# Exercise at Home for Seniors

Sue Schuerman, PT, GCS, PhD UNLVPT

### Source

 Exercise & Physical Activity (Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging) – Go4Life

### Goals

- Retain our physical and mental health
- Continue to do the things we enjoy
- Maintain our independence
- Prevent or help manage effects of chronic disease

### **Activity and Exercise?**

- Anything that uses large muscle groups and lots of muscles
- Brisk walking
- Take the stairs when you can
- Exercise video
- Ex classes at local senior center
- Exercise at home
- Exercise is a planned activity

### Generally 4 Categories of Exercise

- Endurance
- Strength
- Balance
- Flexibility
- Many activities cross over

### **Endurance**

- Improve aerobic capacity
- Activities
  - Brisk walking
  - Yard work
  - Dancing
  - Jogging
  - Swimming
  - Biking
  - Climbing stairs

## Strength

- Strength training or resistance training: using weight to increase strength (your weight or weights of various types)
- Your weight
- Lifting weights
- Resistance bands

### Balance

- Standing on one foot
  - Up to 20 seconds
  - Non-compliant to compliant surface
  - Near kitchen sink
- Heel to toe walking
- ▶ Tai Chi

## Flexibility

- Stretching
- Yoga

## **Getting Started**

- Use activity log on page 102 for baseline & future monitoring
- Goal setting
- Make it fun and interesting and social
- Make it routine and make it rewarding
- Talk to your doctor
- Safety first don't overdo at first shoes, water, meals, warm-up & cool-down, symptom
- Exercise soreness versus injury
- How many? How long? Vary ex from day to day

### Tips

- Posture is everything
- Body alignment
- Rest/breaks as needed
- If you overdo, decrease your exercise intensity & repetitions for 3 days
- Good grasp on flexible bands or flexible tubing with hand grips
- Weights: soup can, bottle of water, weights, grocery bags (double) with cans, rick bags in socks, a milk jar with sand or water, dried beans in a sock
- Snacking

## Progressing

- Gauge your effort
  - Use talk test for aerobic exercise
  - Use a step counter
- Progress cautiously (use adjustable cuffs for legs)
  - Start with weight you lift comfortably only about 8 times
  - Stay with that weight until you can do 2 sets of 10– 15 reps
  - When that is easy, add a little resistance and decrease to 2 sets of 8 working up to 15
  - When that is easy, move up again

## **Grip Strength**

- Ideally use theraputty or make your own clay
- Next maybe a foam ball
- Recent literature recommends against a tennis ball
- Slowly squeeze as hard as you can & hold 3-5 seconds, relax
- ▶ Repeat 10–15 times, relax, repeat
- Do both hands
- Help to open jars and lift groceries

### **Wrist Curls**

- Use a chair arm
- Palm up and palm down
- 2 sets of 10-15 with each hand with rest between
- Move slowly no momentum
- Help maintain good form for other arm exercises

### Overhead Arm Raise

- Standing or sitting (armless chair)
- Posture and alignment & breathing (out during harder part & in during easier part) – palms forward
- Lift & hold one second
- 2 sets of 10–15 with rest between
- Can alternate arms if need to as progress
- Strengthens shoulders & arms to make swimming, lifting, and carrying grandchildren easier

#### Front Arm Raise

- Posture, alignment, breathing palms down
- Hold for 1 second
- ▶ 2 sets of 10–15 with break
- Can alternate arms as progress
- Strengthens shoulders to help lifting items up and down from tall shelves

### Side Arm Raise

- Standing or sitting in an armless chair
- Posture, alignment, breathing palms down
- 2 sets of 10–15 with break
- Can alternate arms as progress
- Strengthens shoulders to make lifting groceries easier

## Arm Curl with Weight

- Standing
- Posture, alignment, breathing palms up
- Hold 1 second
- 2 sets of 10-15
- Can alternate arms as progress
- Strengthens upper arm to lift eg. gallon of milk

### Arm Curl with Resistance Band

- Sitting in armless chair
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Tubing under feet, palms turned in
- Bend elbows against resistance, hold 1 second
- 2 sets of 10–15

## Seated Row with Resistance Band

- Armless chair
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Band under feet, hands facing in
- Pull up on band pulling elbows behind your trunk, hold 1 sec
- 2 sets of 10-15
- Strengthens upper back and shoulder to make everyday activities like vacuuming easier

## Wall Push-Up

- Face a wall
- Stand a little further than arm's length away, feet shoulder width apart
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lower your body slowly to the wall, hold 1 sec, push back until arms straight
- 2 sets of 10–15 with rest
- Strengthens arms, shoulders, & chest

#### **Elbow Extension**

- Standing or sitting in an armless chair
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lift & support 1 elbow at top of head
- Straighten that arm toward the ceiling & hold 1 sec
- ▶ 2 sets of 10–15 for each arm with break
- Strengthens triceps

## Chair Dip

- Sturdy chair with arms rests, feet flat, shoulder width apart, lean forward slightly
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Push your body off the chair, hold 1 sec, lower
- 2 sets of 10–15
- Strengthens your arms even if you can't lift your body

### **Knee Curl**

- Stand behind a sturdy chair holding on to the back for balance
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lift one heel up toward your buttocks keeping knee pointed toward floor, hold 1 sec
- ▶ 2 sets of 10–15 with each leg
- Makes stair climbing easier
- Can progress to use a s a balance ex

## Leg Straightening

- Sturdy armless chair with hand towel folded under each knee
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Straighten 1 knee, point toes toward ceiling, hold 1 sec
- 2 sets of 10–15 with each leg
- Strengthens thighs & may reduce arthritis symptoms - may have to limit range at first

### **Chair Stand**

- Sit toward front of sturdy, armless chair, arms cross over chest
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lean back with back straight
- Lean forward to upright, slowly stand up extending your arms in front of you, palms down, sit down, 2 sets of 10-15
- Strengthens abdomen & thighs to make it easier to get in/out of car
- Start from sitting upright if hx of back pain

### Toe Stand

- Stand behind sturdy chair holding back
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Rise up on toes as high as possible, hold 1 sec
- 2 sets of 10–15
- Progress to one leg at a time
- Makes walking easier & improves balance

### **Heel Lifts**

- Stand behind sturdy chair holding back
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Balancing on heels, lift toes up toward ceiling, hold 1 sec (won't be much lifting if your heel cords are tight – will improve with practice)
- 2 sets of 10-15
- Improves toe clearance in walking & balance

## Side Leg Lifts

- Stand behind sturdy chair, holding back
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lift one leg out to side keeping toe of foot pointed forward (Don't let foot and toe turn out to side.), hold 1 sec, lower down
- ▶ 2 sets of 10–15 on both legs
- Improve side hip strength for walking, stair climbing, and balance

## **Back Leg Lifts**

- Stand behind sturdy chair, holding back
- Posture, alignment, breathing
- Lift one leg behind you with the knee straight, hold 1 sec, lower down
- 2 sets of 10–15 with each leg
- Makes standing up and stair climbing easier

## The Ultimate Strengthening Exercise

- If your client will only do one strengthening exercise, make it sit to stand
- Strengthens all large muscles of lower extremity
- Do several times per day but modify at first if needed
- Recommended by the CDC's STEADI Task Force

### **Balance Exercises**

- Standing on One Foot
- Heel-to-Toe Walk
- Balance Walk
- Back Leg Raise without hands
- Side Leg Raise without hands
- Knee Curl without hands
- Toe Stand without hands

## Flexibility Exercises

- Neck Turns
- Shoulder rolls against wall
- Towel stretches
- Wall slides
- Chest stretch in doorway or corner
- Floor stretches
- Standing quad stretches
- Calf stretches

## More Questions?

### Thank-You!

Handout