

Strengthening exercises

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net.

Introduction

This booklet contains a variety of exercises designed to help keep your muscles strong and joints flexible. It can be used alongside your usual physical activity, whilst you are in hospital or to strengthen specific muscle groups, as advised by your physiotherapist.

A physiotherapist will advise which exercises will be most beneficial to you (marked with a tick) and indicate how many to complete.

Ideally you should practice the exercises every day. The exercises do not all need to be done at once, and can be completed throughout the day. It is normal to experience some mild discomfort when exercising, however please stop if you begin to feel unwell, lightheaded or if you start experiencing pain.

There are many benefits of exercise and keeping active. It can help reduce the risk of certain medical conditions such as stroke, high blood pressure, heart attack, and many more. In addition to this, maintaining an active lifestyle can help improve sleep, reduce stress, improve quality of life and maintain independence. It is recommended to complete 150minutes of exercise a week. This includes gentle exercises in the chair/bed, gardening, walking, housework and so on. At home, strength, flexibility and balance exercises should also be incorporated a minimum of twice a week.



Lying exercises

Ankle pumps

Lying on your back or sitting upright. Point both of your feet away from your body and then gently bend them both upwards. Repeat for a total of ____ times then rest (this is one set). Repeat ____ sets altogether.



Inner range quads



Lying on your back or sitting upright in bed. Place a rolled-up towel or blanket underneath your knee. Tighten your thigh muscles and lift your heel off the bed until your knee is straight.

Hold in this position for ____ seconds then slowly lower your ankle back to the bed. Repeat ____ times and then rest (this is one set).

Complete this exercise a total of ____ sets.

Static glutes

In a lying or seated position. Squeeze/tighten your buttock muscles (glutes).

Hold for ____ seconds and then relax. Repeat ____ times and then rest (this is one set).

Complete a total of ____ sets.

Straight leg raise

Bend one knee up to place your foot on the bed. Keep your other leg straight and lift it off the bed. Keep your ankle bent at 90 degrees. Hold this position for ____ seconds then slowly lower your leg back down.

Repeat for a total of ____ times on each leg (this is one set).

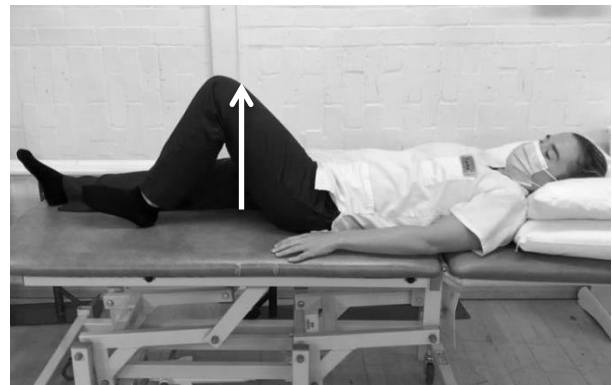
Complete a total of sets.



Knee flexion

Rest on your back with both legs straight. Bend your knee and slide your foot towards your hip. Slowly return to the resting position. This is one set.

Complete a total of ____ sets.



Bridging



Lie on your back with both of your knees bent and your feet flat on the bed. Lift your bottom and lift your hips off the bed. Your shoulders, knees and hips should be in a straight line.

Hold this position for ____ seconds before slowly returning to the starting position. Complete ____ repetitions (this is one set).

Repeat a total of ____ sets.

Seated exercises

Foot wear or slipper socks to be worn

Knee extension

Sit on a chair with both feet on the floor. Squeeze your thigh muscles to straighten your knee with your toes pointed upwards. Hold this position for ____ seconds and slowly bend you knee again. Repeat ____ times on each leg and then rest. This is one set.

Complete ____ sets altogether.

Seated marches / leg lifts

Sit in your chair. March your legs up and down. Complete a total of ____ marches. This will help encourage blood flow.

OR

Raise one leg up, keeping the knee bent. Hold for ____ seconds. Lower your leg and repeat ____ times on each leg and then rest (this is one set).

Repeat ____ sets.



Elbow extension

Sit on a chair with armrests. Place both hands on the arm rest, with your elbows bent. Push down into the armrests and straighten your elbows, lifting your bottom off the chair. Slowly lower yourself back to the chair and repeat ____ times. This is one set.

Complete a total of ____ sets.



Standing exercises

Foot wear or slipper socks to be worn.

Sit to stand



Sit on the edge of your chair with your arms crossed, or gently resting on the arms of the chair. Your feet should be behind your knees.

Lean forwards to bring your nose 'over your toes' and push through your legs to stand upright. If needed, gently use your arms to push yourself off the chair. Squeeze your glutes (buttocks).

To sit back down, bend at your knees and move your hips backwards towards the chair. Slowly lower yourself back down (using arms if required) and pause before repeating ____ times (this is one set).

Complete a total of.... sets.

Heel raises

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and your hands gently resting on a stable surface in front of you eg. chair, windowsill or table. Slowly raise your heels off the floor, whilst keeping your knees straight. Hold for ____ seconds then slowly lower your heels to the ground. Repeat this ____ times. This is one set.

Complete a total of ____ sets.



Standing hip bends

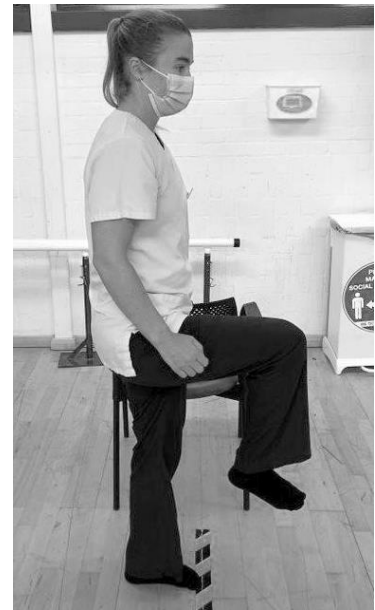
Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and gently rest one or both hands on a stable surface.

Bend at your hip and knee to lift your foot off the floor.

Hold this position for ____ seconds and slowly lower your foot back to the floor, in line with your other foot.

Repeat this exercise ____ times on each leg and then rest. This is one set.

Complete a total of ____ sets.



Side leg lifts

Stand facing a stable surface with both hands resting on the support.

Keep your face, shoulders and hips pointing forwards.

Raise one leg out to the side.

Hold this position for ____ Seconds and slowly lower your foot back to the floor, in line with your other foot.

Repeat this exercise ____ times on each leg and then rest. This is one set.

Complete a total of ____ sets.



Further information

If you require information, please speak to your ward physiotherapist.

Here are some links to useful websites and contacts:

Age UK – <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/> Tel: 0800 678 1602

Care Direct – www.devon.gov.uk/socialcare Tel: 0345 155 1007

Age Concern Barnstaple – www.ageconcernbarnstaple.org.uk Tel: 01271 324488

Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) – www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk Tel: 01209 705159

References

NHS England <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/>

NICE Guidelines <https://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/physical-activity>

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

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Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website www.careopinion.org.uk.

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple
Devon EX31 4JB
Tel. 01271 322577
www.royaldevon.nhs.uk

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