

If you require any further information please contact us on the telephone number on the front of this booklet or speak to your GP.

Your named physiotherapist is:

If you need help to understand this leaflet or would like it in a different language or format such as large print, Braille or audio, please ask a member of staff.

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Leicestershire Partnership
NHS Trust

Community Falls Team - strength and balance exercises



Exercises for

issued on (date):

To contact the Falls Service

Tel: 01530 468 510

www.leicspart.nhs.uk

Email: feedback@leicspart.nhs.uk

Introduction

Keeping your joints and muscles mobile and strong is important in order for you to keep safe, active and independent. This leaflet contains exercises to improve your muscle strength and overall balance.

There are two types of balance: static and dynamic.

Static balance

Your static balance is your ability to maintain balance when not moving in any position/posture, without holding on to external support.

Dynamic balance

Your dynamic balance is your ability to maintain your balance when you are moving. Dynamic balance is normally easier to maintain than static e.g. it is easier to balance on a bike when we are moving than it is to remain stationary.

This booklet provides exercises that will improve your static and dynamic balance through progressively difficult levels. To start with, your physiotherapist will tell you which level is best for you. You can then progress gradually at your own rate as you improve.

At any time, if you feel that your balance is getting worse, please return to a level that you feel is more appropriate.

How many repetitions of each exercise should I do?

To strengthen a muscle you need to work it to fatigue therefore how many you should do will vary. You should continue until the muscle working feels tired, you will hopefully be able to increase this number over time as the muscle strengthens. Eg. you may manage x10 reps the 1st week but be able to increase to x20 reps by week 3. If you need further guidance on this please contact the team.

In order to maintain or improve your muscle strength, range of movement and balance you must complete these exercises on a daily basis even when the six week programme has finished.

Space for your notes or any questions you may wish to raise at your next appointment

These exercises are suitable for most people, however your therapist may advise you to avoid certain exercises which may not be suitable for you.

Safety Notice

- For the exercises, ensure you have a stable surface to hold onto e.g. kitchen worktop.
- Wear comfortable clothes and suitable footwear, prepare a space and have all appropriate equipment ready before you start.
- If you experience any NEW symptoms while exercising, which are not normal for you, or if any of your existing symptoms become worse then stop exercising and if they persist contact your GP.
- We expect you to become short of breath during exercise. Your breathing should however, return to normal after 2 - 3 minutes. If this is not the case then you should seek advice from your healthcare professional/GP.
- If you experience pain in your joints or muscles check your position and try again. If the pain persists stop the exercise and ask one of the team when you next see us.

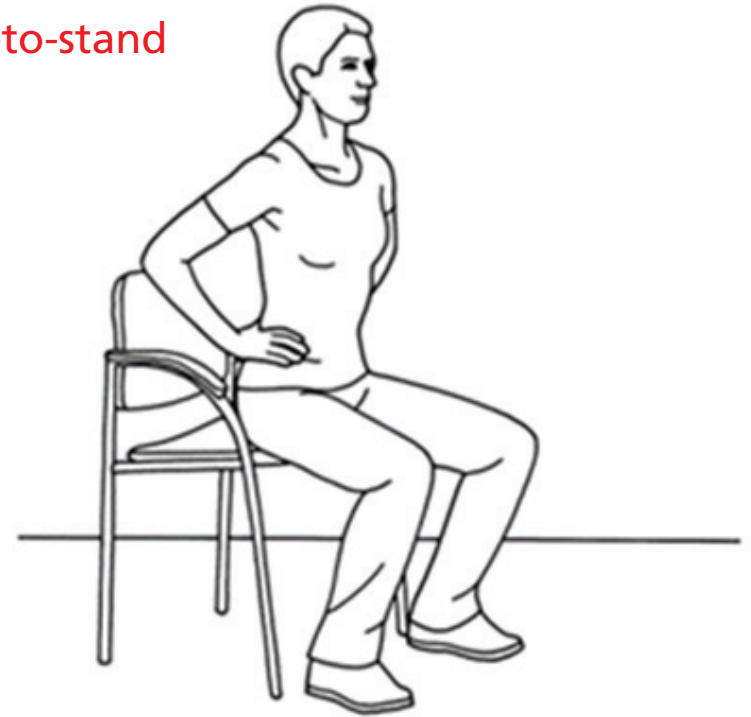
Exercise levels

You will start completing all of the exercises at level 1. Then with guidance from therapy staff may be progressed onto different levels. The level you should work at is highlighted next to each exercise through the booklet as you may be asked to do a different level for different exercises. The Levels are as followed:

- Level 1 – Holding on with both hands for support
- Level 2 – Holding on with only one hand for support
- Level 3 – Resting just your fingertips onto the surface for support
- Level 4 – Resting just one fingertip on for support
- Level 5 – Do not use your hand at all for support. If you have been advised to do this level it is still good practice to stand near a stable surface and initially hover hands above the surface only progress to placing your arms down by your sides if you feel steady enough to do so.

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9. Sit-to-stand

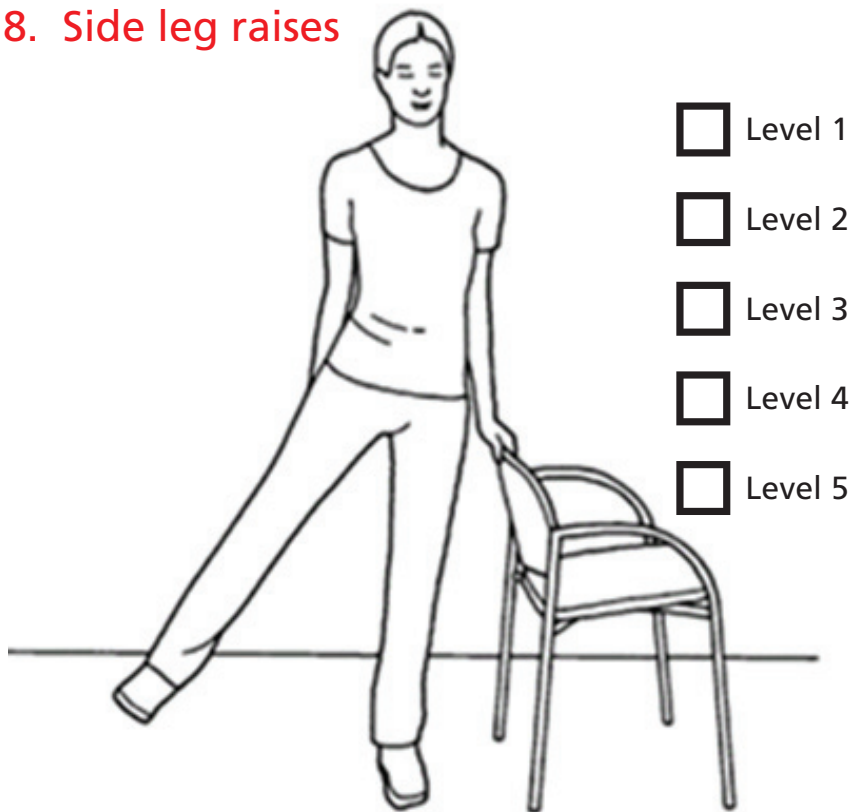


Sitting in a stable chair of adequate height (your hips and knees should be parallel). Come forwards in the seat, feet flat on the floor and lean forwards with your body. Push down through your legs and stand up straight without using your arms to assist. Stand for a few seconds before slowly sitting back down. To sit; stick your bottom out and sit down slowly again without using your arms for support. Do not drop down in to the chair.

Repeat 10 times.

This exercise is one of the best for maintaining lower limb strength and mobility and should be completed frequently throughout the day. We do not recommend you sit for long periods at a time and try to adopt this technique of standing every time you get up if possible.

8. Side leg raises



Standing with feet hip width apart, hands resting on surface as advised. **Important: your toes must face forwards at all times during this exercise.** Keeping your knee straight and toes forwards, slowly lift one leg out to the side and hold for 2 - 3 seconds then return to the original position. Your toes should come together before your heels. Make sure your body remains upright. Do not lean over to lift your leg higher.

Repeat 10 times each leg.

Seated balance exercises

1. Seated stretch



Sitting on a chair with your feet firmly on the floor. Bend forwards, rolling down your back slowly starting with your head. Go as far as is comfortable for you, allow your hands to slide down the front of your legs (shins) towards the floor as far as you can.

Hold this position for 5-10 seconds if able, then slowly bring yourself back up.

Repeat 2 - 3 times.

If at any point this makes you feel dizzy or lightheaded stop the exercise and continue with the rest of the booklet.

2. Elbow bend

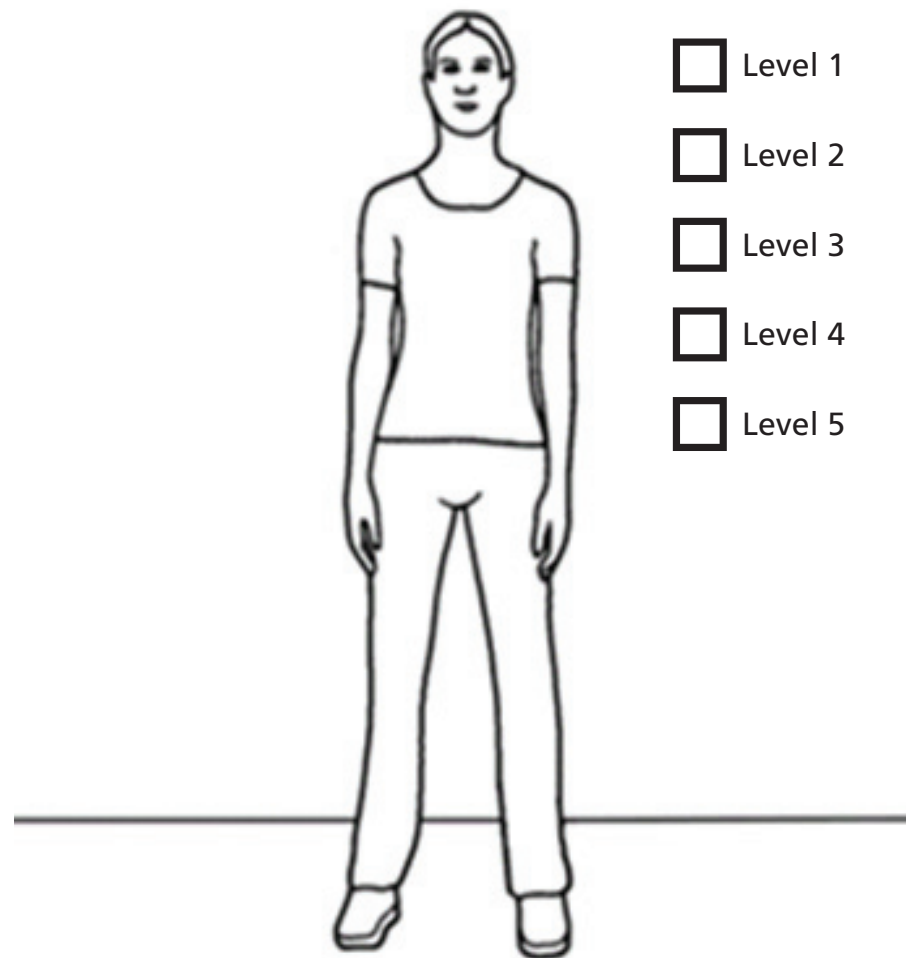


Sitting in a chair holding a small weight e.g. a tin of beans or bottle of water, slowly bend your elbow up and then straighten it again. Keep your palm facing upwards if possible.

Complete in standing if you feel able to.

Repeat 10 times each arm.

7. Weight shift side-to-side



☐ Level 1

☐ Level 2

☐ Level 3

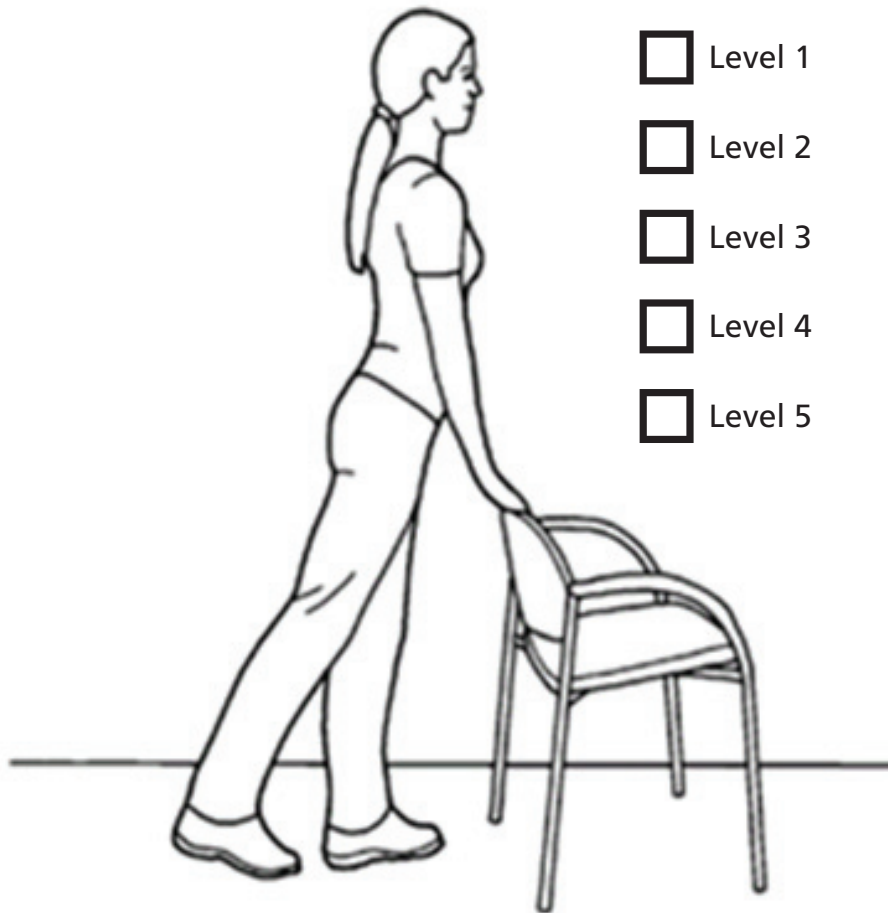
☐ Level 4

☐ Level 5

Standing with feet hip width apart, hands resting on surface as advised. Slowly think about shifting all your weight onto the left foot. Both feet should remain on the ground and you should feel your body move slightly from right to left as you shift the weight.

Repeat 10 times both left and right.

6. Hip extension



Standing with feet hip width apart, hands resting on surface as advised. Keeping your knee straight and ankle bent upwards, move your leg backwards extending from the hip. Make sure you keep your back straight - do not lean forwards.

Repeat 10 times each leg.

3. Shoulder lift



Sitting in a chair holding a small weight e.g. a tin of beans or bottle of water, keeping your arm straight, slowly lift the weight up towards the ceiling as far as you can and then slowly lower it again.

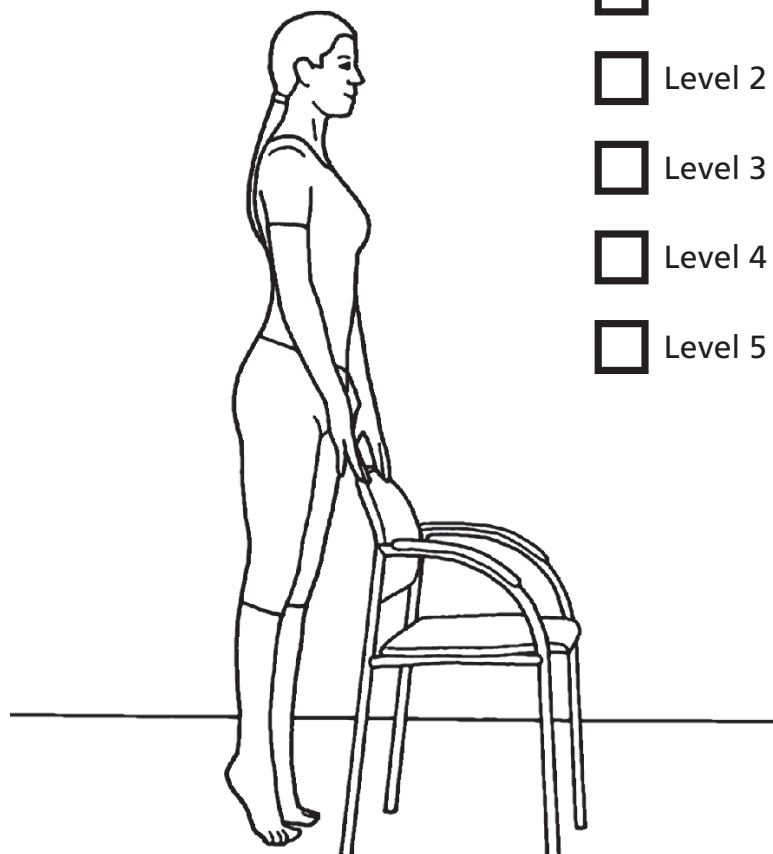
If you are unable to do this with a weight, just raise your arm without a weight.

Complete in standing if you feel able to.

Repeat 10 times each arm.

Standing balance exercises

4. Heel raises



- ☐ Level 1
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 5

Standing with feet hip width apart, hands resting on surface, as advised. Slowly raise up onto your tip toes, pushing through feet not hands. Hold for 3 seconds and gradually lower your heels back down. Do not let your body rock backwards when you lower back to the floor.

Repeat 10 times.

5. High knees



- ☐ Level 1
- ☐ Level 2
- ☐ Level 3
- ☐ Level 4
- ☐ Level 5

Standing with feet hip width apart, hands resting on surface, as advised. Start movement at your ankle and pull your toes upwards then lift your whole leg up in front of you. Bending at your hip and knee. Hold the leg up for 3 seconds, then slowly lower. Make sure your heel hits the ground first and you maintain the hip width stance throughout. .

Repeat 10 times each leg.