



Level Three Exercises



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Click on the Osteoarthritis (OA) Program link

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1. Warm up



Aim Warm up your muscles prior to doing your exercises and stretches.

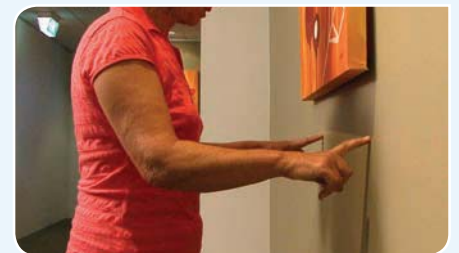
Instructions

- Walk on flat ground for 5 minutes, trying to cover as much distance as possible in the 5 minutes without running.
- Stop at any point if you are in pain, feeling too tired or light-headed. Start walking again once you feel capable of continuing.

Alternative If continuous walking is too difficult, walk 20 metres then rest or sit, walk 20 metres more. Repeat in this way for the 5 minutes.

Duration 5 minutes.

2. Balanced walking



Aim Improve balance.

Instructions

- Stand up straight in a clear space – either near a wall or the side of a table (where you can take about 10 paces).
- Start by walking forward for around 10 steps.
- Now step sideways, first with one foot, then step the other leg to follow. Keep stepping sideways the same distance.
- Step sideways in the opposite direction to before.
- Now step backwards (slowly and carefully) for the 10 paces.

Repetitions 10 times (3 x per week).

Tip Do not try to step sideways where one leg crosses over the other. Stand up straight, do not bend over. Make sure there is nothing to trip over.



3. Standing leg squeeze



Aim Strengthen adductor or inside thigh muscles.

- Instructions**
- Stand up straight, place a rolled up towel between your knees or lower thighs.
 - Keep your feet and knees as close together as is comfortable
 - Keep your knees straight, squeeze your knees together as firmly as you can without pain.
 - Hold squeeze for 5 seconds then relax.

Repetitions 20 times (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your back straight. Do not bend forwards.

4. Sit to stand with correct technique



Aim Strengthen gluteal (or buttocks), quad (or front of thigh) muscles and to improve ability to stand up from a chair.

- Instructions**
- Sit on a sturdy chair eg. a dining chair, preferably without arms. Shuffle forwards so you are sitting towards the front of the chair with feet flat on the ground.
 - Move your feet so they are directly under your knees and are shoulder width apart.
 - Keeping back straight, sway forwards with your trunk, push through both feet and stand up. Your trunk needs to be able to move forwards before your bottom leaves the chair. Aim to do this exercise without using your arms to push yourself up.
 - To sit down – do not flop! Keep your back straight and bend at the hips so that your buttocks move over the chair, then bend your knees and sit down. Sit up straight once your buttocks are on the chair.

Repetitions 5 times (3 x per week).

Tip A higher surface makes this exercise easier eg. a higher chair or a table rather than a chair. Standing up and sitting down slowly is very difficult. Try to use your momentum (speed of movement) to assist you to stand up.



5. Slow kick with exercise tube



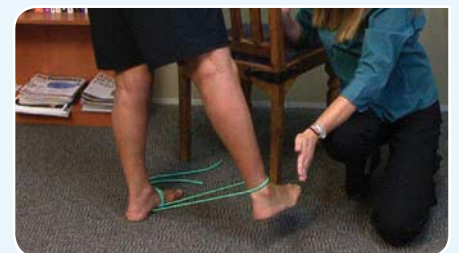
Aim Strengthen hip flexor muscles.

- Instructions**
- Stand near a heavy table. Tie both ends of your exercise tube to a table leg or other similar heavy object.
 - Put one foot inside the tube and move sideways along the table until the tube is pulled taut. Keep one hand on the table for support.
 - Kick the leg slowly forwards, then slowly backwards. Aim to keep your knee straight. Only go as far as is comfortable for you. The movement should occur at your hip.

Repetitions 10 times each leg (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your lower back still by keeping your 'core* switched on' by sucking your tummy muscles in tight. If you have delicate skin, wear thick socks for protection when using the exercise tube. 'Core' refers to the major muscles in the belly, mid and lower back, hips, shoulders and the neck.

6. Side kick with exercise tube



Aim Strengthen abductor or outside hip muscles.

- Instructions**
- Fold your tube in half and hold both ends in one hand. Rest your other hand on the stable surface for balance.
 - Lay the looped end of the tube on the floor and step one foot inside the loop.
 - With your other foot, stand on the exercise tube so you anchor both strands of the tube to the floor. Stand so that your feet are shoulder width apart.
 - Move the foot that is inside the loop slowly to the side about 20cm or as far as is comfortable, allow you leg to come slowly back again.

Repetitions 5 times each side (3 x per week).

Tip If the elastic tube is uncomfortable on your foot, do this activity with your shoes on. If you have delicate skin, wear thick socks for protection when using the exercise tube.



7. Hip extension stretch



Aim Improve hip mobility.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your tummy on a firm surface eg. on your bed.
 - Place both hands near your chin.
 - Using your arm muscles pull your elbows in under your shoulders so your chest raises off the bed.
 - Keep your pelvis pressed down onto the bed.
 - Slide your elbows back out to the side, do not hold the upward position for longer than 2 seconds.

Repetitions 20 times (3 x per week).

Tip At all times, look between your hands. Do not arch your neck back.

8. Quads muscle stretch in lying



Aim Stretch quads or front thigh muscles and improve hip and knee mobility.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your tummy on a firm surface eg. on your bed.
 - Bend one knee towards your buttocks until you can hold your foot or ankle with your hand.
 - Gently pull your heel towards your buttocks as far as you can comfortably.
 - Hold for 10 seconds and slowly release the leg.

Repetitions Repeat 10 times with each leg (3 x per week).

Tip Use a dressing gown cord looped twice around your ankle to help pull your foot up if needed.



9. Active hip extension



Aim Strengthen gluteal (buttock) muscles and stretch hip flexor or front of hip muscles.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your tummy on a firm surface, eg. your bed, with a pillow under your hips.
 - Keep your pelvis pressed down onto the bed and pillow and keep your knee straight.
 - Tighten your buttock muscles and try to lift your straight leg 10 cm off the bed and immediately lower it down again.

Repetitions Repeat 10 times with each leg (3 x per week).

Tip Try not to arch your lower back as you lift your leg.

10. Buttock or gluteal muscle stretch



Aim Stretch gluteal muscles (buttocks), improve hip mobility.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your back on a firm surface eg. your bed.
 - Start with both knees bent and feet flat on the bed.
 - Bring one leg up so your ankle rests on the knee of the opposite leg.
 - Hold behind your thigh, or over your shin, and bring your knee towards your chest.
 - For a lighter stretch bring the knee to your sternum (breast bone).
 - To increase the stretch bring the knee towards the opposite armpit.
 - Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

Repetitions 10 times each leg (3 x per week).

Tip If you get groin pain do not hold the stretch position and only do this stretch gently.



11. Groin stretch in sitting



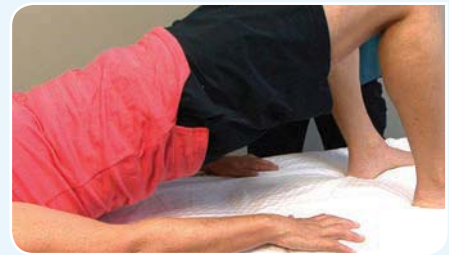
Aim Improve hip joint mobility and stretch inner thigh or groin muscles.

- Instructions**
- Sit on a firm surface eg. on your bed.
 - Bend knees up as far as is comfortable with feet flat on the bed.
 - Use both hands for support on the outsides of your knees, keep the feet close and gently let the knees lower out to the side as far as is comfortable until you feel a gentle stretch in your inner thighs.
 - Hold for 5 seconds only and use your hands to assist your knees to come up.

Repetitions 10 times each leg, hold each stretch for 5 seconds only (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your back as straight as possible. Use your hands to help lower knees and to return to the start position.

12. Hamstring bridges



Aim Strengthen gluteal or buttock muscles and hamstring or back of thigh muscles.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your back on a firm surface eg. your bed, with both knees bent to a comfortable angle.
 - Feet should be flat on the bed, and your arms should rest by your sides.
 - Position your feet and knees about hip width apart.
 - Tighten your tummy and your buttock muscles, then press through both feet - raise your buttocks off the bed as far as is comfortable for you, then slowly lower your buttocks back to the bed again.

Repetitions 10 times (3 x per week).

Tip Have a pillow under your head. Keep your tummy muscles sucked in as you lift your hips up and down – to help support your lower back. Do not arch your back.



13. Step ups



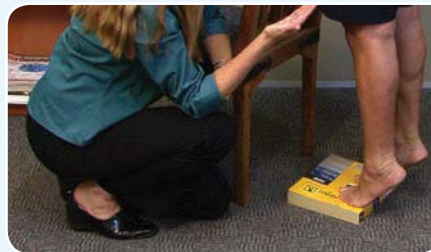
Aim Improve balance and strengthen front thigh or quad muscles.

- Instructions**
- Stand in front of a small step (a phone book placed on the ground near a table will suffice).
 - Place one foot up on the step, your feet should be facing forwards and your knee on the step should be slightly bent.
 - Press through your foot on the step and use your leg muscles to step up and straighten the knee.
 - Now step up with the other leg, touch this leg to the step but do not rest it there, immediately step back down to the floor behind.

Repetitions 5 times each leg (3 x per week).

Tip Try to use your leg muscles, avoid using your arms to pull yourself up the step. Arms should be used to balance only if required.

14. Calf raise standing on a step



Aim Strengthen calf muscles (lower leg), stretch calf muscles, improve ankle mobility.

- Instructions**
- Stand on the edge of a small step with your knees straight, so the balls of your feet are on the step and your heels are over the edge of the step. You can use a phone book, or a step at home.
 - Hold onto something stable for balance eg. a table, doorframe or a handrail.
 - Using both legs at the same time, rise up onto the balls of your feet, lifting both heels above the level of the step, as far as is comfortable for you.
 - Slowly lower your heels below the level of the step as far as is comfortable for you.
 - Make sure you keep your knees straight.

Repetitions 10 times in a smooth up and down motion, without holding at any position (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your knees hips and back straight. Do not bend over. Use your hands for balance, not to push yourself up.



15. Standing hamstring muscle stretch



Aim Stretch hamstring or back thigh muscles.

Instructions

- Stand near a small step or stool (a phone book would be adequate).
- Place one foot onto the step, resting on the heel of the foot.
- Keep your lower back straight at all times, making sure the knee of the lower leg is straight.
- Slowly bend forwards at your hips, stop when you feel a light stretch at the back of your thigh. Hold the stretch position for 5 seconds then return to the upright position again.

Repetitions Repeat 10 times with each leg (3 x per week).

Tip This stretch should not be painful.

16. Cool down



Aim Cool down after doing your exercises.

Instructions

- Walk on flat ground for 5 minutes, trying to cover as much distance as possible in the 5 minutes without running.
- Stop at any point if you are in pain, feeling too tired or light-headed. Start walking again once you feel capable of continuing

Alternative If continuous walking is too difficult, walk 20 metres then rest or sit, walk 20 metres more. Repeat in this way for the 5 minutes.

Duration 5 minutes.