



**Moving Medicine**

**Home exercise  
programme:  
standing**

Name .....

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Recovering from a significant illness, such as a coronavirus, may leave you feeling somewhat weaker than usual and everyday tasks may feel very challenging and tiring. Increasing your physical activity gradually as your symptoms allow is a safe and important thing to do when recovering from coronavirus although it may take some time to build back up to your previous activity levels.

This booklet details a number of exercises that can be carried out standing **next to a stable surface**. There are exercises to work on stamina, flexibility and strength as well as guidance on how to progress the exercises. They are designed to help you start to get moving a little more as you start to recover or if it's been some while since you've exercised.

It may be that physical activity has not been part of your daily routine, but now might be the time to look again at the role activity plays in your life. It's never too late to increase the amount you do and feel the benefits, not only to your general health, but also to improved sleep, maintaining a healthy weight, managing stress and helping you participate in activities that are important to you.

Remember – it's really important to build up gradually. Listen to your body. Some of the exercises might make you breathe a little heavier and feel a little warmer, but a good rule of thumb is that you should still be able to hold a conversation whilst exercising.

Of course we're all different and so everyone will progress to differing levels and at different rates. There are several useful resources that you can use to progress your own activity programme which can be found here at [movingmedicine.ac.uk/covidrecovery](https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/covidrecovery)

Choose the level which suits you best – and above all choose something you enjoy as you're much more likely to stick to your new routine that way!



**Why not ask your friends or relatives to help keep you motivated!**

## How to Use This Booklet

You will see a number of symbols throughout the booklet:



Step by step instructions explaining how to perform the exercise



The reason the exercise is important for you



Top tips

### How much should I do?

Ideally you should try to practise these exercises two or three times a week. You may prefer to practise in smaller activity chunks – for example arm exercises in one session and leg exercises in the next and so on.

### How do I know when to stop exercising?

It is normal for anyone who is not used to being physically active to experience some muscle soreness after doing a new activity and this discomfort will reduce as they become more accustomed to the activity. Worsening symptoms may be due to increasing activity too quickly – try reducing activity levels a little and then gradually increasing them again more slowly.

Dizziness, sickness or excessive tiredness are signals to stop exercising and wait for symptoms to settle. Warning signs to stop exercising and seek urgent medical attention include sudden onset of rapid palpitations, reduction in exercise capacity, dizziness, severe breathlessness or chest pain.



**The most important thing is to start small and build up gradually.**

During the first 2-3 months of increasing physical activity it is sensible to be physically active with other people.

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## Marching

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Stand tall next your bed.

- Start marching gently on the spot, with your feet a hip width apart.
- Try to continue at an even pace for about 2 minutes



### Feeling unsteady?

- ✓ Rest your hands on a stable surface if you feel you need a little more support
- ✓ Reduce the distance you're lifting your feet

### Need more?

- ✓ Try lifting your knees a little higher
- ✓ Add in an arm swing

**?** This is a good warm-up for your legs at the start of your exercise session.

You might find this exercise starts to make you feel a bit warmer

and breathe a little heavier. You should still be able to hold a conversation.

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## Side leg lift

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Stand tall with your hands resting on a stable surface.

- Keeping your hips facing forwards, lift your leg out sideways a small distance.
- Hold for a count of 5 before gently lowering.

Do 2 sets of 10 with each leg

### Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of sets of 10
- ✓ Add a small ankle weight



? To strengthen the muscles on the side of your hip – these are important when you're standing and walking and also when moving

your leg sideways, eg when getting in and out of bed.

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## Forward taps

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Stand next to the bed or a stable surface

- Place your heel on the ground in front of you
- Lift the foot back and point your toes to the floor
- Do 2 sets of 10 with each leg

### Need more?

- ✓ Try to keep moving for 1 minute
- ✓ Add in an arm bend



? To improve flexibility of your ankle, which is helpful when getting up from a chair and going up and down stairs. It is also good for the circulation in your legs.

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## Mini squat

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Stand next to the bed holding on with one hand if you need to.

- Bend your knees, keeping your body upright and heels on the floor
- Hold for 5 seconds, then stand tall
- Repeat 5 times

### Too much?

- ✓ Slightly reduce the depth of your knee bend

### Need more?

- ✓ Increase the depth of knee bend slightly
- ✓ Increase to 10 repetitions



? To strengthen the muscles on the front of your thigh. These are the powerful muscles that help when you get up from the chair and provide strength to your knees when you're walking.



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## Shoulder press

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Stand next to the bed

- Bring your hand up towards your shoulder, then push your hand straight up into the air. Your elbow should be straight, but not locked.
- Do 2 sets of 10 with each arm

### Need more?

- ✓ Try adding a small weight – a half litre bottle of water is a good starting point
- ✓ Build up the number of repetitions again



? To strengthen the muscles in your shoulder and upper arm. These muscles are important when reaching up, eg to get something from a shelf.

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## Side arm lifts

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Facing the bed, hold on with one hand if required.

- Lift your arm up out to the side
- Hold for 5 seconds before lowering slowly
- Do 10 with each arm

### Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of repetitions to 3 sets of 10
- ✓ Hold a small weight, then build up the number of repetitions again.



? To increase strength in your shoulders to help with everyday tasks

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## Onto toes

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Stand next to the bed or a stable surface, holding on to give you as much support as you need.

- Move your weight towards the front of your foot and lift your heels.
- Try to balance for 5 seconds. Use the surface for additional support if you need it.
- Repeat 5 times

**Quick tip:** Keep the weight onto your first (big) and second toes

### Need more?

- ✓ Work towards being able to do this exercise without needing to use your hands for support. Gradually reduce the support from your arms – 2 hands, then one hand, fingertips only, etc.



? To improve strength around your ankles and help with your balance when you're walking.

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## Onto heels

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Stand next to the bed or a stable surface, holding on to give yourself as much support as you need.

- Move the weight toward the back of your foot, lifting your toes up from the floor (keep your body straight).
- Balance for 5 seconds
- Repeat 5 times

### Need more?

Work towards being able to do this exercise without needing to use your hands for support. Gradually reduce the support from your arms – 2 hands, then one hand, fingertips only, etc



**?** To improve strength around your ankles and help with your balance when you're walking.

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## Stride stand

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Stand next to the bed or stable surface

- Take a stride forwards with one foot
- Balance in that position for 5 seconds
- Practise 5 times

### Feeling unsteady?

- ✓ Make the step slightly shorter
- ✓ Use your hands for support to start with, gradually reducing the amount you need.

### Need more?

- ✓ Step one foot directly in front of the other as shown – this makes your base much narrower and so it's more difficult.
- ✓ Work again towards reducing the amount of hand support you need.



? To improve your balance when walking.

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## Sit to stand

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Practise standing up from your chair as shown opposite

### **Not quite there yet?**

- ✓ Start by practising the push through your arms to lift your bottom a small distance up from the chair, before lowering down again.
- ✓ Make it easier by starting in a higher seat



To improve strength in your legs and hips. This exercise is important to improve and maintain your ability to get up from a chair



Try practising this exercise once every hour.



Move towards the front of the chair – your feet should be flat on the floor slightly behind your knees.



Bring your upper chest forward and, with your hands on the arms of the chair push through your feet and hands into a standing position.



Produced by the Moving Medicine team as part of the Active Hospital Pilot at Oxford University Hospitals Foundation Trust, aiming to improve levels of activity in hospitals.

Commissioned by Public Health England and funded by Sport England.



Produced: April 2020

Modified: June 2020 for coronavirus

Reviewed: