



## Tips and Ideas for Older Australians (65 years and older)

*What sort of activity should I be doing?*

Four types of activity are needed to keep you healthy.

- **Moderate Activities** – for your heart, lungs and blood vessels
- **Strength Activities** – to help maintain bone strength
- **Flexibility Activities** – to help you move more easily
- **Balancing Activities** – to improve your balance and help prevent falls.

Try to include at least one activity from each group.

### Moderate Activities

**Do 30 minutes of activity from this group on most days**

- Brisk walking
- Continuous swimming
- Golf (no cart!)
- Aerobics
- Cycling
- Washing the car
- Walking the dog
- Yard and garden work
- Tennis
- Water aerobics
- Dancing
- Mopping and vacuuming

### Strength Activities

**Do specific strength exercises two or three times a week**

- Weight, strength or resistance training exercises.
- Lifting and carrying (eg groceries or small children)
- Climbing stairs (instead of taking the lift or escalator)
- Moderate yard work (eg digging and shifting soil)
- Calisthenics (eg push-ups and sit-ups)

### Flexibility

- Tai Chi
- Bowls (indoor and outdoor)
- Mopping, vacuuming
- Stretching exercises
- Yoga
- Dancing

### Balancing Activities

- Side leg raises
- Half squats
- Heel raises

**Make your move – Sit less – Be active for life!**





## Tips for improving flexibility, balance and strength

Try to do some form of stretching every day – even if it is only while you are watching TV. Make a specific time each day to do these exercises, or fit them in whenever you can -for example – while waiting for the kettle to boil. If you can, also try to reduce the time you spend sitting for long periods.

- **Stand up and sit down (or chair raise) (for strength and balance)**

Sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor and slightly apart. Try to keep your back and shoulders straight throughout this exercise. Slowly stand up, trying not to use your hands (or as little as possible). Slowly sit back down and pause. Do this 8-15 times.

- **Shoulder roll (for flexibility)**

Using a gentle circular motion, hunch your shoulders upwards, backwards, downwards and forwards. Do this slowly 5 times, then reverse the direction.

- **Knee lifts (for strength)**

Sit back in your chair with your back straight. Bend your knee and lift your left leg towards your chest. Hold for a few seconds then lower slowly. Do this 8 – 10 times with each leg.

- **Heels up toes up (for flexibility)**

While seated, start with feet flat on the floor and lift heels as high as you can, keeping the balls of your feet on the floor. Slowly lower heels until feet are flat, then lift toes until they point upwards. Repeat these up and down movements for 30 seconds.

- **Side leg raises (to improve both strength and balance)**

Stand sideways to the bench and hold on with your right hand to support yourself. Slowly take your left leg out to your left side. Keep your back and both legs straight. Hold the position for one second then slowly lower. Repeat 8 times at first, increasing to 15. Turn around and hold on with your left hand while you raise your right leg.

- **Half squats (to improve leg strength)**

Stand facing the bench with your feet apart (about shoulder width), feet facing forward and holding on with both hands. Leaning very slightly forward, but keeping your back straight, slowly bend both legs, keeping your knees over your feet. Do not go down too far. As you return to the up position, squeeze your buttocks together as if there is a \$5 note between them that you don't want to drop. Repeat 8 times at first, increasing to 15.

- **Heel raises (for strength and balance)**

Stand sideways to the bench, feet apart (shoulder width) holding on with one hand to support yourself. Slowly rise up on to your toes, hold for one second and lower again. Do this 8 times to begin with, increasing to 15. Make sure your movements are not rushed.

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