**STRENGTH EXERCISES TO SUPPORT YOUR WALKING**

### Why is strength important:
Physical activity is good medicine. Being active on most days will help you to perform everyday tasks and remain independent for longer. It can help to boost your energy, think more clearly, manage blood pressure, reduce stress and anxiety and leads to a healthy heart. Building strength into your exercise regime will help to keep your muscles, joints and bones healthy and strong.

### How much:
Aim to do strength exercises two times a week, along with walking daily. Gradually build from Beginner to Advanced. Reps are the number of times you complete a single exercise. Completing several reps of a specific exercise in a row is called a set. Remember, it is okay to rest in-between different exercises and sets.

- **Beginner:** 1 set of 6 reps
- **Intermediate:** 2 sets of 10 reps
- **Advanced:** 3 sets of 10 reps

### Tips:
Most of these exercises can be done seated or standing.
- It is important to keep hydrated, water is best.
- If you are outside don’t forget to practice sun-safety and slip, slop, slap.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothing.
- Stop if you experience pain or discomfort and seek advice from your GP.

### For heart information and support, call our Helpline on 13 11 12 or visit heartfoundation.org.au

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### MARCHING ON THE SPOT

**Technique:**
Start walking for 2-4 seconds. Or, if seated try standing.

**Benefit:**
A great way to relieve tension in the neck and shoulders. Posture is key to good walking form. Shoulders should be down and back, chin up, eyes looking forward and spine straight.

### CALF RAISES

**Technique:**
Lift one foot from the floor, placing it back down whilst lifting the opposite foot from the floor and back down.

**Make this harder by:**
Increase the speed.

**Benefit:**
An easy way to build up strength alongside the added benefit of improving your cardiovascular and walking endurance.

### SHOULDER RAISES

**Technique:**
Start standing behind a chair, holding the chair for balance and support. Start with your feet shoulder width apart, tuck your tummy in to keep your core tight, (this will help keep your back upright and straight). Take your right leg out to the side, 6 times, don’t rush the movement. Bring your right leg back to the centre and take your left leg out 6 times.

**Make this harder by:**
Hold in squat position just above the chair (try not to touch or rest on the chair).

**Benefit:**
A great way for hip mobility and to maintain strength in your backside, which will help you to maintain balance when standing and walking.

### SIDE LEG SWINGS (Lateral)

**Technique:**
Sit in a chair (try not to touch or rest on the backrest). Hold your feet out to the side with palms facing forwards and your knees bent 90 degrees. Slowly swing your feet out to the side and swing back. Repeat.

**Make this harder by:**
If seated try standing.

**Benefit:**
A good exercise to maintain ankle flexibility and blood flow to your lower limbs. Also to strengthen calf, ankle and foot muscles. Lower body muscles and joints are extremely important for walking.

### CHAIR SQUAT (Sit to Stand)

**Technique:**
Start standing behind a chair, holding the chair for balance and support. Start with your feet shoulder width apart, tuck your tummy in to keep your core tight, (this will help keep your back upright and straight). Begin the movement by bending at your knees and sitting back with your hips until your backside sits on the chair. Return to standing position. Repeat.

**Make this harder by:**
Hold in squat position just above the chair (try not to touch or rest on the chair).

**Benefit:**
A wonderful functional exercise to help with mobility and stability of the three main joints used when walking: the hip, knee and ankle joints. Also a great exercise to maintain and strengthen muscles in your legs and backside.

### ARM CURL

**Technique:**
Starting with your feet flat on the floor and arms down by the sides of your body with palms facing forwards. Move your palms upwards aiming to reach an inch from your shoulders. Keep your elbows by the side of your torso.

**Make this harder by:**
Add weight.

**Benefit:**
Keeping your upper arms strong allows you to complete daily tasks and maintain independence for longer. Swinging your arms can also assist you to increase your bodies intensity when you walk.