



## SIT TO STAND

### Upper leg strength

- Sit on a sturdy chair with arms.
- Place the feet below the knees.
- Lean forward over the knees.
- Push off with both hands to stand up.

### Tip

To increase the challenge, use only one hand or no hands to stand up.

From Otago Exercise Program (ACC, 2007)



## ONE LEG STAND

### Balance

- Stand up tall beside the bench.
- Hold on and look ahead.
- Stand on one leg.
- Try to hold this position for 10 seconds.
- Stand on the other leg.
- Try to hold this position for 10 seconds.

### Tip

To increase the challenge, try to stand on one leg without holding on.

From Otago Exercise Program (ACC, 2007)



## CALF STRETCH

### Flexibility

- Step back with one leg from the chair into the lunge position.
- Your front leg is bent and your back leg is straight (but not locked).
- Both feet should point forward.
- Press your back heel to the floor and your hips forward towards the back of the chair.
- Switch the position of your feet and repeat.

### Tip

Stand tall. Don't bend forward.



## BACK OF THIGH STRETCH

### Flexibility

- Sit with your bottom at the front of the chair.
- Extend one leg and place your heel on the floor.
- Keeping your back straight, slowly lean forward until you feel the stretch in the muscles at the back of your thigh.
- Switch legs.

### Tip

To increase the stretch, focus on lifting up through your chest, aim your chest towards the tips of your toes (without rounding your back).



## CHAIR PUSH UPS

### Arm strength

- Sit with your bottom at the front of an armchair keeping your back straight and shoulders down.
- Using your arms only, push yourself up from the chair until your arms are straight.
- You should feel the tension in the back of your arms NOT your thighs.
- Bend your elbows to slowly lower yourself back down.

### Tips

Don't stand all the way up. To increase the challenge, lift one foot off the floor before you push yourself up from the chair.



## HEEL RAISE

### Lower leg strength

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees soft.
- Holding onto a chair or bench for support, slowly rise up onto the toes of both feet.
- Slowly lower yourself back down.

### Tip

Stand up tall when you rise up onto the tips of your toes. Don't lean forward onto the chair or bench.



## LOOK OVER SHOULDER

### Flexibility

- Looking forward, slowly turn your head to one side to look over your shoulder.
- Return to centre and turn to look the other way.

### Tip

Pretend that you are checking your 'blind spot' while driving.



## EAR TO SHOULDER

### Flexibility

- Looking forward, slowly tilt your head to the side.
- Keep your shoulders down.
- Return to centre and tilt your head to the other side.

### Tip

Don't lean to the side or pull on your head to increase the stretch.

All exercises are sourced from the Have A Try (HAT) Exercise Program (Cyarto, 2006) unless stated otherwise.

## TEST YOURSELF - Fitness

Find a place where you can measure a distance of about 20 metres, such as a corridor or a footpath. If you are using a footpath, you could walk the distance between telephone poles or letterboxes. Make sure the path is level and free of debris or obstacles. If indoors, put an object (such as a plastic cup) at each end of your walking course.

Before you start, put several paper-clips in your pocket. Each time you complete a lap, move a paperclip to the other pocket. Do this to keep track of how many laps you complete.

Record the number of laps here:

\_\_\_\_\_ x 20m = \_\_\_\_\_ m

Measure your distance weekly.

If you walk further in 2 minutes, your fitness has improved.

## TEST YOURSELF - Leg Strength

Using a watch or clock, time yourself standing fully upright and sitting back down 5 times in a row without stopping. Do this as quickly as you can, but safely. You can use your arms to help you rise from the chair.

Record the time here: \_\_\_\_\_ sec

Use arms? Y / N

Time yourself every week.

If you are faster or don't need to use your arms to assist you, your leg strength has improved.

## TEST YOURSELF - Balance

Stand beside the kitchen bench, holding on for support. Lift one foot off the floor. When you feel steady, let go of the bench. See how long you can stand on one leg without support. You will need someone to time you.

Timing begins when you drop your hand to your side. Timing ends if you: reach for the bench, lean on the bench, put your foot down or reach 30 sec. Record your time below and repeat with your opposite leg.

Record the time:

R leg \_\_\_\_\_ sec, L leg \_\_\_\_\_ sec

Practice daily but time yourself in 3 months.

If the time you can stand on one leg (without holding on) increases, your balance has improved.

## CARDIOVASCULAR FITNESS EXERCISES

Climbing stairs, walking around the shops or vacuuming are daily activities that may challenge your cardio-respiratory system. There are many activities you can do to keep your heart, lungs and blood vessels healthy.

Examples are: brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, water aerobics, tennis, gardening and housework (sustained activity that increases your breathing like raking, digging, sweeping, mopping).

If you are new to exercise, start with 10-15 minutes on 5 days of the week. Add a few more minutes each week until you can do 30 minutes of continuous activity on most days.

**Warming up** is important before you do strength, balance or flexibility exercises. Start slowly by marching on the spot or walking at a slower pace for 5 minutes. A warm-up increases blood flow to your muscles and may prevent injury.



### UPPER BACK STRETCH Flexibility

- Clasp your hands in front of your body at shoulder height.
- Gently push out through your elbows until you feel tension across your upper back.

**Tip:** Stand tall. Don't round your back.



### CHEST STRETCH Flexibility

- Clasp your hands behind your back.
- Stand up tall, pull your shoulders back to open your chest.
- Imagine sliding your shoulder blades down into your back pockets.

**Tip:** Don't lean or bend forward at your waist.

## STRENGTH & BALANCE EXERCISES

You need strong upper and lower body muscles for daily activities like carrying groceries, getting out of the bathtub or digging in the garden. Balance exercises help keep you steady on your feet and help to prevent falls, giving you more confidence in daily activities.

Do these exercises 2-3 times a week, after warming up for 5 minutes.

- Check your posture before each exercise, draw in your abdomen.
- Breathe regularly. Don't hold your breath!
- Move slowly and with control.
- Start by doing each exercise 5 times.
- Progress regularly by increasing the number of times you do each exercise (repetitions or reps).
- Aim for 15 reps before trying the next level. Start again with 5 reps.

If you are new to exercise, you may feel some muscle stiffness or soreness after your first few sessions. This is not unusual. The good news is that as your muscles become stronger you will experience less discomfort.

## WHY BE ACTIVE?

This poster gives you some simple exercises you can do at home in about 30 minutes. Put it where it will remind you to exercise —on the fridge, the door or the wall.

Doing these exercises will help you to maintain your independence, mobility health and reduce the risk of falls.

You can do a couple of these exercises each time you boil the kettle or while watching TV.

### IMPORTANT

If you are new to exercise or have an existing health problem, ask your doctor or other health professional if these exercises are right for you.

Please stop immediately and contact your doctor if you experience any of these symptoms while exercising: chest pain; nausea; dizziness; or sharp pain in your muscles or joints.

For more information contact:

**COTA**  
Telephone 1300 13 50 90  
www.cotavic.org.au

Seniors Online  
www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au



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## FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES

Many daily activities require flexibility, for example, reaching for something on a high shelf or putting on your shoes. Stretching your muscles helps keep your joints moving freely. These exercises can be done on their own after warming up for 5 minutes.

- When standing, place your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Check your posture.
- Stretch until you feel a slight tension or pull in the muscle.
- Do each stretch once and hold for **20 to 30 seconds**.
- Don't bounce while stretching.
- Breathe regularly. Don't hold your breath!

All exercises are sourced from the Have A Try (HAT) Exercise Program (Cyarto, 2006) unless stated otherwise.



# BE ACTIVE

Simple exercises to try at home

