

## Do something now

Phone **the Silver Line**: free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people. Open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.  
**0800 4 70 80 90**

If you have internet access, go to:  
<https://www.csp.org.uk/keepactive>

where you will find a variety of adapted activities for you to choose from.

More resources and ideas found at:  
<https://bswccg.nhs.uk/docs-reports/covid-19/854-awp-covid-19-wellbeing-guide/file>

If you don't have internet access you should have been given the Leaflet:

'Stay Active At Home'

## The updated advice

It is important to continue to follow the guidelines around socially distancing, but it is equally important that you are informed and encouraged to increase your fitness while at home. Aim to:

- be more active, sit less, build strength and improve your balance
- find different ways to stimulate your mind and seek contact with others (consider social media, telephone, video calls or contact the Silver Line)
- spend socially distanced time outside, exposure to the sun stimulates Vitamin D production
- ensure adequate nutrition, especially protein is important to help your muscles and physical functioning

Royal United Hospitals Bath  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email: [ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.

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Are you over 70 or have a long term condition?

This advice is for you

Taking care of your well-being during and after lockdown



## Consequences of Lockdown

There are concerns that the guidelines in place to protect people from COVID-19 must not come at the expense of their health and wellbeing.

The COVID shielding advice is aimed at people over 70 and people with long term conditions. The concern is that having to spend more time indoors is causing people to be less active – as a result of exercising less and sitting down more. Due to the duration of lockdown this is starting to have an immense deconditioning effect, now affecting millions of people.

We know that:

- The older you are the more activity you need
- The more long term conditions you have, the more activity you need

For those people who are less resilient, or living alone, several months of reduced access to care, isolation, physical inactivity, lack of mental stimulation and social contact can have unintended consequences. There can be loss in quality of life with loneliness, anxiety, distress and even reduced ability to think.

It is known that social isolation and loneliness is damaging for health, both physical and mental.

The risk of falls increases because inactivity can result in reduced strength, balance or stamina.

It is not unusual for people to not recognise the initially subtle changes in their ability, furthermore as more time passes they get used to the new 'normal.' For example you may notice that it is harder to get up from sitting in a chair.

For some people the forced inactivity will have life-long consequences with reduced wellbeing.

It is important for you to make changes and take action now and get ready before this winter.

### Benefits of being more active

You will not be surprised to hear that physical activity is good for us. It is well known that healthy ageing is largely determined by our ability to maintain both mental and physical capacities.

Regular physical activity can:

- improve our immune system
- have anti-inflammatory effects

- help us feel better physically and mentally
- improve sleep and quality of life

It is recognised that active people are less likely to get upper respiratory illness (such as a common cold). The benefit of low to moderate exercise is that the immune system is more robust against respiratory infections.

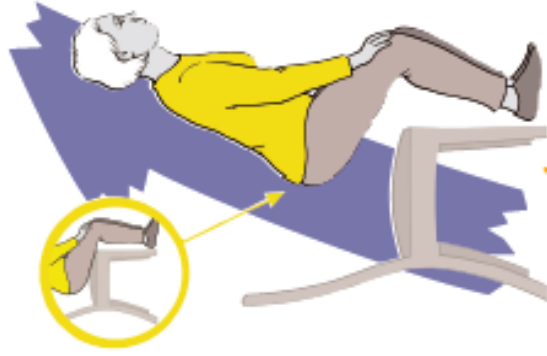
Regular activity improves the health of people with chronic conditions. It has many benefits, for example it reduces your chances of:

- Diabetes (Type 2) by up to 40%
- Hip fractures by up to 68%
- Depression by up to 30%
- Dementia by up to 30%
- Dying (of any cause) by up to 30%
- Cardiovascular disease (such as stroke or heart attack) by up to 35%
- Certain types of cancer: colon by up to 30% and breast by up to 20%

# Stay Active @ Home

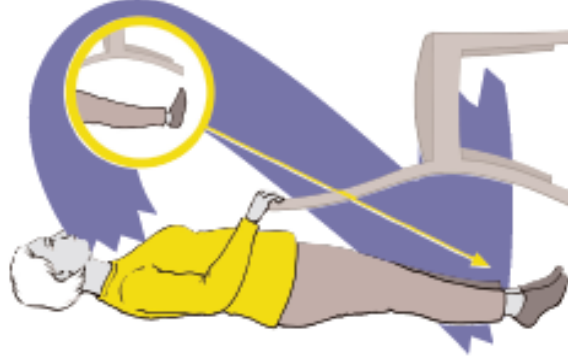
[www.csp.org.uk/easyexercises](http://www.csp.org.uk/easyexercises)

With an indoor lifestyle, physiotherapists recommend a few simple steps to help you stay active at home, lift your spirits and reduce stress. Try them at least twice a week – or even better, daily!



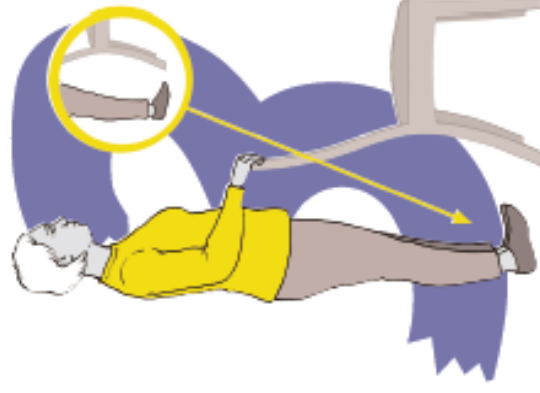
## Sit to stand

Sit tall near the front of a chair with your feet slightly back. Lean forwards slightly and stand up (with hands on the chair if needed). Step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower yourself back into the chair. Repeat 10 times.



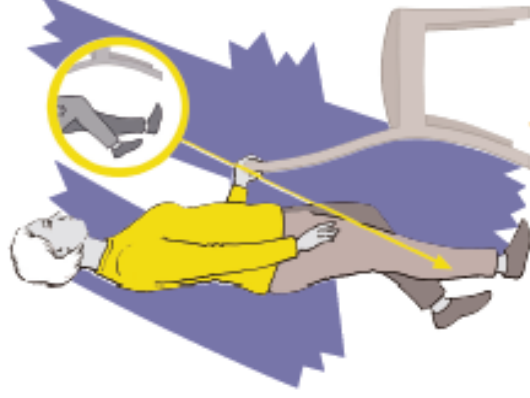
## Heel raises

Stand tall, holding the back of a sturdy kitchen-type chair or kitchen sink, then lift your heels off the floor, taking your weight onto your big toes. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. Repeat 10 times.



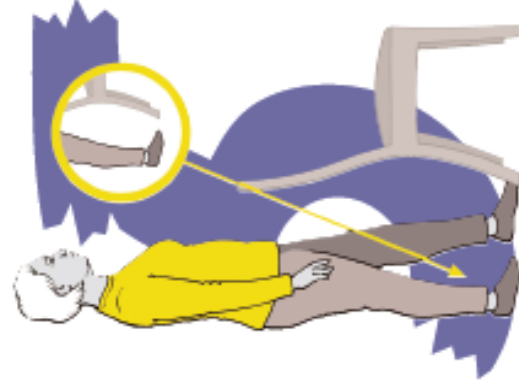
## Toe raises

Stand tall holding the same support, then raise your toes – taking your weight on your heels. Don't stick your bottom out. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. Repeat 10 times.



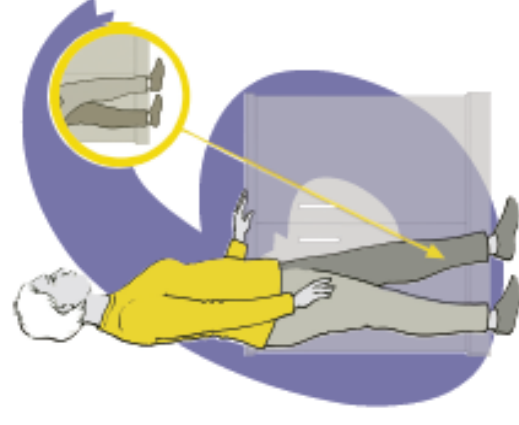
## One leg stand

Stand close to your support and hold it with one hand. Balance on one leg, keeping the support knee soft and your posture upright. Hold the position for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other leg.



## Heel-toe stand

Stand tall, with one hand on your support. Put one foot directly in front of the other to make a straight line. Look ahead, take your hand off the support and balance for 10 seconds. Take the front foot back to hip width apart. Then place the other foot in front and balance for 10 seconds.



## Heel-toe walking

Stand tall, with one hand on a support like a kitchen cabinet. Look ahead and walk 10 steps forwards, placing one foot directly in front of the other so that the feet form a straight line. Aim for a steady walking action. Take the feet back to hip width apart, turn around and repeat the steps in the other direction.



• **MAKE SURE** THE CHAIR YOU USE IS STURDY • **WEAR SUPPORTIVE SHOES** • **IF YOU EXPERIENCE** CHEST PAIN, DIZZINESS OR SEVERE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, STOP AND CONTACT A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL • **A SLIGHT SORENESS** THE DAY AFTER IS QUITE NORMAL.

## Use it or lose it!

For many people, retirement marks a time of new beginnings.

More time with the grandkids, new hobbies, greater opportunities to travel. But it can also be a time for finding new ways to maintain or build your strength while discovering talents you never knew you had. This is important because at present, too few people are doing as much exercise as they should each week – particularly to strengthen their muscles and bones.

Finding something that you love to do is the perfect way to help you remain active and strong as you age – while having fun at the same time.

## Everyday strength

Many of us overlook everyday opportunities to strengthen our muscles.

These can be as simple as:

- ▶ Carrying the shopping
- ▶ Scrubbing clean the car
- ▶ Digging in the garden.

Try to incorporate those into your daily routine to feel the benefits. But as with any activity, our bodies adapt quickly. So always make sure

you are making it that bit harder – carrying the shopping a little further, for example. Small amounts can add up to a big difference over time to keep you stronger for longer.

## How much should I be doing?

Studies show we lose 3-5 per cent of muscle every year from the age of 30 if we do not take steps to maintain it.

Losing that strength puts us at greater risk of falls and other ill-health so it is vitally important to make countering the decline a priority in your life.

The official guidelines call for everyone to do activities that strengthen your muscles and bones twice a week.

Meeting that target will help you not only prevent falls, but improve your mood, help your sleeping patterns and bring benefits for your overall health and wellbeing.

## New beginnings

It's never too late to be what you might always have been.

There are so many activities out there that you may have wanted to do in the past but never got around to and retirement is a great opportunity to put that right.

Activities found to have the most benefit for muscle and bone strengthening include:



- ▶ Ball games
- ▶ Racket sports
- ▶ Dance
- ▶ Nordic walking
- ▶ Resistance training.

Also try to do the home-based exercises in the centre of this leaflet twice a week to supplement those activities.

But if none of those float your boat, there are plenty more to choose from – for instance, how about playing the drums? Whatever you do, just make sure it has a strength component. Ask your physio for suggestions or visit the BBC's Get Inspired website.

## Tips for starting a new activity

- ▶ Find something you enjoy so that you'll keep going
- ▶ Set goals for yourself – big or small – to keep you motivated.
- ▶ Pace yourself – start slowly and gradually build up
- ▶ It's ok to ache but if pain persists, ease back and go slower.

Need more motivation and support? Find someone to join you!

Visit us at: [www.csp.org.uk/activity](http://www.csp.org.uk/activity)