

Band Exercises for Older Adults: Using Resistance to Build Strength and Prevent Falls



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Finding
Balance



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Build Strength With Bands

Exercising with resistance bands is a great way to build strength in all parts of your body - legs, arms, and core. Bands are portable and inexpensive. You can use them at home, outdoors, or at the gym.

Building strength with bands is safe and effective and will:

- Reduce your risk for falls
- Improve your physical capabilities
- Deter some chronic diseases

Generally, increasing your strength will lessen the

symptoms of aging. (Seguin et al. 2003)

Almost anyone can exercise with bands.

If you:

- have talked with your healthcare provider about exercising
- have been regularly doing some exercises and/or activities
- have enough strength in your hands to hold a band securely,

then you are ready to exercise with bands.

Be Active

.....

Adults aged 65 years and older should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week in bouts of 10 minutes or more. Plus, it is beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities, like exercising with bands, at least 2 days per week.

How to Exercise with a Band

For these exercises you will need:

- A sturdy chair without arms, like a kitchen chair
- Shoes that are flat and supportive
- Clothing that allows you to move freely
- A band

Bands come in various colours representing different amounts of tension or resistance.

Tension can also be increased by moving your hands closer together to shorten the length of the band.



Bands are also called:

- Resistance bands
- Exercise bands
- Therapy bands
- Tubing
- Loop bands
- Figure 8 bands or
- Elastic bands



Before You Exercise

Warm up your body

- Do 5-10 minutes of light to moderate aerobic activity:
 - Walk briskly, dance, bike, or row
- Move your muscles:
 - Rise up on your toes then your heels
 - Squat half way down or sit to stand
 - Do arm circles and wall push-ups

When you feel warm and alert and you are perspiring lightly, you are ready to go.

Review the exercises

- Read through the instructions and look at the pictures
- Practice each movement without the band

Select the right band

- Choose a band that you can move through the entire range
- Change where you grip the band to adjust the tension
- Begin exercising with lighter tension, increasing resistance as you progress over time



As You Exercise

- Maintain good posture:
 - Sit up tall, tighten your core, relax your shoulders
- Grip band firmly, but don't cause white knuckles
- Make slow, controlled movements:
 - Don't allow band to snap back
- Continue breathing throughout:
 - Don't hold your breath
 - Exhale as you pull on the band
- Always keep a slight bend in your knees and elbows:
 - Never lock your joints or hyperextend.

Consider a lighter band if any of the movements are too hard to do.

An Important Reminder:

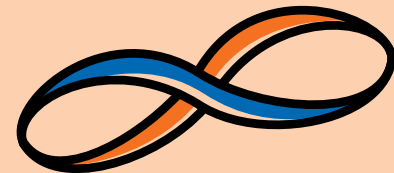
Always listen to your body!

Stop exercising if:

- A movement causes pain
- You become dizzy
- You feel not right or "off"



To tighten or engage your core, imagine pulling your belly button towards your spine.



1. Seated Hip Abduction

Set up and starting position:

Sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor and shoulder width apart

Loop band around thighs, just above knee and tie band on top

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



1. Seated Hip Abduction

Movement:

Push thighs out against band to open, hold for 3-5 seconds

Slowly return to start position

Relax, repeat up to 15 times

Remember to breathe



2. Marching Hip Flexion (seated)

Set up and starting position:

Sit up straight in a chair with feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart

Loop band around the thighs, just above the knee and tie band on top

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



2. Marching Hip Flexion (seated)

Movement:

Raise one knee up towards chest to stretch band

Hold for 5 seconds and slowly lower back to floor

Repeat up to 15 times, switch legs

Remember to breathe



3. Toe and Heel Raises (seated)

Set up and starting position:

Sit up straight in a chair with feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart

Band looped and tied just above the knee

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



3. Toe and Heel Raises (seated)

Movement:

Press sides of thighs out into band and raise both toes off the floor

Don't let band pull your knees or ankles inward

Hold for 5 seconds then return to start position

Raise both heels off the floor

Repeat up to 15 times

Remember to breathe



4. Seated Knee Extension

Set up and starting position:

Sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart

Loop band around ankles, just above shoes and tie band

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



4. Seated Knee Extension

Movement:

Keep left knee bent with foot on floor, slowly straighten right leg to stretch elastic

Hold leg extended for 5 seconds, slowly return to start position

Repeat up to 15 times, switch legs

Remember to breathe



5. Shovel Exercise (seated)

Set up and starting position:

Sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart

Loop band around bottom of one foot

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



5. Shovel Exercise (seated)

Movement:

Hold ends of band firmly in both hands and keep them at hip height

Slowly bend knee towards chest, keeping toes pointed up

Push foot down towards the floor to straighten knee

Repeat up to 15 times, switch legs

Remember to breathe



6. Shoulder Flexion (seated)

Set up and starting position:

Sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor and shoulder width apart

Loop band under thighs, hold band firmly in both hands

Relax shoulders, tighten core to maintain good posture



6. Shoulder Flexion (seated)

Movement:

Hold left hand stationary on thigh

Hold right arm straight with thumb up and pull the band up in front of you as high as comfortable

Hold band up for 5 seconds

Slowly return to the starting position

Repeat up to 15 times, switch arms

Remember to breathe



7. Bicep Curls

Set up and starting position:

Sit up straight in a chair with feet flat on the floor

Loop band under feet and hold band firmly in both hands

Relax shoulders, tighten core to maintain good posture



7. Bicep Curls

Movement:

Hold each end of the band with thumbs facing up

Keep elbows at your sides

Keep wrists straight, bend right elbow bringing hand toward right shoulder

Only one forearm should move at a time

Slowly lower hand and repeat up to 15 times, switch arms

Remember to breathe



8. Seated Row

Set up and starting position:

Sit up straight in a chair with feet flat on the floor, back straight

Loop band under one foot and hold band firmly in both hands

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



Movement:

Squeeze shoulder blades together while bringing elbows straight back until hands reach top of hips

Hold for 5 seconds then slowly return to start position

Keep arms close to your side the entire time

Repeat up to 15 times (switch arms)

Remember to breathe



9. Shoulder External Rotation (band pull apart)

Set up and starting position:

Sit up straight in a chair with feet flat on the floor

Hold band firmly shoulder width apart in both hands, elbows bent at your side with thumbs facing up

Relax shoulders, tighten core and maintain good posture



9. Shoulder External Rotation (band pull apart)

Movement:

Keep elbows in, stretch band apart
and hold for 5 seconds

Slowly bring hands back to start

Repeat up to 15 times, switch arms

Remember to breathe



Cool Down Your Body

Use this time to cool your mind and body:

- Start your cool down with 2-3 minutes of either walking around the room or walking on the spot
- Perform the same exercises you did during warm-up
- Add stretching to your cool-down

Always cool-down after exercise and before you sit down or stand still for lengths of time.

Important to:

- Move slower
- Lower heart rate
- Breathe deeper



Included in this booklet is a selection of basic band exercises to get you started!

Many of the exercises have additional variations. Perform 1-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions for each exercise. Consider a more challenging band tension once you can complete 3 sets of 15 reps.



No matter what your abilities are today, you can improve your strength and balance.

Explore options for activities in your community. Visit your local seniors centre or recreation centre to learn about programs and classes for you!

For more ideas, activities and resources on
challenging your balance and building strength to
prevent falls go to findingbalancealberta.ca

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