

## Strengthening Exercises

This packet contains seven basic strengthening exercises that we recommend for older adults to help reduce falls and improve mobility. Functional improvements typically will not occur unless that 4lb. weight is reached with the leg exercises.

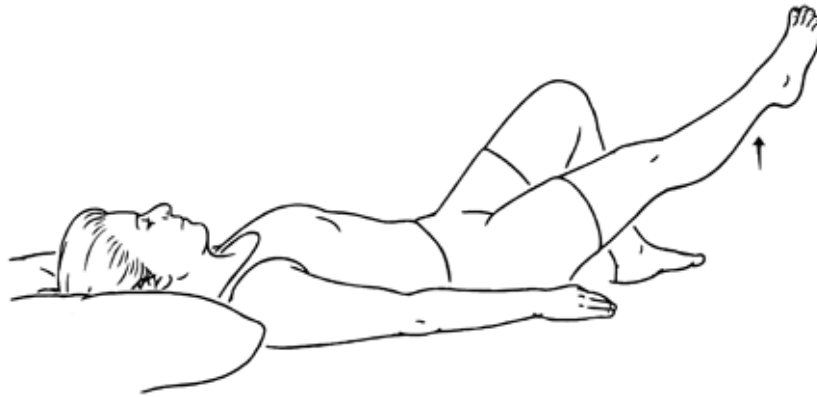
- All the exercises are completed lying down (bed, recliner, or floor).
- Start with no weights and then progress up to at least 4lb. cuff weights on both the arms and the legs. *This could take several weeks or even months.*
- The typical weight progression is in 1lb. increments.
- Progress weight only when exercise can be completed smoothly, slowly and with ease for all the repetitions.
- Strength training should be completed two times per week with two days in between strengthening sessions.
- Consistency is the key: You start losing strength within 3-5 days of stopping an exercise.

### Variations:

- Start with 2 sets of 5 repetitions (when just starting or increasing weight)
- Increase repetitions to 12 - 20 repetitions (recommend completing 2 sets)

*\*\*\*Consult a physician before beginning any exercises. If you are in doubt, please do not attempt them\*\*\**

## Straight Leg Raises



1. Bend your right leg and place your foot on the bed.
2. Keeping the left knee locked and toes pointed towards the ceiling, raise your left leg off the bed. Do not let your knee go higher than the bent knee.
3. Slowly lower your left leg (do not drop it) back down to the bed.
4. Complete a set of 10 with your left leg and then repeat with your right leg.

Frequency: 2x/week with two days of rest in between

Goal is 7-10 lbs.

Benefits: Assists with walking and transfers, especially with getting in/out of bed.

## Hip Abduction



1. Keep your kneecaps and toes pointing towards the ceiling.
2. While barely lifting your leg off the floor, slide your left leg out to the side.
3. Slowly bring your leg back to the middle.
4. Continue 10 repetitions on the left leg and then repeat with the right leg. If you are having back pain, bend the opposite leg.

Frequency: 2x/week with two days of rest in between

Goal: 7-10 lbs

Benefit: Because it is the weakest muscle with older adults, strengthening the hip stabilizers helps improve balance.

## Heel Slide



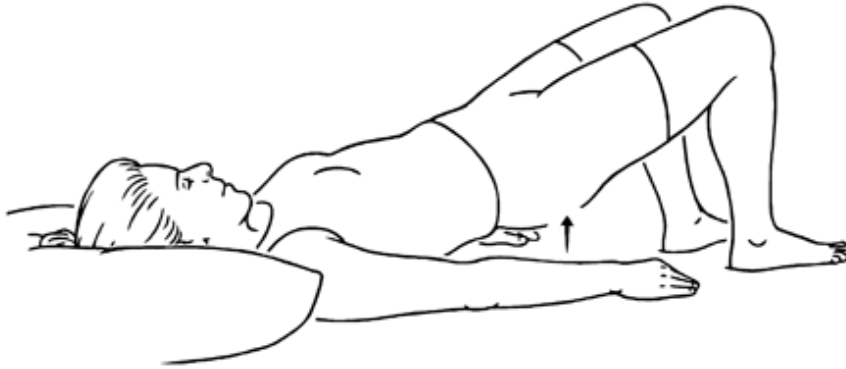
1. Bend your right knee and pull your heel toward your buttocks. Try to keep your foot *off* the bed.
2. Slowly straighten your knee.
3. Continue 10 repetitions on the right leg and then repeat with the left leg.

Frequency: 2x/week with two days of rest in between

Goal: 7-10 lbs.

Benefits: Increases leg strength to help walking, transfers and stairs.

## Bridging

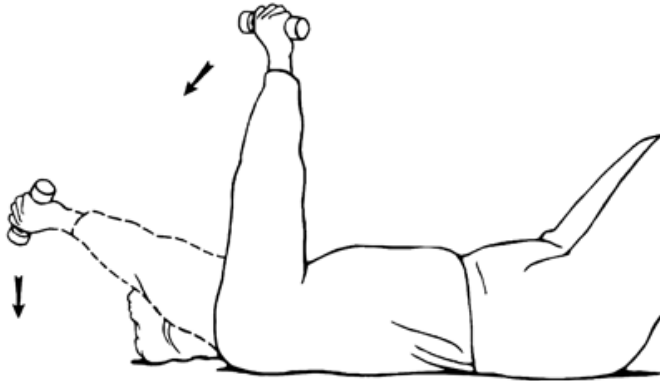


1. Bend your knees and place your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Lift your hips up towards the ceiling.
3. Hold for 5 seconds.
4. Return your buttocks slowly to the ground. Do not let it drop.
5. Repeat 10 times.

Frequency: 2x/week with two days of rest in between

Benefits: Increases flexibility in waist area to assist with balance. Increases body awareness; strengthens back, buttocks and legs.

## Supine Shoulder Flexion



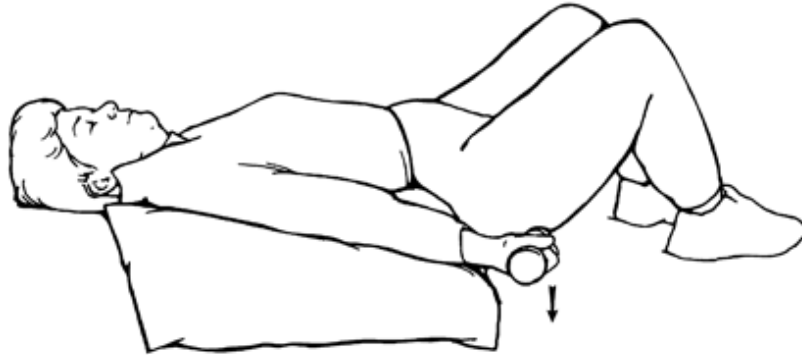
1. Place your arms down by your side and point your thumbs toward the ceiling.
2. Slowly lift your left arm over your head keeping elbow straight.
3. Now bring it back down to your side.
4. Repeat with your right arm.
5. Continue the routine by alternating your left and right arm until 10 repetitions have been completed on each arm.

Frequency: 2x/week with two days of rest in between

Goal: 7-10 lbs

Benefits: Increases arm strength for dressing, cleaning, cooking and reaching for overhead objects.

## Supine Elbow Flexion



1. Place your arms down by your sides and palms facing the ceiling.
2. Keeping your elbows on the floor, slowly bend BOTH elbows so your hands move towards your face.
3. Slowly return to the starting position.

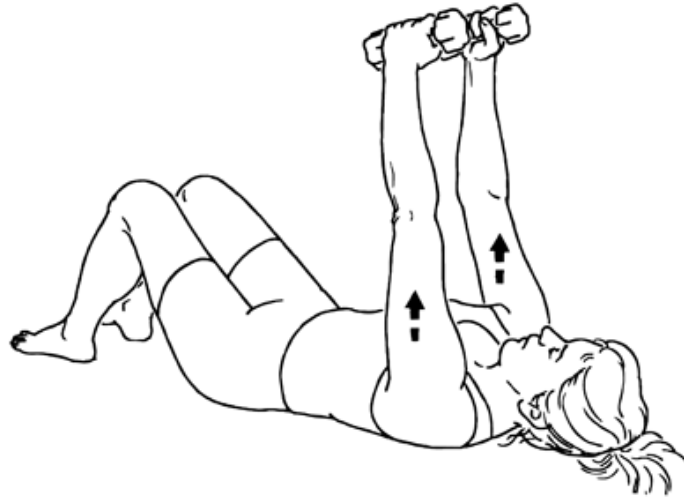
Repeat 10 times

Frequency: 2x/week

Goal: 7-10 lbs

Benefits: Assists with all daily activities such as eating and dressing.

## Shoulder Press



1. Hold your arms up towards the ceiling with your elbows straight.
2. Bring your hands down and touch your chest, keeping your elbows pointed away from your body.
3. Now slowly straighten your arms.
4. Continue the routine until 10 repetitions have been completed.

Frequency: 2x/week

Goal: 7-10 lbs

Benefits: Total arm workout that will help with all daily activities.