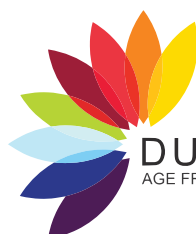


Stay Home Stay Active Stay Healthy



Dublin City
**Sport &
Wellbeing**
Partnership



DUBLIN
AGE FRIENDLY CITY



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Stay Home, Stay Active, Stay Healthy.

Due to the Covid-19 National Health Emergency Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership have had to suspend all our Older Adult Community Exercise classes until further notice.

To ensure you can stay as active as possible during this difficult time we have put together some guidelines on how much activity you should be aiming for and some handy tips to help achieve this at home. We have also included some easy to follow exercises with instructions overleaf.

Some physical activity is better than none, more is better than some, and if you take part in any amount of activity you gain health benefits. Any physical activity you do is also vital in helping you maintain your mental health and makes you feel good.

Older adults should aim to be active for 30 minutes a day doing moderate intensity activity for 5 days a week and include cardio (heart & lung health), muscle-strengthening and balance exercises.

You don't need to do it all in one go so three 10-minute bouts spread out over the day works just as well.

Moderate intensity simply means pushing yourself a little harder to get outside your comfort zone so your breathing and heart rate has increased, and you would feel warm and might be sweating slightly.

Remember if you are new to exercising or if you have never done any of the exercises mentioned below start off slowly and build your way up to 30 minutes gradually over a few weeks. If you have a diagnosed chronic condition such as diabetes, heart disease, or osteoarthritis or if you have symptoms such as chest pain or pressure, dizziness or joint pain, talk to your doctor before you increase your activity levels.

Tips to stay active around the house

- Marching on the spot during the ad breaks while you watch your favourite soaps or tv shows is a great way to get some of your cardio in.
- Try including some high knee raises to increase the intensity.
- Avoid sitting for long periods without getting up and moving about. Stretch in your chair every half hour and walk around during the ad breaks on TV.
- The Chair Sit to Stand exercise on the following page is ideal to do when the ads come on the TV.
- Toe raises or standing on one leg (aim for 45 seconds on each leg) while waiting for the kettle to boil are great to improve your balance.
- If you have stairs in your house that you regularly use go up and down a few extra times during the day.
- Backward and sideways walking, and walking on heels and toes are great ways to improve your balance and fitness at the same time. Try to do these in a large room or long hallway in your house.
- Try balancing on one foot or stretching while you brush your teeth.
- Active housework counts toward your activity goals. Gardening, Hoovering, cleaning floors and washing windows are all good ways of keeping active.

Here is a link to a chair-based exercise programme for older adults called Easy Exercises produced by the HSE which you can download if you have access to a computer and use in your home to help you stay active also:

<https://www2.hse.ie/file-library/health-eating-active-living/chair-based-exercises-for-older-adults.pdf>

Try doing the following exercises at least 3 times per week. It is also very important to keep all your joints flexible. Please see the stretches we have included for you on the following pages that you should do before and after exercising to warm up and cool down.

Chair Sit to Stand is a great exercise to improve your core and leg strength while also working on your cardio fitness. (If you have knee or back problems go very slowly and stop if it hurts.)

1. Place a sturdy armless chair against a wall and sit towards the front of it with back straight and feet flat on the floor about shoulder width apart.
2. Place your arms crossed at wrists on your chest and rise to a standing position breathing out as you do. (If you can't keep your arms across chest hold them straight out in front of you parallel to floor.)
3. Slowly sit back down breathing in as you do.
4. Repeat 10-15 times, rest for 30-60 seconds and repeat for 3 sets in total.
5. As your fitness improves you can increase the speed and number of repeats for each set.



Grip Strength is a vital component of fitness that you need to maintain as you grow older.

1. Hold a tennis ball or other small rubber or foam ball in one hand.
2. Slowly squeeze the ball as hard as you can and hold it for 3-5 seconds.
3. Relax the squeeze slowly.
4. Repeat 10-15 times with each hand.
5. Do 3 sets of the above with each hand.

Wall Push-Up is an exercise that will strengthen your arms, shoulders and chest.

1. Stand a little further than an arm's length away from a wall with feet flat on floor and shoulder width apart and lean forward placing palms flat against wall.
2. Breathing in, slowly lean forward bending elbows until your nose is about 6 inches from wall, hold for 1-2 seconds.
3. Breathing out, slowly push yourself back until your arms are straight again.
4. Repeat 10-15 times, rest for 30 seconds and then repeat for 2 more sets of 10-15.



Heel-to-Toe Walk is an exercise that will improve your balance which is fundamental to prevent falls as you age.

1. Position the heel of one foot just in front of the toes of the other foot. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch.
2. Choose a spot ahead of you and focus on it to keep you steady as you walk.
3. Take a step. Put your heel just in front of the toe of your other foot.
4. Repeat for 20 steps.
5. If you feel a bit unsteady on your feet make sure you do this exercise near a wall that you can use for balance if you need it.
6. As your balance improves try doing this exercise at a faster pace.



Why warm up and stretch before exercise?

- Gradually increases heart rate, temperature of the body and blood flow to muscles
- Gently prepares the muscles for exercise

To warm up we suggest that you walk at a gentle pace for 3-4 minutes before exercise. Stretching should be done directly after the warm up. A few simple stretches are outlined below, each stretch should be held for about 10 seconds.

Calf Stretch

For this stretch you will need something to lean against (wall, tree, lamppost).

1. Leaning on the wall with arms outstretched, place one foot in front of the other with the back leg straight (both feet should be facing forward).
2. Gently lean forward, keeping heels on the ground.
3. Switch legs and repeat. Stretch should be felt on below knee on back of extended leg.



Hamstring Stretch

1. Extend left leg in front of right with toes pointed up.
2. Lean on the thigh of extended leg. Gently bend the right knee and lean back slightly.
3. Switch legs and repeat. Stretch should be felt on the back of the outstretched leg.

Quad Stretch

1. With right hand, grasp your right ankle. Keep right knee pointing towards the ground, push hips slightly forward. (It might be a good idea to hold on to something with your free hand for balance.)
2. Switch legs and repeat. Stretch should be felt on the front of bent leg.



Groin Stretch

1. Stand with feet wide apart, facing forward.
2. Gently lean to one side, bending the knee and keeping the opposite leg straight. Both feet should stay flat on the ground.
3. Switch legs and repeat. Stretch should be felt on upper inner side of outstretched leg.



Shoulder Stretch

1. Place one arm across your body, with the opposite hand grasp your elbow and pull your arm across your body.
2. Switch arms and repeat. Stretch should be felt on the front of your shoulder and possibly in the chest area.



The All Over Stretch

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent.
2. Raise arms slowly overhead and bring hands together.
3. Slowly begin to stretch upwards. Keep breathing normally.

Why cool down and stretch after exercise?

- Gradually decreases heart rate and body temperature
- Prevents pooling of blood in the working muscles after exercise

After you have finished exercising we suggest that you walk again for 3-4 minutes at a gentle pace to cool down. At this point it is important to stretch again. Using the same stretches as in the warm up, this time holding each stretch for a count of 20 seconds.



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