

Physical Activity

**C - Sedentary
Wheelchair users**

How to get the most out of your exercises

You can enjoy the benefits of aerobic, strength and flexibility exercises even if you're mostly seated or wheelchair bound. Have fun while preventing further health complications.

1. Sitting exercises



Pressure relief

- Shift your weight left to right continuously for **10 times every 1 hour**. Progress to every **30 minutes** if possible.



Shoulder mobility

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Roll your shoulders backwards. Hold for **10 seconds**. Repeat **10 times**.



Seated march

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Roll your shoulders backwards. Lift your thighs and march, alternating both feet. Repeat **20 times**.

If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.



Knee extension

- Sit in the middle of the chair without leaning against the back rest. Straighten your knee and raise your leg up. Repeat on the other leg. Repeat **20 times**.

If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.

2. Flexibility exercises (stretches)

Do these exercises as often as possible throughout the day, everyday.



Chest stretch

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Open both arms sideways. Hold for **10 seconds**, repeat **10 times**. Rotate your torso to each side, hold for **10 seconds** each.



Back thigh stretch

- Sit at the edge of the chair. Straighten one leg and lean forward (like in the picture). Hold for **10 seconds**, repeat **10 times**.

3. Aerobic exercises



Cycling

- Using an exercise or pedal bike, cycle for **10 to 15 minutes daily**. You can also place a portable pedal bike on a table and use it as an arm cycling machine.

If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.



Log on to healthhub.sg and watch the 7 sit-down exercises video, "You can get moving".

4. Strength exercises

Lower limbs



Knee extension

- Sit in the middle of the chair without leaning against the back rest. Straighten your knee and raise your leg up. Hold for **10 seconds**. Repeat **10 times** and do the same exercise with the other leg.

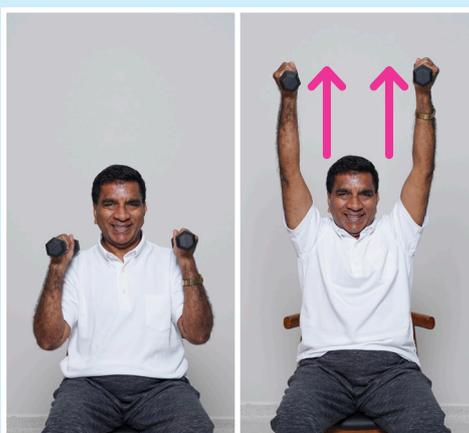


Stand-sit

- If you are able to, sit-to-stand **10 times** with the help of someone.

Upper limbs

Resistance bands, weighted cables and dumbbell exercises can help to improve your upper limb strength. These exercises should be done correctly for safety.



Seated dumbbell press

- Raise the dumbbells or filled water bottles up along the sides of your body with elbows bent. Straighten your elbows and push the dumbbells upwards over your head. Repeat **10 to 12 times**.

The weights you use should be heavy enough to perform this exercise 10 to 12 times. If you can do more than 15 repetitions, the weights are too light.

Pain management

- You should not feel any pain – just very minimal ache – when doing these exercises.
- Pain may be due to various reasons, like weak muscles due to a sedentary lifestyle, or tight muscles due to repetitive work.
- Exercise can help to relieve pain. However, if you have difficulty or pain with these exercises, seek help from an exercise professional or physiotherapist.

Check with your doctor if

- You have ulcers or wounds that limit weight bearing or movement.
- Your heart condition is stable enough for exercise.
- You develop giddiness, unusual breathlessness, chest tightness or pain during these exercises.

Remember

- You need to progress your exercises gradually.
- You may need professional help from a physiotherapist if you are unsure of your exercises and/or need progression.
- Supervised standing exercises may benefit you. Consult your doctor and physiotherapist.