



Seated Vitality at Home

Welcome to Seated Vitality

This booklet has been created to help you enjoy chair-based exercises in your own home. Seated Vitality is an excellent form of physical activity for anyone who has difficulties in exercising whilst standing. It can be adapted and enjoyed to suit the needs of your specific requirements. Seated Vitality will help you to improve your posture, mobility, flexibility, balance and build strength.

For some people, any or some forms of exercise are not recommended. Any exercise programme carries some risk of injury. Please consider any risks to yourself before participating in Seated Vitality. The exercises should not cause you any pain or distress.

If in doubt, sit it out!

If you have any doubt, it is in your interest to check with your doctor or other suitably qualified medical professional before engaging in any of the exercises.

Whilst every effort has been made to minimise the risk of injury whilst following the exercises in this booklet, Age UK Devon cannot accept liability for any such injury.

Before You Begin

Please check you have the following before beginning your seated vitality session:

- If possible, use an upright chair without arm rests such as a dining chair.
- If using a wheelchair, please ensure that the footplates are set correctly, and the handbrake is on.
- It is advisable to have somebody with you whilst exercising for reasons of safety and to help with any requirements.
- Have a cold drink available to keep hydrated and ensure that your room is bright and well ventilated.
- Please ensure that the immediate area around you is free of tripping hazards.
- Feel free to enjoy some of your favourite music whilst exercising.

Let's Get Started

Correct Seated Position

The best position for seated exercises, commonly referred to as the 'working position' is to sit in the front third of an upright chair (preferably a chair without arm rests). Your back should be straight and your aiming to sit up as tall as possible. Make sure your hips and knees are in line, as well as your knees and ankles, with your feet forward and hip width apart. Pull in your stomach and look straight ahead. If you find this position difficult sit up as straight as possible with your back against the back of the chair for support.



Back Rest Position

When resting between exercises you may wish to move to the back of the chair for back support, and move to the front third of the chair to resume the 'working position'.

Back Refresher

You may wish to change posture by placing your elbows on your knees and curving or rounding the spine, enabling the back to stretch out. After a short time resume the 'working position'.



Let's Warm Up - Time for a Circulation Booster!

A warm up prepares your body and mind for the main activity. The Circulation Booster will increase your heart rate, body temperature and blood flow; warming up your muscles and increasing your range of movement.

All the exercises you will be performing will emulate movements in your everyday lives, such as washing and cooking. They also help to improve your walking coordination and shoulder mobility, which helps dressing.

It may be helpful to perform the following exercises whilst playing some suitable music for this part of your session.

Please complete all the repetitions of the Circulation Booster below if able to do so.

Rep.1

- Toe tap to the music beat – left foot / right foot / alternating feet / both feet side to side.
- Gentle arm swing – alternate swinging of arms – elbows close to the sides – swing forward and back – point fingers forwards – push elbows back.
- Alternate tap and clap – tap hands on knees – clap hands up to chest height.



Rep. 2

- Toe / ball / heel – place the toes down, then ball of foot, then heel.
- Left foot / right foot / alternate feet / both feet.
- Gentle arm swing – increase the range of movement.
- Tap and clap – up to chest height.

Rep.3

- Marching – lift feet off the floor. Gentle march in time to the music.
- Arm swing – slightly more rigorous and increased range of movement.
- Tap and clap up to shoulder height alternate sides.

Rest

Well done! You have now completed your Circulation Booster and are warmed up for the main activity. Enjoy a full back rest or a back refresher as shown on the previous page.

Now for the Main Activity

Here are a series of exercises to choose for your session. Build your session around identifying one or two parts of your body that you would like to exercise; for example, shoulder and arm exercises for one session and then leg and ankle exercises for the next session. These will help you to improve your posture, mobility, flexibility, balance and build strength. The Main Activity should last for about 20 minutes.

Mobility, Stretching and Resistance

Shoulder Lifts and Circles

To loosen and lubricate the shoulder joints. This aids with dressing and reaching.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Slow controlled movements.
- Elevate the shoulders to the ears and gradually push down as far as possible x 4.
- Elevate the left shoulder to the ears, roll back, down and forwards x 4.
- Repeat on right side.

Rest

Ankle Activator

Improves walking, balance and stability and reduces ankle swelling.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Keep feet flat on the floor to start.
- Hold the chair for support if required.
- Heel and toe action – left foot. Place toe on heel spot and heel on toe spot x 4.
- Repeat with right foot x 4.
- Gradually increase range of movement.

Rest



Trunk Twists

Mobilises mid and upper back. Helps balance. The exercise will aid getting out of bed and looking behind.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Hold the chair for support if required.
- This exercise is a continuous movement.
- Place the left hand on the right thigh and right hand behind or on the side of the chair.
- Turn and look around.
- Return to centre position.
- Repeat on the other side.
- 4 x repetitions – 2 x each side.

Rest

N.B. Do not hold the position as this could lead to neck injuries.



Chest Stretch

Improves posture through expanding the ribcage and diaphragm, and helps with dressing and toileting.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Hold the back or side of the chair with both hands.
- Lift the chest.
- Push the chin forwards and look slightly upwards.
- Stretch forward.
- Lean forward from the hips.
- Ensure regular breathing.
- Hold the stretch for up to 10 seconds.

Rest



Back of Thigh Stretch

Increases range of movement in hips and helps reaching down and picking up.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Hold the chair for support if required.
- Single leg stretch – hold for 8 – 10 seconds.
- Stretch the leg out to full stretch.
- Point toes upwards.
- Place hands on the other thigh.
- Ensure that the bent leg has the knee directly over the ankle for stability.
- Stretch forward.
- Lean forward from the hips.
- Ensure regular breathing.
- Repeat on the other side.

Rest



Side Stretch

Improves mobility and flexibility in the trunk area, expands the ribcage and helps bending over and picking things up.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Slide one hand down the side of the chair as far as possible.
- Maintain posture.
- Do not lean forward or backward.
- Hold position for up to 10 seconds.
- Return to upright position.
- Repeat exercise on the opposite side.

Rest



Upward Side Stretch

Helps reaching upwards and expands the ribcage.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Lift the elbow as high as possible – elbow pointing upwards.
- Reach up with the hand as far as possible.
- Feel the stretch to the side of the body.
- Keep shoulders down. Ensure the bottom stays in contact with the chair.
- Bring the arm down to the side.
- Repeat on the other side.
- Hold the stretch for 8 – 10 seconds.

Rest



Calf Stretch

Mobilises the ankle, helps with walking up and down stairs.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Stretch one leg out.
- Place hands on opposite knee.
- Point the toes of the outstretched leg upwards.
- Gradually move the toes towards the knee.
- Hold position for up to 10 seconds and gradually release the stretch.
- Change over legs and repeat the exercise.

Rest



Building Strength in your Hands

Hand and Finger Flexion and Extension

Aids mobility, strength and motor skills. This helps with co-ordination.

Fingers

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Extend the arms away from the body.
- Clench fingers to make a fist.
- Extend and stretch fingers.
- Repeat up to 8 times.

Rest



Finger Dexterity

- Extend one arm away from the body, palm facing downwards and fingers outstretched.
- Touch the thumb with each digit.
- Repeat up to 4 times.
- Change hands and repeat the exercise.

Rest



Thumbs

- Extend the arms away from the body, palms facing downwards and fingers outstretched.
- Rotate thumbs.
- Repeat in opposite direction.

Rest



Wrists

- Extend one arm away from the body, palms facing down and fingers outstretched.
- Rotate wrist.
- Repeat in opposite direction.
- Change arms and repeat the exercise.

Rest



Stress Balls

The following exercises include the use of a stress ball. If you don't have access to a stress ball you can use an alternative such as a small soft ball or a rolled-up pair of socks.

Using stress balls or alternative provides a barrier to eliminate the possibility of skin lesions through repeated impact while exercising your hands and fingers. The stress balls also provide a form of resistance which will help to build strength in your fingers and hands which will greatly improve everyday tasks such as lifting pans and opening cans and bottles.

Fingers

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Holding a stress ball, extend the arm away from the body.
- Clench fingers and squeeze the ball to make a fist.
- Extend and stretch fingers.
- Repeat up to 8 times.
- Change hands and repeat the exercise.

Rest

Finger Dexterity

- Extend one arm away from the body and holding a stress ball.
- Squeeze the ball with the thumb and each digit.
- Repeat up to 4 times.
- Change hands and repeat the exercise.

Rest

- Place the stress ball between forefinger and middle finger and squeeze the ball.
- Repeat the exercise by placing the stress ball between middle finger and ring finger and ring finger and little finger.
- Change hands and repeat the exercise.

Rest



Bump Balls

Using a versatile item of equipment called a Bump Ball can enhance the outcome of the following exercises and can be used to exercise most parts of your body.

For details of purchasing a Bump Ball please see the 'useful resources' page. An alternative to a Bump Ball could be the use of a soft, large ball or a cushion.

Chest Press

Strengthens upper back, shoulders and arms and helps with tasks such as carrying, getting out of bed and hanging out washing.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Hold the bump ball at chest height with hands either side of the ball and elbows pointing outwards.
- Squeeze the ball as hard as possible.
- Gradually fully extend the arms.
- Hold position for up to 4 seconds.
- Bring the arms back towards the chest.
- Repeat the exercise up to 4 times.

Rest



Leg Strengthener

Strengthens legs and hips, builds bone density and core strength and aids balance.

- Check posture – good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Place bump ball between the ankles.
- Hold the sides of the chair for support.
- Gradually lift the ball up to 12 inches off the floor.
- Hold for up to 8 seconds and slowly lower feet to the floor.
- Repeat the exercise up to 4 times.

Rest



Thera Band

Another ideal way to build resistance, strength and flexibility for most parts of your body is with the use of a Thera Band. As an alternative to the Thera Band, you could use a pair of tights to perform the exercises.

Upper Back Strengthenener

Improves posture and strength in shoulders for supporting body weight.

- Sit tall in the chair in working position.
- Place band across thighs ensure band is flat.
- Slide hands under band - wrists up and flat position.
- Grip band and lift to tummy height stretch band outwards.
- Draw band back to tummy - keep elbows tucked in.
- Return hands to forward position, relax arms and release tension of band.
- Repeat exercise up to 12 times.

Rest



Outer Thigh Strengthener

Strengthens hips and thighs. Helps balance and walking.

- Sit tall in the chair in working position.
- Wrap band around lower thighs and cross band over holding to secure.
- Ensure the band is flat and not too tight, press legs outwards.
- Keep feet flat on the floor, return to first position.
- Repeat exercise up to 8 times.

Rest

N.B Please do not complete this exercise without checking with your doctor or physiotherapist if you have recently had a hip or knee replacement.



Wrist Strengthener

Helps opening bottles, jars, turning handles.

- Use rolled band.
- Squeeze x3, twist x3 and pull x3.
- Hold for up to 5 seconds.
- Relaxed shoulders, good posture.
- Keep wrists in line with arms.
- Use a piece of tubular foam if the exercise is too difficult.
- Repeat between 5 to 8 times.

Rest



Backward Press

Strengthens arms, shoulders and spine. Helps with pushing yourself up/out of car, bed & bath.

- Sit tall in the chair in working position.
- Secure band under one foot or both feet.
- Grip band on one side at knee height - dogs lead hold.
- Draw band back to hip level - keep elbow into your sides.
- Push band behind until the arm is as straight as possible (lock and hold).
- Release the tension by returning hand to hip and then start position.
- Keep wrists in line with lower arms.
- Repeat exercise up to 8 times.

Rest



Arm Curl

Strengthens arms and shoulders helps with carrying and lifting.

- Sit tall in the chair in working position.
- Place band under one or both feet.
- Grip band on both sides - ice cream hold.
- Draw the fists upwards towards shoulders then drop the hands to be in line with the elbows - keep wrists in line with arms.
- Hold for up to 5 seconds.
- Relax the arms to sides.
- Repeat exercise up to 4 times.

Rest



Pelvic Floor Exercises

The exercises below are very useful for building muscle to aid bladder control for men and women.

Fast contractions will help to react to coughs and sneezes and slow contractions will help to improve holding urine flow when necessary.

Sitting comfortably in a chair, practice drawing up the pelvic floor muscles from front to back passage (as though you are trying to hold in urine) and hold this lift for 10 seconds. Repeat the exercise 10 times.

Thigh and Pelvic Floor Strengthenener using bump ball

Strengthens inner and outer thighs and builds bone density. It also helps with the prevention of falls. This aids mobility for walking, climbing stairs, continence and toileting and getting up and out of chairs.

N.B Please do not complete this exercise without checking with your doctor or physiotherapist if you have recently had a hip or knee replacement.

Slow Twitch Exercise

- Check posture - good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Place bump ball between the knees.
- Gradually squeeze the ball with your knees as hard as possible whilst drawing up the pelvic floor muscles.
- Hold for up to 10 seconds and slowly release.
- Repeat the exercise up to 4 times.

Rest

Fast Twitch Exercise

- Check posture - good upright posture.
- Feet flat on the floor to start.
- Place bump ball between the knees.
- Quickly squeeze and release the ball with your knees as hard as possible whilst drawing up the pelvic floor muscles.
- Repeat up to 8 times.

Rest

- Repeat the exercise up to 4 times.

Rest



Cool Down - Almost finished!

The cool down is as important as the warm up as it slows the level of activity down gradually returning your heart rate to normal. Bring your Seated Vitality session to an end by completing the circulation booster in reverse. Begin the circulation booster at the highest intensity and reduce to a low level of activity as you work your way through the exercises.

Once the cool down is completed, you may wish to enjoy some relaxation techniques such as slowly breathing in through your nose and exhaling slowly and steadily out through your mouth about six times.

You may find listening to your favourite relaxing music during this part of your session helps you to slow everything down.

It is important to remember to keep well hydrated after your session to replace the fluids you will have lost through exercising.

The End



Congratulations! You have now completed your Seated Vitality session. We hope you are feeling more energised with a positive boost to your feeling of physical and mental well being. Over time you'll notice improvements to your mobility, balance, flexibility, fitness and strength. All of which will help you with everyday tasks. It is advisable to participate in Seated Vitality sessions on a regular basis with the aim of enjoying two sessions per week.

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet, which we hope you have enjoyed and found useful.

Useful Resources

Equipment

The equipment used for the Seated Vitality exercises can be purchased from the websites below.

- www.sport-thieme.co.uk/Balls/Playing_Balls-Therapy_Balls/art=1094334
- www.sport-thieme.co.uk/Balls/Playing_Balls-Therapy_Balls/art=1344745
- www.physiosupplies.co.uk/fitness-rehabilitation/exercise-bands-tubes/
- <https://mymeglio.com>

Being active at Home

If you would like further advice or different exercises for staying active at home take a look at the websites below.

Active Devon

www.activedevon.org/how-to-get-and-stay-active-while-youre-at-home/

Brilliant ideas, tips and advice including links to online workouts for staying active at home.

10 Today

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p087wddm

A series of short 10 minute exercise videos designed by Sports England for older people.

Sport England

www.sportengland.org/jointhemovement

Helpful tips, advice and guidance on how to keep active at home.

www.sportengland.org/news/new-booklet-help-older-adults-keep-active

This booklet gives practical guidance to older people on activities to do at home that will help maintain their strength and balance.

We Are Undefeatable

www.weareundefeatable.co.uk

Support for those of us with health conditions to become more active.

The Bodycoach

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyCLOpd4VxBvH1ZqD6Vp6vD2C2No1cloe

A variety of full body and chair based exercise videos for older people.

NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/>

NHS guidance on physical activity for older people.

Useful Contacts

Age UK Devon

0333 241 2340

We have a range of services and activities across Devon for older people.

Age UK

0800 169 65 65

Age UK provide information and advice to older people across the UK.

Silver Line

0800 470 80 90

A free confidential helpline for older people that is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

NHS 111

111 or 111.nhs.uk

NHS 111 can help if you have any concerns about your health.

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Please consult an appropriate health professional before attempting any of the exercises if you have any concerns about your health and the suitability of the exercises.

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