

**TIME TO GET PHYSICAL!*****Exercises and Stretches***

Exercise and stretching are both important tools to help you maintain a healthy mind and body. Exercise helps strengthen your muscles and bones, and stretching helps maintain flexibility. Together, they can help you set a positive tone for the entire day, every day.

Of course we should always pay attention to our bodies and know what our limits are. **Here is a list of low-impact exercises and stretches we compiled that you can do in your home. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider before starting any new exercise or stretching regimen.**

For additional exercises you can do at home, check out these helpful videos [here](#).

**THE TEAPOT**

Sitting in a chair, straighten your spine and fold your arms across your body or put your hands behind your head, positioning your elbows to the sides. Slowly pull your stomach muscles in and angle your torso to one side, lowering your rib cage in the direction of your corresponding hip. Use your belly muscles to move your torso to the beginning position. Repeat your next set on the other side and continue changing directions. If your doctor gives you the OK to make the exercise more difficult, try holding dumbbells in your hands with your arms next to your sides.

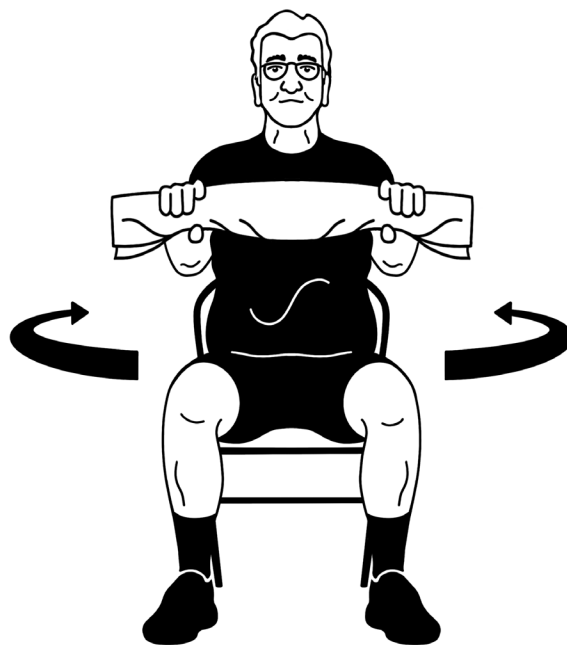
**TWIST**

Sit straight up in a chair and grab a towel with your hands, placing them shoulder-width apart. Stretch your arms in front of your body, slightly bending your elbows. Pull your belly in toward your spine and shift your torso to the right. Twist your torso while squeezing your stomach muscles. Return to center and twist to the left. Repeat as necessary.

**TAKE A BOW**

Begin in the same position as the Teapot. Tighten your belly muscles and bend your torso down. Both sides of your rib cage should reach in the direction of your hips. While engaging your stomach muscles, gently extend your spine back into the starting position.

If your doctor gives you the OK to make the exercise more difficult, try holding weights.



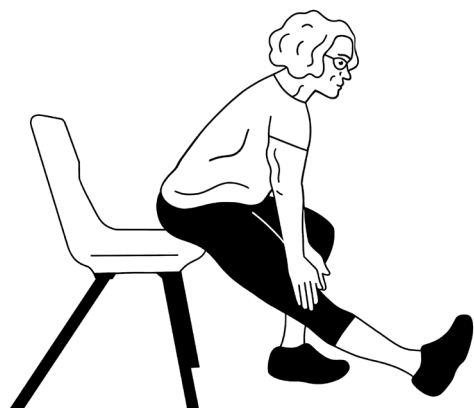
*Fig 1: Twist*

### **MODIFIED PLANK**

Rest a chair up against a sturdy wall, facing the seat toward you. Stand up facing the chair and put your palms on the seat, near the corners. Gently walk your feet backward until your head, shoulders, hips and feet are in a line. Adjust your feet so you can comfortably hold the position. Your hands should line up under your shoulders, and your arms should have a slight bend at the elbows. Hold, and then walk back to a standing position. Repeat as desired.

### **MODIFIED CAT AND CAMEL**

Stand and place palms flat on the arms of a chair or on a countertop, leaving space between you and the countertop and straightening your arms. Lower your upper body so your back and head line up with the countertop. You should also feel a stretch in the back of your legs. Round your back and hold. Then open your chest and slightly arch your back. Hold. Repeat the stretch in both directions as necessary.



*Fig 2: Seated Hamstring Stretch*

### **SHOULDER AND UPPER-BACK STRETCH**

Stand tall, arms by your sides. Reach behind you with both hands, pulling your shoulders back, and clasp your fingers together. If you feel a stretch already, hold it here. If your doctor gives you the OK to increase the difficulty, try pushing your hands away from your lower back and gently arch back. Return to a standing position and do again as necessary.

### **TRICEPS STRETCH**

Seated in a chair or standing up, raise your right arm over your head, bending at the elbow. Lift your opposite arm up and reach for your elbow, pulling gently. In doing this exercise, you should feel a slight stretch through the back of your arm. Hold, then switch arms.

### **SEATED HAMSTRING STRETCH**

Sit in a chair. Place one foot flat on the ground with the knee at a 90-degree angle. Extend your other leg straight out with the foot flexed. Reach forward toward the flexed foot to stretch your hamstring. Hold, and then repeat with the other leg.



*Fig 3: Shoulder and Upper-Back Stretch*