hands up to rest on your shoulders. Bend at the hips to bring your elbow towards the floor. Rest and repeat. (5 on each side)

### **Foot Side Fruit Stretch -**

With one foot flat on the floor, step out with the other leg to one side. Holding down on the knee of the foot that is flat, lean your body gently forwards. Hold at the end point and bring your body back to where you began. Do this on each side. (3 time each side)

## Strength Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Walk/Jog High Knees -**

Raise your knee up as high as feels comfortable. Place down and lift the other knee. Alternate each side and fast as you can, either at a walking or jogging pace. (15 each side)

### **Standing Supported Squat -**

Using a chair to support you, stand to the side and move from a standing position into a squat position. (10 times)

### **Ham String Curls -**

Using a chair to support you, raise one leg at a time up behind you, do a 90° angle. Return back down and switch legs. (10 each side)

### **Double Leg Lifts -**

Clutch a small ball in between your feet. Hold the chair arms for support and raise both legs up together and place back down. (10 times)

## Coordination Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Alphabet -**

Imagine your toe is a pen. Raise one leg and write every letter of the alphabet with one foot. Rest and repeated with the other foot.

### **Hip To Knee -**

Hold a ball/ball of socks in your hands.

Tap your right hip then your left knee. Now tap your left hip then your right knee. See how fast you can get this routine going. (20 times)

# Exercise Session 4 - Continued

## Soft Cardio Movement

### *Mini circuit*

1. Leg kicks
2. Double arm reach outs
3. Buttercup side reach on each arm

Do each of the movements 5, 10 or 15 times and give yourself plenty of rest in between. This is a mini circuit to get you going.

### **Guidance notes:**

You may notice your heart rate increase - this is normal.



# Exercise Session 5

## Stretch and Flex Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Cat Stretch -**

Round your shoulders forward and nod your head. Then look up and back, pushing your chest forward, rolling your shoulders back and lifting your chin up. (12 times)

### **Hip Opener -**

Place one foot on your opposite knee and apply gentle pressure down. If this is challenging, stay with the previous hip opening exercise. (3 on each leg)

### **Namaste -**

Sweep your arms out and around into a prayer position, bow forward using your whole torso. Keep strong core as you bow forwards. (12 times)

### **Side Step Over -**

Take a large step out to the side with one foot and return to the middle. Do this on both legs. (8 each side)

## Strength Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Hiking Pole Walking -**

Take big static steps forward while placing an imaginary 'hiking pole' down onto the ground with each step, using your arms. (10 on each side)

### **Diagonal Can-Can Kick -**

Starting with both feet flat. Kick one leg out diagonally across the body and back to the centre. Repeat this on both legs. (8 on each side)

### **Dig -**

With two hands together, move them up and down as if digging soil. (10 on each side)

### **Knee Lift To Leg Kick -**

Lift the knee up, hold and kick the leg out straight. Return to a normal seating position and repeat on the other side. (8 on each leg)

## Coordination Movements - *Repeat this section twice*

### **Hand Jives -**

With flat hands, swing your arms out to the side and back into the middle. (20 times)

### **Split Steps -**

Starting with one foot forward and one back, switch your steps forwards and backwards. (20 times)

# Exercise Session 5 - Continued

## Soft Cardio Movement

### *Mini circuit*

1. Diagonal toe tap
2. Knee lift each leg
3. Shoulder roll

Do each of the movements 5, 10 or 15 times and give yourself plenty of rest in between. This is a mini circuit to get you going.

### **Guidance notes:**

You may notice your heart rate increase - this is normal.