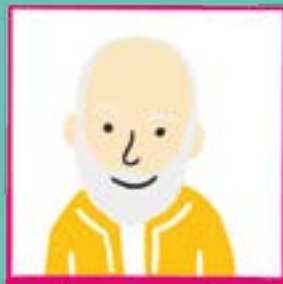




Active at Home

A guide to staying
active at home





Who is this booklet for?



This booklet has been developed to support older people and those who find themselves spending more time at home to stay active and healthy.

Why is it important to stay active?

Being active is good for our physical and mental wellbeing.

This is why we should all try to move regularly, including exercises to help us stay strong and steady. This particularly applies to those of us who have health conditions or are older. If you are not able to get out often and find yourself staying home more, it is important to find ways to build activity into your day, every day.

If you are receiving or waiting for health or social care treatment, being active is one of the best things you can do to look after your health, as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Being active at a level that feels comfortable is unlikely to make your health worse; in fact it can help to manage many health conditions.

It can be frustrating trying to be active if you can't get out to do your normal daily activities. This guide will help you to find ways to build activity into your day.

Being active every day can help to:



Keep your
spirits up



Get a good
night's sleep



Stay
independent



Stay at a
healthy weight



Reduce risk of
falls & fractures



Keep you steady
on your feet



Keep your
bowels regular



Reduce risk of
heart attack,
stroke, diabetes
& some cancers



Prevent many
health conditions
from worsening

The two key activity types that help are:



Strength and balance exercises

These are specific exercises that will help you to stay strong and steady your feet



Aerobic exercise

This is activity that warms you up and gets you breathing slightly harder, it will help you to stay fit and well

Safety

Being active is safe for the vast majority of people and it has many benefits for your health and wellbeing.

There are some small steps you can take to reduce the chance of problems occurring when you are exercising in and around the home.

Most people can exercise without speaking to a doctor first, especially if their medical condition is under control.

However, if you have any symptoms from a heart, kidney or metabolic condition you should phone your healthcare professional to check with them before you start.

1. Prepare your exercise space by clearing away any unnecessary clutter
2. Keep something sturdy and solid nearby for support (for example a kitchen work surface)

3. Have a glass of water ready to sip as you exercise
4. Wear well-fitting, supportive shoes that are done up, and comfortable clothing
5. If you are exercising on your own, keep a telephone nearby, just in case you need it
6. Set the pace, start exercising at a level that you find easy and build up gradually
7. If you experience acute pain anywhere or dizziness then stop immediately and rest
8. It is common for muscles to feel a bit stiff for a few days after you have used them - this is a normal response and shows that your body is responding to the increased movement
9. Try not to hold your breath as you exercise, breathe normally throughout

Recap of key points



Exercise is
safe and
helpful for
most people



Try to be
active every
day



Try to do
strength and
balance
exercises 2-3
times each
week

Strength and balance exercises

Muscles, bones and joints like to be moved, lack of movement causes your muscles to waste away quickly and this affects your strength and your balance.

The exercises below will help you to stay strong and steady. Aim to do these exercises 2-3 times throughout the week. You can spilt them up and do them a few at a time throughout the day, at a time that works for you. Remember to start small and build up gradually, as the exercises begin to feel easier you can increase the repetitions to 8-10. If you want to make it harder still, you can build up to 3 sets of 8-10 repetitions for each exercise.

Strength exercises can be done whilst sitting or standing. If you can't stand comfortably or safely, then choose the seated option.

Seated Exercises

Always warm up before you start

Sit up straight in a supportive chair, take 2-3 deep breaths in and out to calm the mind and body in preparation for the exercises.

Heel lifts



Lift heels off the floor, then place them back down. Lift toes off the floor then place down. Do these slowly and fully.

30 seconds

Chair marching



Lift one leg at a time, as if marching. You can add your arms in too, if comfortable.

30 seconds

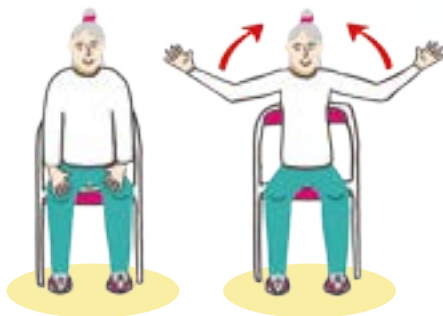
By the end of the warm up you should feel warmer and be breathing a little harder.

Exercises

Arm raises

Raise your arms out to the side and above your head, then slowly lower back down. Start with **3** then build up.

Make this harder by going very slowly and hold for 1 second at the top before you lower your arm down.



Alternate leg extensions

Straighten out one leg in front of you, then lower slowly back down. Start with **3 each leg** then build up.

Make this harder by lifting the leg slightly off the chair as you straighten it.



Arm curls

Keep elbows into your sides, bend one arm up, then slowly lower. Alternate sides. Start with **3 repetitions on each side**.

Make this harder by holding a small weight, bottle of water or tin of food.



Cool down

Let your breathing settle and enjoy the feeling of accomplishment!



Hamstring stretch

Feel gentle stretch
at back of thigh
Hold for 20 seconds



Chest opening

Feel gentle stretch
across your chest
Hold for 20 seconds



Breathe

3 deep breaths in
and out

Standing Exercises

Always warm up before you start

Remember to have something sturdy, like a work surface, next to you. Use it to stay steady and safe.

Marching



Slow march on the spot, gradually lifting the knees slightly higher, or by marching a little faster and adding arms in.

30 seconds

Shoulder rolls



3 each way

You should feel warmer and be breathing a little harder now.

Exercises

Mini squats

Stand tall, slowly bend your knees keeping your body upright. Push up and return to standing.

Start with **3 repetitions** then build up.

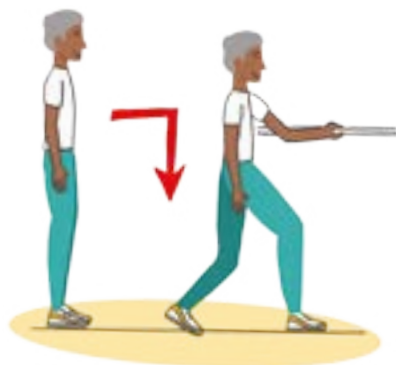
Make this harder by going further into the squat, and holding for longer.



Small lunges

Take a small step forward and bend both knees. Push back into standing. Start with **3 repetitions** of each leg and build up.

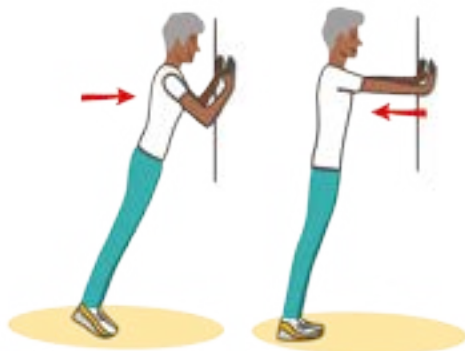
Make this harder by stepping further forward, making sure you return from the lunge position in one steady step backwards.



Wall press up

Slowly bend both arms so that your nose moves closer to the wall. Slowly push back into standing. Start with **3 repetitions** then build up.

Make this harder by moving very slowly and smoothly.



Heel/toe raises

Push up onto your toes, keeping bottom in, then slowly lower back down. Do these slowly whilst maintaining good posture. Start with **3 repetitions** and build up.

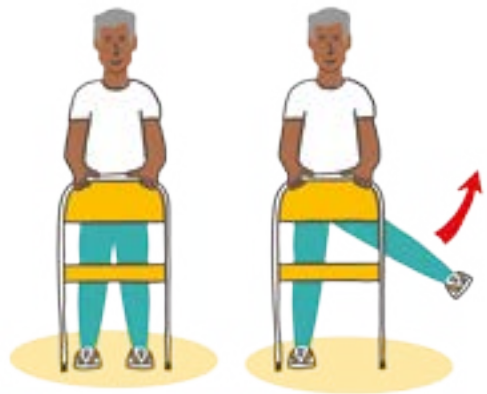
Make this harder by lowering down very slowly.



Sideways leg lift

Lift one leg slowly out to the side keeping your upper body straight. Slowly lower back down. Start with **3 repetitions** each leg then build up.

Make this harder by moving the leg very slowly.



Cool down

Let your breathing settle and enjoy the feeling of accomplishment!



Hamstring stretch

Hold for
20 seconds



Chest opening

Hold for
20 seconds



Breathe

3 deep breaths
in and out

Ways to build activity into your day

As well as doing these exercises 2-3 times a week, **try to avoid any long periods of inactivity and find ways to build movement into your day, every day.** Any movement is good, particularly if it makes you feel a little bit warm and makes you breathe a little faster.

Here are some ideas of ways to stay active at home:



Cleaning



Dancing



Gardening



Going up and down stairs



Stretching regularly

Staying healthy

A few other things that will help you to stay as healthy and happy as possible at home:



Stay connected

with phone calls, letters, emails, text messages or a cheery wave to a neighbour



Limit intake

of foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar



Consider taking a Vitamin D supplement

of 10 micrograms a day for healthy muscles and bones, if you aren't often outdoors

Stick to regular mealtimes

Eat a balanced diet that includes a variety of:

- fruit and vegetables (fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juice)
- starchy foods (bread, cereals, potatoes, pasta or rice)
- beans, pulses, fish and meat
- two portions of fish per week, one of which should be oily
- dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese)
- oils and spreads (choose unsaturated and use in moderation)

If you are struggling to eat well, switch to smaller meals and frequent healthy snacks



Take your prescription medicine

regularly and ensure that you have at least two weeks' supply



Keep your mind active

with crosswords, puzzles and letter writing



Stay hydrated

by aiming to drink 6 - 8 glasses of water a day



Limit alcohol and don't smoke

Limit your alcohol intake to no more than (and ideally less than) 14 units a week. Support is available to help you stop smoking see page 19.



Prioritise your sleep

going to bed and waking up at a regular time can really help your health and wellbeing. Make sure you give yourself time to wind down before bed

It is normal to sometimes feel worried or anxious

If you find yourself feeling anxious or worried about yourself or your loved ones, try to focus on the things you can control rather than the things you can't.

This might mean focusing on getting yourself into a good daily routine, eating well and staying active. Take small practical steps each day to do the things you need to do.

Planning your day

The days can feel very long when you are at home all day. Having a couple of goals each day and planning your day in advance can help; it will remind you to move around during the day too.

Here's an example:



Try to do things that you LOVE to do,
as well as the things you NEED to do

Staying safe at home

Moving around less can make you less steady on your feet. Falls are common and can result in injury and frustrating periods of reduced independence.

Simple tips to make your home safer:

- Use a nightlight in the bedroom, a bedside light or a torch by the bed in case you need to get up in the night
- When you first wake up, sit on the edge of the bed and do a few seconds of marching with the legs to get the blood flowing. This will reduce your chance of dizziness when you stand up
- Keep stairs and steps free of clutter
- Keep floors clear of trailing wires, wrinkled or fraying rugs and carpets, or anything else you might trip or slip on
- Keep active – strength and balance exercises have the best effect for making you steadier on your feet
- Stand up slowly if you have been sitting for a while, and count to 10 before setting off

What to do if you fall

If you do have a fall, lie still for a minute, try to stay calm and check yourself for injuries.

If you know you can't get up, or feel pain in your hip or back, then try to call for help using your phone or pendant alarm, or by banging on radiators or walls until help arrives. Try to keep warm by covering yourself with whatever is close by, keep moving your limbs and roll from side to side if you are able to. If you need urgent medical help, you should call 111 or in an emergency 999.

If you are unhurt and think you can get up, then you should:

1. Roll onto your side, and then push up onto your elbows
2. Use your arms to push yourself onto your hands and knees
3. Crawl towards a very stable piece of furniture (a sturdy chair or bed) and hold onto it for support
4. Slide or raise the foot of your stronger leg forwards so it's flat on the floor
5. Lean forwards and push up using your arms and front leg, slowly rising to a standing position
6. Turn around and sit down. Sit for a minute or two and catch your breath.

Even if you are unhurt, make sure that you tell a healthcare professional or carer that you have fallen.

Stay independent for longer with Able4Life

Able4Life and the LifeCurve™ app provide 24/7 help and advice to enable you to carry out your daily activities. You can visit the Able4Life Bradford website at:

www.able4lifebradford.org.uk

Able4Life can help you to set goals and tasks to improve the way you age. Find expert advice and be matched to activities and products that meet your needs.

You can download the LifeCurve™ app from the Able4Life website or from the app store (please see details overleaf).

Quickly discover how you are ageing using the **LIFECURVE™ APP**

Able4Life and the LifeCurve™ App, provide 24/7 help and advice so you can stay independent for longer and feel empowered to help yourself.

This 24/7 online digital service allows you to:

- > Find out how you are ageing using the ADL LifeCurve™
- > Set tasks and goals to help you improve the way you age
- > Find expert advice, and be matched to activities, services and products that meet your needs



Read more: www.adlsmartcare.com/lifecurveapp

You can connect directly from the app to Able4Life Bradford as they are a LifeCurve™ partner using the following connector code:

FCRCL



The ADL LifeCurve™ is available for **FREE** from the following stores



Useful phone numbers

NHS 111

111 or 111.nhs.uk

If you have any concerns about your health

Bradford Council

01274 431000

For any questions or concerns relating to council services

Bradford Adult Social Care

01274 435400

For help with daily living

Samaritans

116 123

If you want to talk through any concerns, worries and troubles

Living Well Stop Smoking Team

01274 437700

For advice and support to help people stop smoking

Age UK Bradford & District

01274 391190

Provides advice and information for older people

Silver Line Helpline

0800 470 80 90

If you're aged 55 or over you can call for a cheerful chat, day or night

Useful websites

Connect to Support

Information for adults with care and support needs. Empowering people to live happy, healthy lives, where they are in control

bradford.connecttosupport.org

Equality Together

Free, impartial, independent and confidential advice for those with complex health care conditions

equalitytogether.org.uk

A Guide To Staying Steady - Get Up & Go

A useful guide to help prevent falls and stay steady on your feet

<https://www.bdct.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/A-guide-to-staying-steady.pdf>

Able4Life

Able4Life and the LifeCurve™ app provide 24/7 help and advice to enable you to carry out your daily activities

able4lifebradford.org.uk



This booklet was originally created by Move More Sheffield: working together to create a culture of physical activity. Design by Nifty Fox Creative, 2020.

This booklet has been jointly prepared by Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and the National Centre for Sport & Exercise Medicine - Sheffield (NCSEM) to provide useful information to support people to stay physically active during isolation. Both SHU & NCSEM have taken their reasonable endeavours to ensure that the content of this booklet is, to the best of their knowledge, accurate at the time of printing. However, it is not to be perceived as professional advice. Before following any exercise or health guidelines set out in this booklet, readers shall always consult with a GP if: they consider necessary; they have any concerns about their health conditions; they are not sure whether the exercises in this booklet are suitable for them.

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