

Strength exercises to support your walking

Why is strength important?

Physical activity is good medicine. Being active on most days will help you to perform everyday tasks with greater ease. It can help to boost your energy, think more clearly, manage blood pressure, reduce stress and anxiety, and help support a healthier heart.

Building strength into your exercise regime will help to keep your muscles, joints and bones healthy and strong.

How much?

Aim to do strength exercises two times a week, along with walking daily.

Gradually build from Beginner to Advanced. Reps (repetitions) are the number of times you complete a single exercise. Completing several reps of a specific exercise in a row is called a set. Rest for at least 30 seconds between sets and exercises. This allows the muscle to recover and be ready for the next set or exercise.

Beginner: 1 set of 6 - 10 reps per exercise

Intermediate: 2 sets of 10 - 15 reps per exercise

Advanced: 3 sets of 10 - 15 reps per exercise

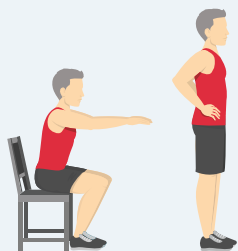
Tips

- ✓ It is important to keep hydrated, water is best.
- ✓ If you are outside don't forget to practice sun-safety and slip, slop, slap.
- ✓ Wear comfortable shoes and clothing.
- ✓ Stop if you experience pain or discomfort and seek advice from your GP.

Sit and stand squat

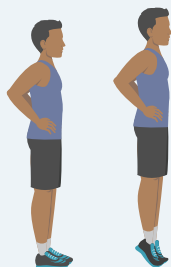
Use a chair for this exercise

- Start in a seated position with feet hip width apart, knees in line with hips.
- Try not to use your hands to push up
- Come up into a standing position
- If this exercise is challenging, increase the height of the chair or bench



Calf raise

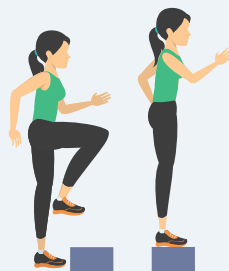
- Start by standing with feet hip width apart
- Raise your heels up so you are on the balls of your feet pausing at the top
- Lower heels back to ground
- Repeat



Step up

Equipment: step that you can step up and down with ease (find a step with a hand rail if balance is an issue)

- Step one foot up
- Step other foot up to meet
- Step first foot backward
- Step other foot back down to meet
- Complete all repetitions on one leg before changing to the other leg to lead



Single leg balance

Equipment: firm surface or stable chair

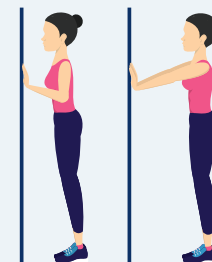
- Hold onto something stable to balance
- Stand up straight
- Lift one foot off floor
- Hold for 20 or 30 seconds
- Repeat on opposite leg
- Complete 3 times each side
- To make harder:
 - Lift hand off chair OR
 - Close your eyes while holding onto the chair



Wall push up

Equipment: wall (can also use park bench or kitchen bench, or fence)

- Place both hands against wall at shoulder height
- Lower your chest toward the wall
- Hold for 2 seconds
- Push body away from wall



Bridge or pelvic tilt

- Lie on a mat or towel on the floor or your bed
- Back flat, knees bent and feet flat on floor or surface
- Roll hips back so back is flat on the ground and lift hips off floor
- Body should make a straight line from knees to shoulder, hold for 2 seconds
- Lower slowly toward floor

Alternate exercise:

- Lie on floor
- Back flat, knees bent and feet flat on floor
- Tilt your hips up towards your belly button to flatten your back
- Hold and repeat as many times as per your plan



For heart information visit heartfoundation.org.au