

Exercise Guide

It is very important that you consult a doctor before beginning any type of exercise. Individuals with high blood pressure should take extra precautions against dizziness, which can result in injury when exercising. Those with back problems may require an exercise program prescribed by a physician and instructed by a physical therapist or exercise physiologist. Always stop exercising immediately if you experience any shortness of breath, dizziness, or pain.

Weight-Bearing Exercise

Walking is one of the best weight-bearing exercises.

- Beginners should walk ten minutes per session, increasing the amount of time as it gets easier, up to 30 minutes to one hour each session on most days of the week.
- When walking, breathing should be slightly faster than normal but it should always be possible to speak easily.
- To increase a walking program, walkers may walk longer distances per session, walk up hills, or walk up stairs.

Postural Correction

Every time you correct your posture, you are exercising. Remind yourself to do the following postural correction several times each day, including before each exercise of your exercise program.

- Slide head back and tuck chin, bringing head back over shoulders.
- Lift chest and ribs, eliminating any bend at the waist.
- Tilt pelvis, flatten back, and tighten stomach muscles.
- Retract shoulders by pinching shoulder blades together.

Weight-Training Exercises

Sitting exercises: Sit with feet flat on the ground. Slide forward to edge of chair. Pull stomach in. Keep lower back straight and shoulders down and back. Strap weights around ankles. Begin with one-pound weights and increase the amount slowly over time.

Equipment: 2 sets of cuff weights, a sturdy chair, comfortable clothing.

KNEE EXTENSION:

- Sit comfortably in a chair, with back of your knees resting against the chair seat. If possible, place a rolled towel or small cushion under your knees to lift them slightly so that just the balls of your feet touch the floor.
- Extend one leg out in front until your leg is as straight as possible. Do not grip the chair as you perform the lift. You may gently hold onto the seat of the chair to help stabilize yourself.
- Slowly lower your leg back down until your foot is resting on the floor.
- Complete eight repetitions on both sides, alternating legs between lifts.
- Rest. Repeat set.

CHAIR PUSH-UPS:

- Sit comfortably in a chair.
- Place hands on the arms of the chair or on the edge of the chair at the side of your legs.
- Push up, using your arms to lift your buttocks several inches off the seat. Hold for 5 counts.
- Relax. Repeat.

Standing Exercises: Stand with stomach tight, lower back straight, shoulder blades pinched together, and knees slightly bent. Strap weights around ankles.

HIP EXTENSION:

- Stand holding onto the back of a chair and bend forward about 45 degrees at the waist.
- Lock one knee and lift that leg straight out behind you as high as possible without bending the knee or moving the upper body. The movement should be smooth and controlled.
- Slowly lower leg to the starting position.
- Complete 8 repetitions on both sides, alternating legs between lifts.
- Rest. Repeat set.

MODIFIED SQUAT:

- Stand holding onto chair.
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- With knees soft and slightly bent, do a pelvic tilt (hold stomach in while flattening your back) and then slowly lower yourself 6-8 inches.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds while maintaining the pelvic tilt.
- Relax. Return to standing position. Repeat.

Balance Exercises: Stand approximately 18 inches away from a chair or counter. Feet should be shoulder width apart. When beginning these exercises, hold onto the chair or counter with one hand for balance.

TOE STANDS:

- Rise up as high as possible on the balls of your feet. Try to stay as still as possible and maintain your balance without moving your feet.
- Maintain this position for ten seconds.
- Rest. Repeat five times.

HEEL STANDS:

- Rise up as high as possible on the heels of your feet. Try to stay as still as possible and maintain your balance without moving your feet.
- Maintain this position for ten seconds.
- Rest. Repeat five times.

ONE-LEGGED STAND:

- Slowly lift one foot off the floor, while maintaining your balance on the other leg. Try to stay as still as possible. Do not move your foot to maintain balance.
- Maintain this position for 10 seconds. Rest.
- Repeat with the other leg.
- Do 5 stands with each leg for a total of 10.

In order to increase balance and strength, it is important to increase the difficulty, length, or number of repetitions whenever you reach the point that it is easy to do the exercises.

LEVEL ONE: Use one hand to steady yourself as you perform the exercise.

LEVEL TWO: Use no hands unless you lose balance as you perform the exercise.

LEVEL THREE: Perform the exercise with eyes closed and using no hands unless you lose balance.