

# Physical activity at home ...is good at all

## For persons aged 65 or more

In the current pandemic emergency situation, staying at home for prolonged periods, often carrying out sedentary activities, can generate particularly harmful effects on the mental and physical health of people aged over 65, to a greater extent than at other ages. Over 65s tend to be more exposed to the risk of solitude and social isolation, have a higher incidence of chronic pathologies, or have limited autonomy. It is therefore even more important to be able to dedicate time to exercise in order to maintain good general health, to organize the day with regular activities and to improve psychological well-being, which is essential for the management of stress, anxiety and tension that the current situation can provoke.

### How much physical activity is necessary per week?

#### AGE 65 YEARS AND OVER

Total minutes per WEEK



**MODERATE**  
aerobic activity

in sessions of at least 10 consecutive minutes

or



**INTENSE**  
aerobic activity\*

+

strengthening of the major muscle groups 2 or more times a week

+

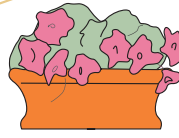
activities to improve balance and prevent falls for people with reduced mobility, 3 or more times a week

\* Vigorous/intense physical activity: when breathing and heart beating are accelerated and can cause sweating (for example: running, jumping multiple times, dancing quickly)

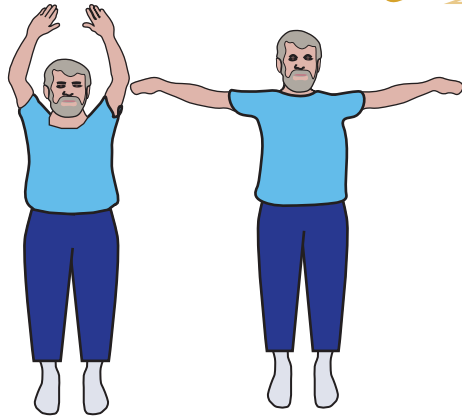
### Some activities for this age group:

- Domestic work and gardening
- Dancing, in pairs if possible
- Listening to music
- Reading books or periodicals
- Doing puzzles or, if you live with other people, play board games
- If you use internet, you can listen to audio books, attend online courses on topics of interest, watch plays, visit virtual museums, participate in reading groups or games, etc
- Every 30 minutes take a break of about 2-3 minutes, doing simple stretching exercises or walking
- Seated meditation: sit comfortably on a chair. Make sure your back is straight. Close your eyes, relax your body and progressively deepen your breathing. Concentrate on your breathing, trying not to focus on any thoughts or concerns. Remain in this position for 5–10 minutes or more, and try to relax and clear your mind



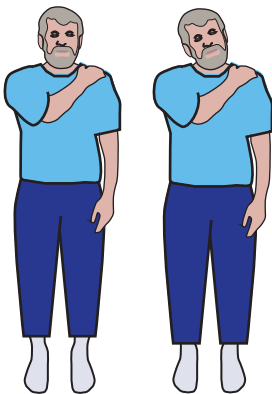
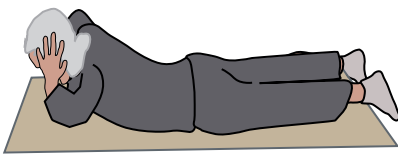


## Some examples of physical exercises



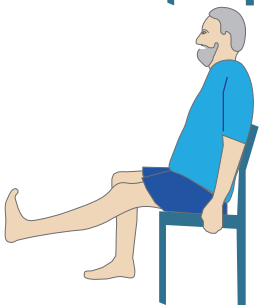
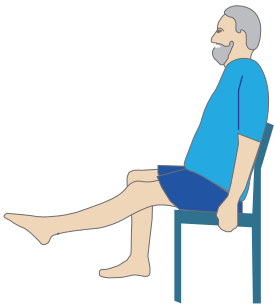
### **Exercises to strengthen muscles**

- **Arms.** Sit or stand upright, arms by your sides. With palms forward, raise both arms out and to the side and up as far as is comfortable. Then return. Keep shoulders down and arms straight throughout. Breathe out as you raise your arms and breathe in as you lower them.
- **Hips and thighs.** Sit upright and away from the back of the chair. Lift your left leg, with your knee bent, as far as is comfortable. Place foot down gently. Repeat with the right leg.
- **Back extensions.** Lie on your front on the ground. Touch your ears with your fingertips and lift your upper body, keeping the legs on the ground. Lower the upper body again.
- **Abdominals.** Lying on your back, with your knees flexed and hands crossed behind your head to support it, lift your head and torso by contracting your abdominal muscles.



### **Exercises to stretch**

- **Chest.** Sit up straight and away from the back of the chair. Pull your shoulders back and down. Extend your arms out to the side. Gently push your chest forward and up until you feel a stretch across your chest.
- **Upper body twist.** Sit upright with your feet flat on the floor. Cross your arms and reach for your shoulders. Without moving your hips, turn your upper body to the left as far as is comfortable. Repeat turning to the right.
- **Neck rotation.** Sit upright with your shoulders down. Look straight ahead. Slowly turn your head towards your left shoulder as far as is comfortable. Hold for five seconds and return to the starting position. Repeat, turning to the right.
- **Ankle stretch.** Sit upright, hold on to the side of the chair and straighten your left leg, lifting your foot off the floor. With your leg straight and raised, point your toes away from you. Point your toes back towards you.



### **Exercise for balance and stability**

- **Pulling your belly in:** you can do this exercise anywhere, in any position. Pull in your belly and imagine pulling your belly button back toward your spine. Remember to keep your spine straight while you do this don't let your back bend forward. Hold this for about 6 seconds. Remember to keep breathing normally.
- **Floor bridge:** Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Find your neutral spine position, and hold it during the exercise. Pull in your belly, as in the exercise above. Push down with your feet and raise your buttocks up about 5 to 10 centimetres from the floor. Hold for about 6 seconds. Remember to breathe normally. Lower yourself slowly to the floor.

