

Exercises

Functional Exercise Descriptions—Guidance Notes

This is a series of 10 functional exercises that can be attempted as they are, or modified with guidance from the health professional, to help you begin manage your activity levels.

They need to be performed on a regular basis: ideally daily. We will help you to set a realistic baseline and guide you through progressing them realistically.

Make sure that the area you will be using to exercise is clear of furniture and other objects that you might knock into or trip over. If you are using exercise equipment (either purchased or im-provised) then make sure it is in good working order, suitable for the task, and you know how to use it safely.

Warming up before exercising is important to prepare your body for movement. 5 minutes of gentle rhythmic movement is all you need. The health professional can advise you on a suitable warm up if necessary. Similarly, a few minutes to cool down, stretch, and relax after your routine will give your body a chance to adjust and prepare for the next activity of the day.

Warm-up/cool-down exercises

Before starting any stretches or exercises, you should ensure that you are warm, if so do 5 - 10 minutes of gentle exercises. This raises the body temperature and makes the tissues more “pliable”. These exercises may include:

- In sitting or standing: ankle circling for each foot in turn, in both directions.
- In standing: circling the shoulders forwards and then backwards.
- In standing: turning the head to the right and then to the left.
- Standing with the feet apart, swinging the arms and trunk from side to side.
- Heel raises or marching on the spot.
- Shake the arms out and shake the legs out.

It is acceptable to break your routine into more manageable chunks, if this is the only way you can complete it, but we recommend that you try to find the time (usually only 10 to 20 minutes) to complete it in one go. This may mean that your initial baseline number for each exercise is set low enough so that the whole amount of exercise is achievable.

Your exercise routine and the total activity levels that we help you to set are considered to be safe and beneficial. However, you have the right to stop your exercise routine if you chose, especially if you feel pain outside of your usual experiences, are unwell, you feel dizzy, unusually short of breath or have chest pain. If you cannot manage the base-line level of activity then please contact the health professional that you have been seeing so that they can help you reset, restructure or adapt the exercise routine.

1. Stand ups from a chair

- Check the chair height and that your neck, shoulders and arms are relaxed with your hands lightly rested on your thighs.
- Try without using your hands to push up, standing up from the chair.
- Sit back down and repeat the exercise.



2. Step ups

- Check the step height. Stand in front of the step.
- Step onto the step so that your feet are side by side.
- Step back down, leading with the same foot that you started with, ending with both feet on the floor.
- Repeat the exercise, starting with the opposite leg.



3. Single arm row

- Find an appropriate weight to lift with one hand.
- Stand in front of a chair, sofa, bed, gym ball etc... with your front knee bent and your hand supporting yourself.
- Keeping your arm close to the body, bend your elbow, bringing the weight towards your chest, and then lowering back down: in a 'sawing action'.
- Repeat the exercise, using the opposite arm.



4. Three step tap

- Start with feet hip width apart, hands by your side.
- Start by taking three side steps to the right, crossing your left leg behind your right in the middle.
- At the third step tap your left heel with your right hand, twisting gently at your waist.
- Continue back the other way in a rhythmic manner.



5. Push ups

- Place your palms flat against a wall at a comfortable height. Have your feet slightly apart.
- Keeping the shoulders down and your chin tucked in; bend your elbows until your nose touches the wall.
- Straighten your elbows and repeat in a rhythmic manner.



6. Lift and move

- Find an object to lift which you use regularly.
- Start with your arms by your side and feet hip width apart.
- Squat down to pick up the object, then lift and reach up- as if placing on a high shelf. Slowly return the object to the starting position.

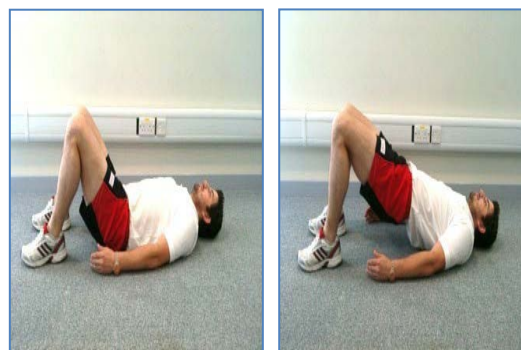
Note: This exercise is a functional exercise designed to improve your confidence and strength. The aim is to choose a task that you find difficult but want to practice e.g. getting pans out of a low cupboard and putting them on the hob.



7. Lower body curl up

- Lie on your back, with your knees bent and feet on the floor.
- As you breathe out, gently tense your tummy muscles and pelvic floor, slowly lift your tailbone off the floor to as high as you feel comfortable.
- Roll your spine back down as you gently breathe out.

Tip: Imagine your spine as a string of beads – trying to lift and lower each individual bead.



8. On all fours: alternate arms and legs

- Kneel on the floor or bed so that your hands are directly under your shoulders and knees are directly under hips.
- Let one arm float up in front of you. Hold it there for a few seconds then gently lower back to starting position.
- Next, lift the opposite arm, then one leg and finally the opposite leg. Then repeat the cycle again.



9. Upper body curl up

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor. Place your hands behind your head or it can be helpful to take hold of the corners of a small towel which is spread out under your upper back and head.
- Gently lift your head and shoulders off the floor. **NB** Rest your head on the towel or your hands.
- Gently lower back down and then repeat.



10. Outer thighs: clams

- Lie on your side with your knees bent and head supported by your hands or pillow.
- Gently pull in your tummy muscles and squeeze your bottom cheeks.
- Keeping your heels together lift your top knee apart. Hold at the top then lower.
- Turn over and repeat the same movement on the other side.



CIRCUIT EXERCISES NAME.....

Chart to enable you to observe your tolerances on a daily basis so that you can establish a baseline for each exercise

Exercise	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Total	Average	50% average (= baseline)
Stand ups from a chair										
Step ups										
Single arm row										
3 step tap										
Push ups										
Lift and move										
Lower body curl up										
Hands and knees- supermans										
Upper body curl up										
Side lying- clams										

Starting a specific activity: where do I start?

Baselines - and working them out

For each activity, you have to work out the period of time that allows you to remain active at the same level on good and bad days. This is called your **baseline**. It will be half your average taken from a number of readings. The information below describes how to work this out.

- On both good *and* bad days, time yourself (or count the number of repetitions) for the chosen activity and write these down on the charts provided. Take a reading **at least once** every day for a week.
- Add all the readings together then divide by the total number of readings to get the **average**.
- Divide your average by 2
- This last figure is your **baseline** and will allow you to take part **confidently**: it will be below the number that you did on your best day and yet a little above what you did on your worst. You can remind your self that any increase in pain will not be an indication of new or further damage.

Use of Timers

It can be very easy to be distracted by something that you are enjoying, which can result in winding up your pain – without realising it! If you find this to be the case, it can be very helpful to set a timer to go off – to remind you stop. This can prevent you from making your pain worse, but allows you to continue your activity without having to monitor your pain levels.

For further help please visit:

www.sdhct.nhs.uk/aboutus/services/painservice/improvinghealthandfitness/6_bodyconditioning.php
for interactive videos on how to set and increase your baselines.

**APPLYING THESE PRINCIPLES IS NOT EASY:
IT TAKES DETERMINATION AND SELF-DISCIPLINE.
DON'T GIVE UP IF YOU DON'T SUCCEED THE FIRST TIME!**