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### **Tips for Performing Strength Exercises:**

- Make sure that you do a minimum of 10 minutes warm up prior to starting your exercises (see the warm up section for details).
- When you finish your exercises you need to cool down and stretch all the muscles that have been worked.
- Make sure that you have a water bottle and drink throughout the workout to keep hydrated.
- **IMPORTANT** to breathe throughout the exercise. DO NOT hold your breath.
- Use smooth, steady movements when performing the exercises, no jerking or thrusting movements.
- Avoid locking the joints of your arms and legs into a strained position.
- Muscle soreness lasting a couple of days and slight fatigue are normal after strength training exercises.
- Exhaustion, sore joints, and painful muscle pulls are not normal. You may have done too much too soon and need to reduce the weight and intensity of your workout.
- It is better to start with less weight (or no weight at all) and sets and gradually increase the amount that you do as your body adapts and becomes stronger.
- Starting out with weights that are too heavy can lead to injury.
- Not using enough weight to challenge your muscles will not allow them to develop and become stronger.
- Before performing each exercise, get your body set and ready by keeping neutral spine and contracting your core (abdominal) muscles.

### **How much and How often?**

- Start with as many repetitions of the exercise as you comfortably can build up to completing between 8 – 12 reps of each exercise.
- The speed of movement can be 2 seconds to lift or push, pause, then 2 seconds to lower. The key is to control the movement.
- When you finish your repetitions this is called a “set”. Rest for one minute then perform another set of the exercise.
- As you progress and feel you can do more, you can either increase the number of repetitions to 15 or add another set of the exercise.
- Do strength exercises for all your major muscle groups 2 – 3 times per week.
- Option to work full body on those days or work your upper body one day and lower body on the second day and the full body on the third day. Just make sure that the same muscle groups are not worked two days in a row, as your muscles need to recuperate and recover so that they can become stronger.
- Lift a minimum of weight the first week, then gradually build up the weight.
- If you cannot lift the weight 8 times it is too heavy, if you can lift more than 15 times it is too light.

### **Which Level should I Choose?**

This program has been designed to be effective for experienced clients with varied levels of fitness experience.

Always start with Level One and if it is too easy, try the next level. You may find that in some exercises you are at a Level One and may be at a Level Two or Three for other exercises.

If you have never exercised start at Level One and go slowly, if you are already active, progress to Level Two, and if you are currently actively involved in a fitness routine Level Three should challenge you and add to your fitness repertoire.

## **CHAIR STANDS**

Strengthens the hips, thighs, and buttocks, which are important muscles to help you walk efficiently, rise from a chair quickly, and climb stairs with better ease. Level Three will include the core abdominal muscles.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

### **Level One:**

1. Standing in front of a sturdy, armless chair with feet slightly more than shoulder-width apart and arms stretched straight out in front of you. (Figure 1)
2. Slowly to a count of four lower yourself to a seated position making sure that your knees DO NOT come forward past your toes and keep your hips, knees, and ankles in line (do not let your knees drop in). (Figure 2)
3. Slowly to a count of two rise back up to a standing position. Keeping your knees over your ankles and your back straight. (Figure 3)
4. Do 1 to 2 sets, and 8 – 12 reps.



**Figure 3**

**Note: If you find it difficult to go all the way down to the chair, place a pillow on the chair, which will shorten the range of motion.**



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

Level Two:

1. Same set up as Level One but standing securely on a band to add resistance to the exercise.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

Level Three:

1. Same set up as Level One and Two using the band for added resistance. (Figure 1)
2. With a pillow at the back of the chair, when you sit down keeping your abdominal muscles tight and back straight (neutral spine) lean back into the back of the chair then sit back up before standing back up to starting position. (Figure 2 & 3)

## **SEATED LEG EXTENSION**

This exercise targets the muscles of the front of the thigh. This exercise is one that helps to strengthen the knee joint and makes climbing stairs easier.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

### **Level One:**

1. Sitting tall (neutral spine) on a sturdy chair, sit all the way back so that your feet barely touch the ground. You can put a rolled up towel under your knees if necessary. Hips, knees, and ankles in line with kneecaps facing up. (Figure 1)
2. Slowly to a count of two extend your lower leg until it is straight but not locked. (Figure 2)
3. Pause then lower to a count of four, repeat with other leg. Alternating legs.
4. Do 1 to 2 sets of 8 – 12 repetitions.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

### **Level Two:**

1. Same set up as level one. Add ankle weights to increase the resistance. (Figure 1)
2. Pause at the top and hold for a count of four, alternating legs. (Figure 2)

### **Level Three:**

1. Same set up as Level One and Two. Add ankle weights to increase the resistance.
2. Pause at the top and hold for four counts. Repeat *same leg* for 8 – 12 reps.

## **STANDING HAMSTRING CURLS**

This exercise works the muscles in the back of your upper thigh. The hamstrings help you bend your knees and control their motion while you walk. When done in conjunction with leg extensions it will make walking and climbing stairs easier, as well as adding support to the knee joint.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

### **Level One:**

1. Standing behind a sturdy chair, hold on to the chair with your back in neutral and core muscles tight. (Figure 1)
2. Bend one knee for a count of two. (Figure 2)
3. Lower to the floor for a count of four, repeat with other leg.
4. Slight bend in the knee of the supporting leg.
5. Do 1 to 2 sets of 8 – 12 reps.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**

### **Level Two:**

1. Same set up as Level One. Add ankle weights to increase the resistance.
2. Alternating legs.

### **Level Three:**

1. Same set up as Level One and Two. Add ankle weights to increase the resistance.
2. Pause at the top and hold for four counts. Repeat *same leg* for 8 –12 reps.