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# FAMILY HEALTH & WELL-BEING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDE





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## Introduction





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## A message from the Health & Well-being team:

*We at the Palace for Life Foundation are committed to facilitating the health & well-being of the south London community despite the limitations of COVID-19. Please take a look through this guide for information & workouts that will help to fight boredom while also promoting physical activity. The circuits in this booklet have been added with considerations for adults, families, children, those with mobility issues & the elderly. We encourage our readers to share this with family, friends & colleagues as we continue to navigate our way through this very strange time. Together, we can adapt & overcome the obstacles that has altered our day to day lives.*

- The Health & Well-Being team

## Safety considerations for physical activity:

**This guide is meant to serve as a supplemental resource for physical activity. It should not be used in place of professional medical advice.** Before engaging in physical activity, you should consider risk factors that may put you at risk of injury. These include:

- Chronic medical condition (cardiovascular, pulmonary or respiratory) or history of chronic medical conditions in family
- Pain in the chest, dizziness or abnormal shortness of breath during exercise
- Joint, muscle or bone injury within the last 12 months
- Over the age of 45 & **NOT** accustomed to regular exercise.

You should consult your GP before participating in physical activity if any of the mentioned factors pertain to you.



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## The benefits of physical activity:

Physical activity has been shown to have the following benefits:

- Improves immune system
- Improves sleep quality & duration
- Decreases blood pressure, cholesterol & body fat
- Improves memory & focus
- Maintains muscle & joint function

## How to turn your home into a gym:

Although our gyms & leisure centres are closed, we can still find ways to be physically active. With a little creativity & commitment, we can turn our households into fitness centres. Below are just a few suggestions on how to turn everyday objects into fitness equipment that we will use in our workouts. Can you think of anymore?

### Stairs

Stairs are an excellent way to complete a warm up or a cardio session. Did you know that climbing at least 1 flight of stairs requires more energy than walking 1 -2 blocks?

### Chairs & Sofas

Chairs can be used for bench dips to target the triceps. They can also be used for push up variations too. Chairs are particularly useful for older populations when engaging in physical activity. Sofas provide a lower, more stable platform than most chairs. This will prove useful for some of the lower limb exercises that we'll do!



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## Belts

We can use belts for a range of isometric (meaning your muscle doesn't lengthen or shorten) exercises to target our shoulders & hips. We can also use belts during our warm up routine.

## Scarfs

Scarfs are particularly useful when attempting to do exercises that require a little bit of light resistance. We can use them during our warm up routine & circuits if we don't have resistance bands available.

## Doorframes

Doorframes can be used for stretching our chest. They are also useful for targeting shoulder muscles during bodyweight rows.

## Rucksacks

Rucksacks aren't just handy to carry our school or work-related materials. We can load them with heavy items in order turn them into dumbbells/kettle bells. If you have a scale to weight out your items, all the better!

## Packaged Food

Canned goods and sacks of potatoes can be used as free weights for curls and raises. Hold onto a couple of cans to add difficulty to the exercises in this guide.



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# Warming Up

## Why it's important

Warming up is a vital part of physical activity because it signals to our cardiovascular, respiratory & muscular/skeletal systems that it's time to work. Our heart rate increases which circulates blood quicker. Our rate of breathing increases which helps obtain the oxygen needed to keep our body going. Our joints lubricate to perform movements. Our muscles receive more blood flow & loosen up as they prepare to execute the tasks that we need them to (running, jumping, & moving in general). Have a look at some of the warm up routines below & use them to get your body ready for physical activity.

## Upper Body Warm up

### Light cardio

Sets: 1      Reps: 6 minutes

- Have a brisk walk around the house or garden if you have the space.
- If you have a flight of stairs at your disposal, travel up & down those. Be sure to take a quick 10-15 second break if you need.
- If you have a stationary bike at home, cycle at a light to moderate pace.





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## Light Stretching

Sets: 1      Reps: 25 Seconds

### 1. Bicep Wall Stretch



- Place your back against a wall & bend your knees slightly.
- Raise your arms to shoulder height & place your palms on the wall until you feel a light stretch in your biceps.

### 2. Triceps wall stretch



- Place your elbow on a wall at head height or above.
- Lean into the wall until you feel a light stretch in your triceps.

### 3. Shoulder Stretch



- Put your right arm across your body.
- Grab your right elbow with your left arm & pull across until you feel a stretch in your shoulders.

### 4. Chest Stretch



- Find a door frame. Grab the door frame with one hand. Place your forearm on the frame.
- Turn your body away from the frame until you feel a light stretch in your chest.



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## Lower Body Warm up

### Light cardio

Sets: 1      Reps: 6 minutes

- Have a brisk walk around the house or garden if you have the space.
- If you have a flight of stairs at your disposal, travel up & down those. Be sure to take a quick 10-15 second break if you need.
- If you have a stationary bike at home, cycle at a light to moderate pace.

### Light Stretching

Sets: 1      Reps: 25 seconds

#### 1. Runner's Stretch



- Place your hands against a wall. Walk your feet outwards until your weight is angled against the wall.
- Put one leg forward. With the trailing leg try to touch the ground with your heel until you feel a light stretch in your calf.

#### 2. Seated Quad Stretch



- Sit halfway on a chair with one leg slightly behind you.
- Lean backwards until you feel a stretch in your quads. Grab the chair with your hands for support.





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### 3. Seated Hamstring Stretch



- Sit halfway on a chair with one leg straight.
- Use one hand to reach out towards your straight leg until you feel a stretch in the back of your leg.

### 4. Knee to Chest



- Lay on your back & let your legs rest with your knees extended.
- Pull one knee into your chest until you feel a stretch in your glutes.

## Workout

Listed below is a physical activity circuits for you to complete. You can follow the pre-selected routine or mix certain exercises to make your own physical activity circuit. Try getting your family to tag along as a healthy way to spend time together. You could even encourage your friends to join via video chat. If you're finding a certain exercise too easy or difficult, modify the rest times, sets, repetitions & weights to best suit your needs. **It is vital to go at your own pace for safety reasons.** Remember, having fun is just as important as staying active. You got this!

## Elderly & Reduced Mobility Circuit:

**Elderly Adults** aged 65 & over should participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity for those who are already regularly active. Exercises should focus on improving strength, balance & flexibility. Exercise for older individuals is vitally important as it allows them to safely complete activities of daily living such as sitting, standing, walking, climbing up stairs & reaching for items out of immediate proximity. At least two days a week should be spent doing exercise that improve strength, balance & flexibility.

Examples of moderate exercise for older individuals include:



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- Going for a brisk walk
- Cycling
- Light gardening (planting, uprooting etc.)
- Dancing
- Tai Chi

Examples of vigorous activity include

- Bodyweight training
- Heavy gardening (digging, shovelling, etc.)
- Pilates

## Elderly & Reduced Mobility Circuit: ADL & Balance

This low impact circuit is designed for older adults & those with mobility issues. Secondary supervision is strongly recommended whenever older adults participate in physical activity. **Remember, you can always change the sets, reps, weight or rest times to best suit you.**

Sets: 1-3

Reps: 8-15

Rest: 90 seconds

### 1. Sit to Stand



- Sit halfway in your chair. Lean forward slightly & use your legs to push yourself up into a standing position.
- Look back as you slowly resume a seated position.

### 2. Wall Prone to Press Up



- Lean into a wall with your forearms planted.
- Push through your hands until you are stood upright. Slowly lower yourself back into the starting position.



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### 3. Clock Reaches



- Stand in front of a wall with a chair next to you for balance.
- Raise one leg off the ground & reach your hand from 12:00 to 6:00.

### 4. Heel Raises



- Place a chair in front of you & stand at the back of it.
- Slowly bring your heel upwards before slowly lowering it.

### 5. Lateral Shoulder Raises



- Find a seat & two cans of food.
- Sit with an upright posture as you raise the cans to shoulder height. Slowly lower them your hands to the starting position.

### 6. Calf Raises



- Place a chair in front of you & stand at the back of it.



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- Lift your heels off the ground until you are on your toes.  
Slowly lower yourself back down.

#### 7. Curls into Press



- Have a seat in a chair with two cans.
- Maintain an upright posture as you curl the cans upwards to your shoulders.
- Raise the cans above your head and slowly bring them back down. Return to the starting position.

#### 8. Head turns



- Find a seat in a chair.
- Practice slowly turning your head from left to right. Try to focus your gaze on an object as you turn your head.



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## Elderly & Reduced Mobility Circuit 2: ADL & Mobility

This low impact circuit is designed for older adults & those with mobility issues. Secondary supervision is strongly recommended whenever older adults participate in physical activity. Remember, you can always change the sets, reps, weight or rest times to best suit you.

Sets: 1-3

Reps: 10-15

Rest: 90 seconds

### 1. Seated Marching



- Sit upright on the edge of your chair.
- Tighten your core & slowly bring your knees up and down in an alternating fashion.

### 2. Overhead Shoulder Raises



- Find a chair & a looped belt. Place your hands in the belt.
- Press outwards as you bring raise your hands above your head. Keep your arms straight during this exercise.



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### 3. Thoracic Rotations



- Grab a can or lightly weighted object and hold it in front of your chest while seated.
- Tighten your core and slowly twist your torso from left to right.

### 4. Cat Camel



- Sit in an upright posture with your hands on your knees.
- Take a deep breath in as you poke your chest outwards. Exhale as you slowly and round your back.

### 5. Knee extensions



- Sit all the way back in your chair.
- Raise your leg until your heel is almost parallel with the ground. Slowly lower it back down into the starting position before beginning again.

### 6. Clam Shell



- Sit with your hands up in a goal post position.
- Bring your hands inwards until your forearms are right in front of you. Slowly separate your arms by squeezing your shoulder blades together.



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### 7. Leg Squeezes



- Lay down with your knees bent while holding a ball or pillow in between your legs.
- Squeeze the object with your knees for two seconds before relaxing.

### 8. Clams



- Lay down with your knees bent.
- Slowly move your knees outwards as far as you can before returning to the starting position.

## Cool Down Routines

### Why it's important

You've completed your circuit for the day, well done! What we do after physical activity is just as important as what we do before. Our bodies need time to recover from the amount of work we just put it through. Our muscles, heart & lungs begin adapting to physical activity by making repairs & changes so that we can go again. Listed below are a couple of stretching routines that will help decrease feelings of stiffness & soreness associated with physical activity. After you're done, be sure to hydrate & consume a meal that reflects the Eatwell guide to provide your body with the proper nutrition to refuel.



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# Upper Body Stretches

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 45 second holds

## 1. Doorframe stretch



- Find a door frame. Grab the door frame with both hands.
- While holding onto the frame, move through the door until you feel a stretch in your chest.

- Use your hands to grab the opposite shoulder & bend forward.
- Inch your fingers closer towards your spine until you feel a light stretch.

## 2. Triceps wall stretch



- Place your elbow on a wall at head height or above.
- Lean into the wall until you feel a light stretch in your triceps.

## 3. Lower back stretch







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#### 4. Biceps wall stretch



- Place your back against a wall & bend your knees slightly.
- Raise your arms to shoulder height & place your palms on
- The way until you feel a light stretch in your biceps.

#### 5. Shoulder stretch



- Put your right arm across your body.
- Grab your right elbow with your left arm & pull across until you feel a stretch in your shoulders.



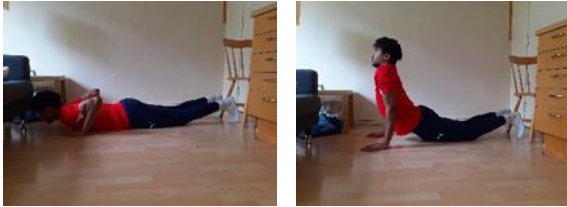
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# Core Stretches

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 45 second holds

## 1. Abdominal stretch



- Lay on your stomach.
- Keep your hips on the ground & use your arms to slowly bring your chest & upper body off the floor until you feel a moderate stretch in your abdominals.

## 2. Fingers to floor stretch



- Find a chair. Lean forward, place your palms on the floor.
- Walk your fingers out until you feel a light stretch in your back.



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## Lower Body Stretches

Sets: 2-3

Reps: 45 second holds

### 1. Runner's stretch



- Place your hands against a wall. Walk your feet outwards until your weight is angled against the wall.
- Put one leg forward. With the trailing leg try to touch the ground with your heel until you feel a light stretch in your calf.

### 2. Seated Groin stretch



- Sit half way in a chair while slightly leaning forward.
- Place your arms inside of your legs and press outwards until you feel a stretch in your groin area.

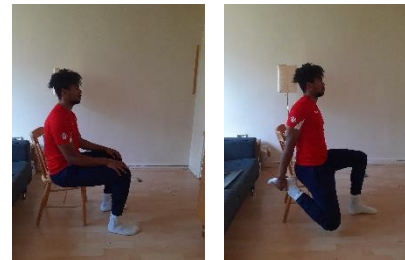
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### 3. Standing Hip flexor stretch



- Stand in front of a wall with one foot placed behind you.
- Shift your hips towards the wall until you feel a light stretch in the hip of the trailing leg. Keep your posture upright.

### 4. Seated Quad stretch



- Sit halfway on a chair with one leg slightly behind you.
- Lean backwards until you feel a stretch in your quads. Grab the chair with your hands for support.



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#### 5. Seated Hamstring Stretch



- Sit halfway on a chair with one leg straight.
- Use one hand to reach out towards your straight leg until you feel a stretch in the back of your leg.

#### 6. Knee to chest stretch



- Lay on your back & let your legs rest with your knees extended.
- Pull one knee into your chest until you feel a stretch in your glutes.

#### 7. Seated Glute stretch



8. While sitting in a chair try to place your right ankle on your left knee. If you can't reach, straighten your left leg.
9. Use one hand to secure your ankle while using the other to bring your right knee across your body until you feel a stretch in your glutes.



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## Final Remarks

We at the Palace for Life Foundation would once again like to thank those who help make our communities a conducive environment for health & well-being during this difficult time. We appreciate your participation & hope that you enjoyed the information & circuits listed in this physical activity guide. Hard work isn't easy but working hard gets easier the more you do it. Please have a look at some of the additional resources listed below for more information & ideas on family activities, mindfulness, nutrition & ways to stay physically active.

- *The Health & Well-being Team*

## Additional Resources

For more information on additional Palace For Life Foundation resources related to mindfulness, nutrition & wellbeing please contact Bethany Towle at [BethanyTowle@palaceforlife.org](mailto:BethanyTowle@palaceforlife.org)

Check out the Palace For Life Foundation website [here](#) for the latest news on our department wide efforts to support the community during this time.

The NHS has a guide for those looking to jumpstart their running careers. Provided [here](#) is a running plan that helps beginners work their way to being able to run a 5k.

[Here](#) is brief pdf of healthy home activities & physical education classes. This is a great resource for families looking to find fun & create activities to pass time.

For those looking to participate in low impact & relaxing tai chi routines, take a look at this beginner's course on [YouTube](#).



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