



Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Simple exercises to encourage weight loss

Introduction

This leaflet includes information about diet and gives details of exercises that you can do while sitting in a chair.

Diet

The key to diet success is to make changes to what you eat and to the exercise you do as part of your daily routine.

Weight loss can be helped by exercising for at least 30 minutes on 5 or more days a week. The exercise can be done in 1 session or several sessions lasting 10 minutes or more.

Exercise

Chair aerobics are exercises you do while seated and are just one of the ways you can exercise.

Seated movements that you carry out many times will raise your heart rate and help you burn calories. Any quick repeated movements offer aerobic benefits and can also help to loosen stiff joints.

Many traditional upper body exercises can be done from a seated position using weights such as dumbbells, resistant bands or anything that is weighted and fits in your hand, such as food cans. Start slow and gradually increase your activity level.

Keep your goals manageable. Reaching even the smallest fitness goals will help you gain body confidence and keep you motivated.

Talking to your GP about exercise

Before you start to exercise, you should talk to your GP if you have mobility, illness or weight problems. Your GP may be able to recommend services aimed at helping people with limited mobility or weight problems to become more active.

This can include specially designed eating and exercise plans such as a referral to Slimming World® or a gym.

Chair exercise suggestions

Sunshine arm circle

Seated in a chair, hold a ball in both hands with arms extended above your head and/or in front of you, keeping elbows slightly bent. Imagine the face of a clock in front of you and begin by holding your arms above your head (at 12 o'clock).



Using a circular movement, move the ball slowly in a controlled movement, back to 12 o'clock, then reverse the direction and circle the opposite way. Keep alternating circle directions for 8 cycles. Rest, then do another set of 8 cycles.

You do not have to use a ball for this exercise you can imagine that you are holding a ball while carrying out the exercise.



If it is difficult to bring your arms above your head, hold them out in front of you and move your arms as if drawing a circle on the wall with or without the ball.

Tummy twists

Hold a ball (optional) at waist height with both hands close to the body, keeping your arms bent. The ball can be replaced with food cans or hand weights. Turn the upper body to the left as far as possible, then back to the middle and then to the right side. Make sure that only your upper body is moving. By imagining your belly button being sucked towards the spine helps to keep the



stomach muscles pulled in. Repeat the exercise 8 times on each side.

This exercise strengthens your main muscles, which you use to keep an upright posture (position).

Chair marching

While sitting in a chair, move slightly forward on the seat away from the backrest. Start with alternate arm swings only. You will need to move your arms as if you were marching by swinging backwards and forwards, then alternative knee lifts only. Then put your arm swings and knee lifts together, as if marching on the spot.

Slowly increase the size of the movements. Carry out this exercise for 1 minute then rest.



Arm extensions

Sit tall (upright) with your feet apart. Hold a can in each hand, bring your hands to shoulder level, slowly raise your hands above your head and then back to your shoulders.

Repeat 8 to 12 sets of this exercise.

Sit tall with your feet apart. Hold cans in each hand down by your sides, slowly curl arms towards your shoulders.

Repeat 8 to 12 sets of this exercise.



Overhead reach with side bends

Sit with feet apart in an upright position. Reach with one arm over your head and relax your other arm down by your side or on your seat. Slowly try to lean to the side of your relaxed arm. Count to 10 then slowly come back to your starting point. Repeat the exercise on your other side.

Repeat exercise 5 times on each side.



Seated arm punches

While seated, make a punching movement into the air, one arm after the other. Punch forwards then up towards the ceiling, to the side and then back to facing forwards. Repeat this exercise 20 times.



Examples of exercises using exercise bands

There are many exercises using exercise bands. Some are quite hard, some are easier, all of which you can do while in a sitting position.

Rowing - place the band under your feet, holding each end of the band. Pull towards your waist then release. Repeat 5 to 10 times.

Chest press – put the band behind your back, then hold each end and stretch your arms out in front of you, in line with your chest. Repeat this exercise 5 to 10 times.



Further information

If you have a smartphone 'MyFitnessPal' is an app that you can download for Android and iOS devices. This app can help you to keep a track of your energy intake and output, as well as recording your weight.

Recommended websites:

NHS choices

Website: www.nhs.uk/livewell

Stronger seniors

Website: www.strongerseniors.com

Live strong

Website: www.livestrong.com/chair-exercises

British Heart Foundation

Website: www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/activity/resistance-bands

To access information on youtube.com, type in a search engine; seated exercises for obesity and limited mobility.

This booklet was developed by the Orthopaedic Pre-assessment Clinic.

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Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.

Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation.

***Ask 3 Questions** is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial.

Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>



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