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How to Use Your Exercise Guide



The exercises in this guide are selected from the Healthy Steps in Motion classes. You can use this guide to keep up your exercise routine at home.

Your Exercise Routine

You can keep doing your Healthy Steps in Motion routine at home. The routine includes:

Warm-Up: In a warm-up you move gently, to increase your heart rate, increase blood flow to your muscles and get your joints active. When your muscles and joints are warm, you move more easily. You will feel less stiffness and pain. Begin with 10 minutes of warm-up.

Balance Exercises: When you do balance exercises, you practice keeping your balance in different positions. This can help you reduce your risk of falling. Include 1 or 2 balance exercises in each routine.

Strength Training: Strength training builds muscles. You build strength when you lift weights, stretch bands or lift your own body. For more tips on strength training, see page 5.

Stretching: At the end of your routine, gently stretch to lengthen and relax your muscles. Stretching also improves flexibility. Begin each stretch in a position that feels easy. Keep breathing, and as you breathe out, relax into the stretch. Do not bounce.

What if I want to walk or bike as part of my exercise routine? This would be a great addition to your routine. Walking and biking are also called aerobic exercises, because you breathe deeply and use a lot of air. Before you walk or bike, do a 10-minute warm-up. After you walk or bike, cool down for 10 minutes and then stretch. If you do not cool down, you could become faint or dizzy. You can use the Musical Warm-Up on page 7 as a cool-down. Or you can walk slowly for 10 minutes.

If I walk or bike, do I also need to do strength training? Strength training builds muscle. Walking and running make your heart stronger but they do not build muscle. When you do strength training, you will find that it is easier to walk, get up from a chair or reach something on a shelf.

Exercise Safety



Exercise helps keep you energetic and strong. Even if you have not exercised in years, you can get the benefits of being more physically active.

It is always a good idea to talk to your doctor before you start a new exercise program. If you have a health problem, ask your doctor how to start exercising.

To Help Avoid Injury

- Warm up at the beginning.
- Breathe freely as you exercise.
- Drink water before, during & after exercise.
- Cool down slowly after a vigorous workout.
- Stretch at the end.

How hard should I exercise? When you exercise, it is normal to breathe faster and deeper and to feel your heart beat faster. You will start to perspire. And you may have mild muscle aches or soreness after you exercise. Exercising regularly, with stretching at the end, also helps prevent soreness.

How do I know if I am exercising too hard?

You should slow down or stop if:

- You feel very short of breath.
- You wheeze or cough.
- You feel pain, pressure or tightness in the chest.
- You feel lightheaded or confused.
- You have cramps, severe muscle ache or pain.
- You perspire more than usual.

What if I feel pain when I exercise? STOP.

Then:

1. Make sure you are doing the exercise the right way.
2. Move less far or lift less weight.
3. If you still feel pain, do not do the exercise.

What if I have sore muscles after I exercise?

This is natural after you start or increase an exercise. The soreness should get better in a few days. Put an ice bag on the sore area for 15 minutes a few times a day. But if you think you have a more serious injury, see your doctor.

Setting Goals and Keeping Track



When we set goals and keep track of our progress, we are usually more successful. Keeping track helps you focus on what you are doing well. It can help you notice when you are going astray, so you can make small changes to get back on track.

Setting Goals

When you list your goals below, start small and list things that you can measure. For example, you might say “I will walk for 20 minutes a day” instead of “I will lose weight.”

Here are some examples of short-term goals.

- Walk 10 minutes 3 times each day.
- Attend exercise class 2 times each week.
- Walk 5 more minutes every day.
- Sit no longer than 30 minutes at a time.

Write your short-term goals here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Keeping Track of Your Progress

It is easy to keep track by using a calendar. Here is an example. Alice’s goals are to walk 15 minutes a day and do strength training 3 times a week, either at home or in her class.

As you can see, Alice met her goals. And she gardened, another great activity. Overall she did great!

M	Walk 15 min Strength training
T	Walk 15 min
W	Walk 10 min Exercise class
T	Walk 15 min
F	Walk 15 min Exercise class
S	Walk 15 min
S	Walk 20 min Gardening

▶
Create your
own exercise
calendar

M	_____
T	_____
W	_____
T	_____
F	_____
S	_____
S	_____

Strength Training Tips



1. Start with good posture.
2. End where you begin.
3. If you feel pain in a joint, limit your motion or lighten your weight.
4. Do not lock your joints (straighten them too far). This harms the joint.
5. Stop for a second and breathe out in the middle position.
6. Do each exercise slowly. If you go fast you will start swinging. If you swing, your muscles work less and your joints work more. This can lead to injury.

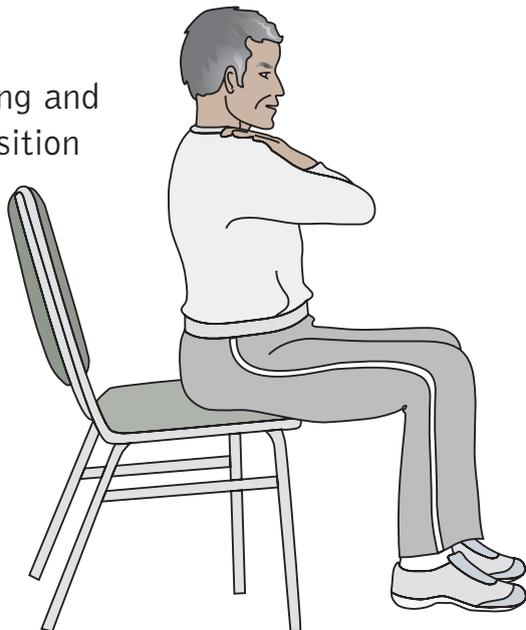
How much should I exercise? Start with one set. A set is 8–12 repetitions. As you get stronger, you may do 2 to 3 sets of each exercise. Rest about 2 minutes between each set.

How often should I do strength training? Aim for 2 to 3 times a week. If you train 2 days in a row, exercise your upper body on one day and your lower body on the next day. Your muscles need a day off to rest.

How much weight should I lift? Start with a weight that you can lift 8 to 12 times, but no more. Most women start with 2 to 4 lbs. for upper body exercises and 3 to 5 lbs. for lower body exercises. Most men start with 3 to 5 lbs. for upper body and 4 to 6 lbs. for lower body.

If you have had a joint replacement or you have arthritis, check with your doctor before you use weights or resistance bands.

Beginning and End Position



Middle Position

