

Activities that promote strengthening and flexibility are vital for a complete physical activity programme. Being stronger and more flexible helps you to do aerobic activities (e.g. brisk walking and swimming) more successfully. It also makes

people feel and look better. Below are some simple exercise that you can follow at home.

Videos of each exercise can be found at www.prescription4exercise.com

Strengthening

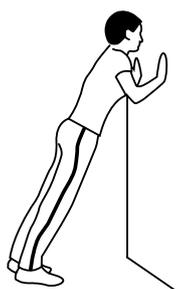
Strengthening exercises should be done at least 2 times per week and they should work all the major muscle groups which include shoulder, arms, chest, back, hips, legs and abdomen. 8-12 repetitions of an exercise is counted as one set. If you can, try to do at least one or two sets for each major muscle group. A weight can be a dumbbell or simple a bag of sugar.



Overhead press

Which muscles does this make stronger? Arms, Upper back, Shoulders

How? Stand or sit with your feet shoulder width apart with a dumbbell in each hand. Lift the weight by bending your elbows and then push your arm up straight. Hold and then return the hand to shoulder and back down again. Repeat this on both sides.



Push up

a) Push up on wall

Which muscles does this make stronger? Chest, shoulders and arms

How? Face the wall and stand just a little further than arms length away. Lean forward and place your palms on the wall at shoulder height. Bend your elbows and slowly move closer to the wall and keep your back and knee straight. Hold it for a second and then push away until arms are straight. When you get stronger and more confident then you can try the 'traditional' push up on the floor.



b) Push up on floor

Which muscles does this make stronger? Chest, shoulders and arms

How? if you are comfortable with the wall push up try this push up on the floor. Lie face down with your hands on the floor at shoulder height. To start with, you may find that getting on your knees is easier than using your toes. Bend your elbows as you lower your body to the floor and then push up slowly.



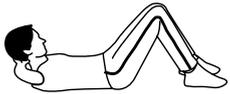
Biceps curls

Which muscles does this make stronger? Arms

How? Determine the correct amount of weight by choosing the one that's going to leave you tired after 10 to 12 repetitions. Begin with your palms facing your thighs. Lift the weight so your forearms rotate and your palms face towards your shoulders. Keep your upper arms and elbows tucked into your side and your wrists straight. Once you have reached the top, hold and then lower the dumbbells back toward the starting position.

Sit up

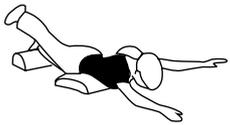
Which muscles does this make stronger? Abdominals



How? Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Place your hand behind your head, keep your chin lifted with elbows pointing out and slowly raise your shoulders and upper back only off the floor, pause for a 2 seconds and then slowly lower your shoulders back onto the floor. Exhale as you raise and inhale as you lower your body.

Back Strengthening

Which muscles does this make stronger? Back



How? Begin by lying on the floor facedown and extend your arms straight over your head (you can have a pillow under your stomach and one under your ankles). Now lift your right arm and your left leg up off the floor at the same time keeping your head neck and back in a straight line. Hold that position for 2 to 4 seconds before lowering your arm and leg back to the floor. Alternate this by lifting your left arm and your right leg. As you get stronger you could try to use all four of your arms and legs off the floor at the same time.

Half squat



Which muscles does this make stronger? Hips and Legs

How? Stand behind a chair and support yourself with both hands. Slowly bend your hips and knees, trying to push your bottom back. Pause and then slowly rise until you're standing again tightening your buttock muscles. To ensure that you maintain the correct form, always keep your knees from moving in front of your toes. As you get stronger and more confident, try it without a chair. If you are struggling to do this activity you could try some simple 'stand up - sit down' exercises on a chair. You can still strengthen your buttock, hip and thigh muscles when you do this in a controlled manner with your knees apart throughout the motion.



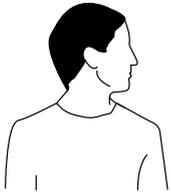
Ankle raise

Which muscles does this make stronger? Legs

How? Start with your feet shoulder width apart and then push-up as far as you can on the balls of your feet. Use a counter or a chair for balance if needed. Pause for two seconds and then lower your heels back onto the floor. As you get stronger, using the staircase can be useful. Facing up the staircase, stand on the first stair with the balls of your feet with your heels just hanging off the edge, and your feet shoulder width apart. Now push up as far as you can on the balls of your feet, pause for 2 seconds then lower the heels back to the starting position

Flexibility Exercises

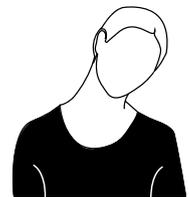
Simple daily stretching exercises can help prevent injuries and pain by improving joint flexibility and muscles limber. Try to hold each position for a short moment when you feel a stretch and repeat as necessary.



Neck

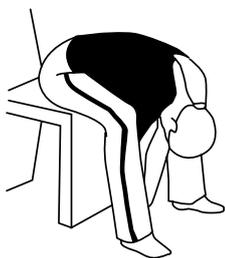
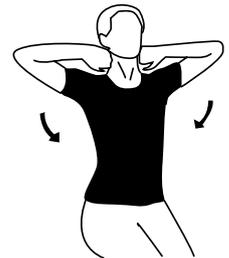
There are four basic neck movements to follow:

- Turn your head to one side, hold for a few seconds and return. Repeat to other side.
- Tilt your head toward one shoulder until you feel a stretch on the opposite side. Hold for few seconds and then return. Repeat to other side.
- Lower your chin to chest, hold for few seconds and then return to starting position.
- Keep your head level and pull your chin back and/or use your finger for an additional gentle push. Hold and return.



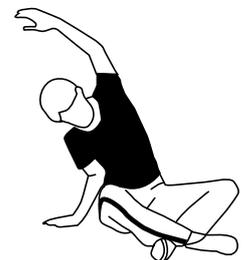
Shoulder

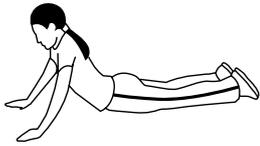
- Start with your arms relaxed on your side. Lift both arms straight forward over your head. Separate your arms sideways and take them back down to the starting position.
- Place hands behind your head and then behind back.



Upper back

- Sit on a chair with your legs apart. Round your back and bend forward, keeping your neck and shoulders relaxed. Hold and relax for a few seconds and repeat.
- Sit with one hand on the seat or floor. Reach the other arm up and bend to the side. Hold and repeat to other side.
- Take hold of the back of a chair. Look over your shoulder while turning your upper body. Hold for a few seconds and repeat to other side.





Lower back

- Begin by lying on your back with your knees bent. Slowly roll your knees from side to side keeping your upper trunk still.
- Lie on your front and push your trunk upwards by straightening your arms. Keep your hips to the floor.
- Place hands on the side of both thighs and bend slowly to one side until you feel a stretch and repeat to other side.



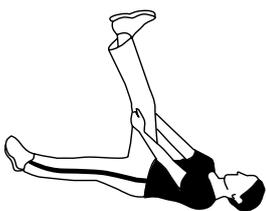
Hips

- Sit on the floor with the knees bent and feet together as close to your groin as you can. Push your knees down towards the floor, hold for a few seconds and then return to your starting position.
- Lie on your back and pull each knee in turn to the chest and keep the other leg straight.



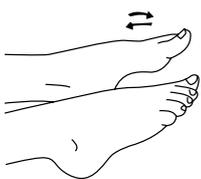
Front of thigh

- Begin by holding on to a support. Bend one knee and take hold of the ankle. Draw your heel towards your buttock with your knee pointing towards the floor. Once you have felt a stretch, hold for a few seconds and repeat. Do the movement in the opposite leg.



Back of thigh

- When lying on your back, lift your leg towards your chest. Place your hands behind the knee and gently pull your leg towards your chest. Once you have felt a stretch, hold for a few seconds and repeat. Do the movement in the opposite leg.



Ankles

- Slowly bend and straighten your ankle
- Move your ankle around in a large circle. Do this in a clockwise and anti-clockwise manner.

