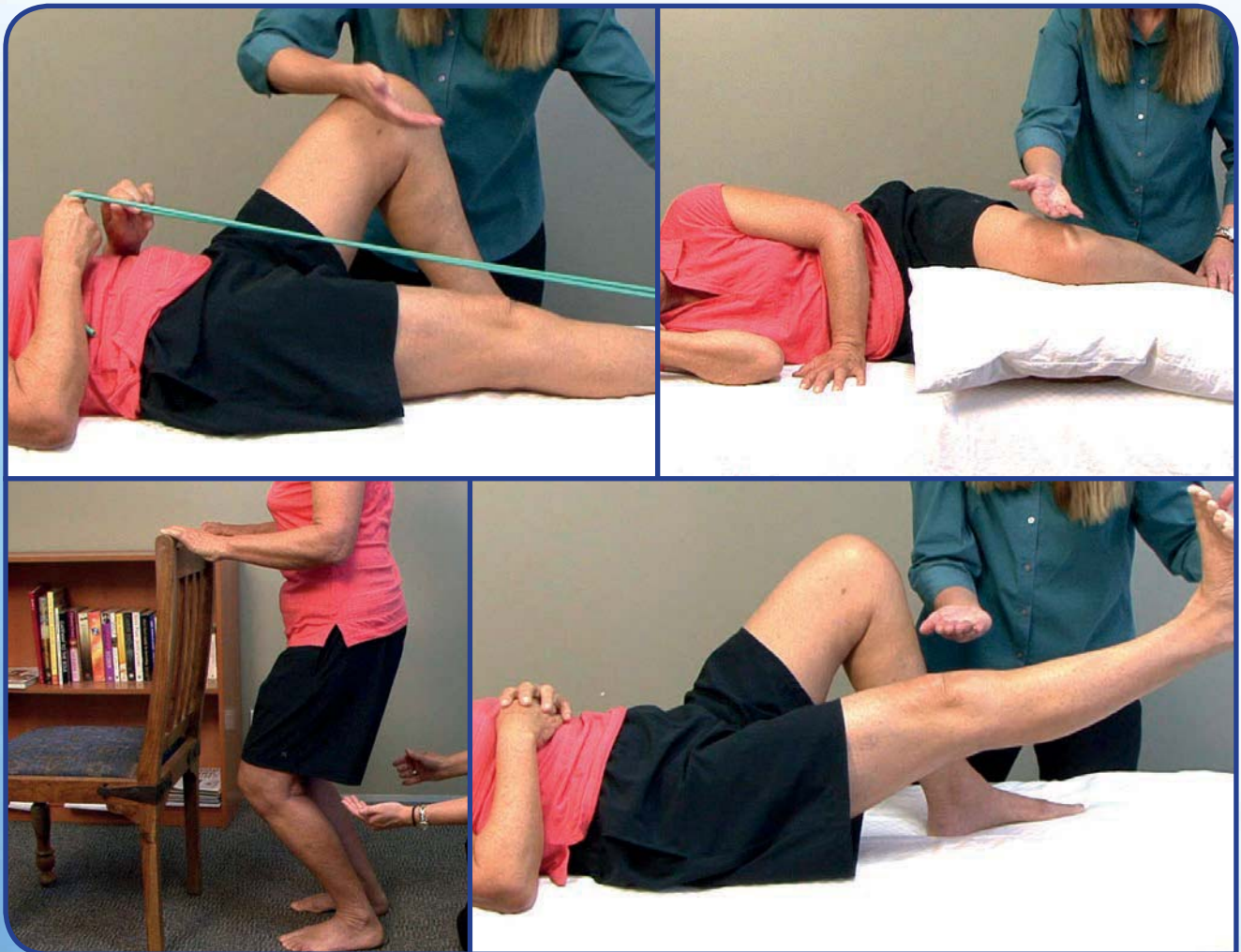




Level Two Exercises



www.HealthyWeightForLife.com.au

Click on the Osteoarthritis (OA) Program link

Ph: 1800 226 180 (free call)

SMS: 0429 200 622





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. Stepping balance



Aim Improve balance.

Instructions

- Stand up straight on a level surface in a clear space, with a chair or small table near you. Walk around the chair or table while always facing the same direction.
- Have your weight evenly distributed through both feet.
- To start, step sideways to the edge of the chair then walk forwards to the front of the chair.
- Then step sideways (the opposite way to before). Now step backwards till you reach the back of the chair.
- You should have just stepped as though around a box – but always facing in the same direction.

Repetitions 10 times (3 x per week).

Tip Stand up straight, do not bend over. If you are unbalanced you can lightly touch your fingers on the chair back or table. Make sure there is nothing to trip over and when stepping sideways ensure your legs do not cross over each other or you may trip.



3. Standing calf raise on flat ground



Aim Strengthen the calf muscles (lower leg).

Instructions

- Start by standing with your feet shoulder distance apart with both feet flat on the ground.
- Stand near a chair or table with your hands resting lightly.
- Rise up onto the balls of your feet, lifting both heels off the floor as far as is comfortable for you.
- Slowly lower your heels to the floor.

Repetitions Repeat 20 times in a smooth up and down motion, without stopping or holding in any position (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your hips and back straight. Do not bend over.

4. Mini chair squats



Aim Strengthen gluteal muscles (buttocks) and quad muscles (front of thighs).

Instructions

- Stand up straight with your hand resting on a table or the back of a sturdy chair.
- Have your legs straight, with your feet shoulder width apart.
- Bend both knees a *small* amount (like a slow curtsy) and immediately stand up straight again with your knees straight.

Repetitions 20 times (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your back straight. Try not to bend forwards at your hips. Do not crouch down too far and only ever go as far as is comfortable for you.



4b. Knee extension in sitting

alternative exercise – if ‘mini chair squats’ are too difficult



Aim Strengthen quads (front of thighs).

Instructions

- Sit on a solid chair eg. a dining chair.
- Start with both knees bent.
- One leg at a time, straighten your knee as far as it is comfortable for you, hold the straight position for one second, then return to the starting position.

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

Tip Remember to keep your back straight.

5. Straight leg raise



Aim Strengthen hip flexor and quad muscles (front of thighs).

Instructions

- Lie or sit on a firm surface eg. on your bed.
- Start with 1 knee bent and the foot flat on the bed. The other leg is straight on the bed. Use your elbows and forearms to help support your upper body.
- Clench the muscles at the front of the thigh of the straight leg, and lock it in the straight position.
- Keep the knee straight, and slowly raise the whole leg 30cm off the bed, hold it for 2 secs then slowly lower it back to the bed.
- Flexing your foot (pulling toes back towards you) can help you to keep the knee straight.

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

Tip Keep your ‘core switched on’ by sucking your tummy muscles in tight (it really helps a lot). ‘Core’ refers to the major muscles in the belly, mid and lower back, hips, shoulders and the neck.



6. Heel slide with knee to chest



Aim Improve hip and knee mobility.

Instructions

- Lie on your back on a firm surface eg. your bed.
- Start with both knees bent and feet flat on the bed.
- One leg at a time, slide one foot down the bed away from you until your knee and hip are straight.
- Keeping your heel on the bed slide the foot up the bed until it is as close to your buttocks as is comfortable.
- Using both hands hold your leg, if your knee is sore don't hold at your shin - hold the back of your thigh instead, and pull your thigh towards your chest as far as is comfortable for you, then release to the starting position.

Repetitions 20 times each leg (3 x per week).

7. Heel slide against exercise tube



Aim Strengthen gluteal (buttock) muscles, stretch hip flexors and strengthen quad muscles (front of thighs).

Instructions

- Sit or lie on your back on a firm surface eg. your bed
- Start with both knees bent and both feet flat on the bed.
- Holding the exercise tube in both hands, loop it under the arch of one of your feet.
- Straighten your knee and hip by sliding your heel along the bed then slowly allow the leg to bend again.

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

Tip The tighter you pull the exercise tube, the harder this exercise will be.
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.



8. Clams



Aim Strengthen abductor or outside hip muscles.

- Instructions**
- Lie on your side on a firm surface eg. on your bed, with a pillow placed between your knees.
 - Slightly bend your knees and hips until they are each at a 45 degree angle.
 - Keeping your heels together, lift the top knee away from the bottom knee as far as is comfortable, then slowly lower it back down to the pillow, and relax.

Repetitions 10 times on each side (3 x per week).

Tip Use your arms for balance. Keep your 'core*' switched on' (by sucking your tummy muscles in tight) to keep your trunk still, you don't want to be rolling backwards or forwards. 'Core' refers to the major muscles in the belly, mid and lower back, hips, shoulders and the neck.

8b. Lateral leg lifts alternative exercise - if 'clams' are too difficult



Aim Strengthen abductor muscles (outside thigh muscles).

- Instructions**
- Stand up straight with both hands on a stable surface eg. a table or chair.
 - Move all your weight onto one leg and slowly lift the other foot out to the side approximately 20cm, then lower the leg back to the starting position.
 - Keep both knees straight.

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

Tip Keep your back straight and stand upright. Do not lean forward.



9. Seated leg squeeze



Aim Strengthen adductor muscles or inside thigh muscles.

Instructions

- Sit on a stable chair eg. dining chair, with your knees and feet close together holding a rolled up towel between your knees.
- Squeeze your knees together as firmly as you can (without pain).
- Hold the squeeze for 5 seconds then relax.

Repetitions 20 times (3 x per week).

Tip Keep your back straight. Do not bend forwards.
The towel can be positioned just above your knees, between your lower thighs, if your knees are sore to touch.

10. Hamstring leg curls in sitting using exercise tube



Aim Strengthen hamstring muscles (back of thighs) and stretch quad muscles (front of thighs).

Instructions

- Roughly tie or wrap the exercise tube to both ankles (allowing only a 10 to 30cm gap between your legs). Hold the loose ends of the tubing with your hands.
- Sit towards the front of a stable chair and move both feet forwards to straighten the knees. A phone book under the stationary foot is helpful.
- Slide your other foot back under the chair - bending the knee as far as is comfortable for you.
- Then allow the foot to come back out to the starting position.

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

Tip Keep your back straight. Do not bend over.
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.



11. Calf stretch



Aim Improve ankle mobility and stretch calf muscles (gastrocs).

- Instructions**
- Stand up straight with your hands on a stable surface for balance, eg. a table.
 - Step one foot backwards and press your heel flat on the ground.
 - Keep your knee straight, make sure your foot is pointing forward and lean slightly forward until you feel a stretch in the back of your lower leg.
 - Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

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

Tip Keep your back straight.

12. Standing quads stretch



Aim Improve knee and hip mobility, stretch front thigh or quad muscles.

- Instructions**
- Place one hand on a stable surface for balance.
 - Bend one leg so you can hold your ankle.
 - While holding the ankle and your knee fully bent, try to bring the front of the thigh level with your standing leg as far as is comfortable for you.
 - Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.

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

Tip Do not arch your back. Keep knees together.
If you are having trouble reaching your ankle, loop a strap (eg. dressing gown cord) around your ankle and use strap to pull your foot up.



13. Groin stretch in standing



Aim Improve hip mobility and stretch inner thigh muscles (groin).

Instructions

- Stand up straight, with your hands on a stable surface for balance if needed (eg. a table).
- Step one foot to the side as a large sideways step.
- With both feet on the ground move your hips to one side over that leg and hold for 10 seconds.
- You should feel a stretch in your inner thigh muscle.

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

Tip Don't lean forwards.

14. Hamstring stretch



Aim Stretch hamstring or back thigh muscles.

Instructions

- Lie on your back on a firm surface eg. your bed.
- Start with both knees bent and both feet flat on the bed.
- Hold behind one thigh, near your knee, with both hands and slowly straighten your knee until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of your thigh. Hold this stretch for 10 seconds.

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

Tip This stretch should never be painful.
Do very gently if you have back pain or sciatica.



15. 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

Repetitions 5 minutes.

Tip 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.