



Moving Medicine

**Bed-Based Exercise
Programme**

Name:.....

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Introduction

Having a stay in hospital may leave you feeling somewhat weaker than usual and everyday tasks may feel very challenging and tiring. Living a physically active lifestyle helps you to maintain your independence, makes everyday tasks more achievable and reduces the risk of developing further medical problems.

This booklet details a number of exercises that can be carried out whilst you are in bed in hospital, with the support of the healthcare team. There is guidance on how to progress the exercises on the bed, but you might also like to try the 'Exercises in the Chair' programme if and when appropriate. It's also beneficial to continue doing these exercises when you leave hospital.



Why not ask your friends or relatives to help you when they come to visit?

It may be that you weren't particularly active before you came into hospital, but now might be the time to look again at the role activity plays in your life. Remember it's never too late to increase the amount you do and feel the benefits.

Setting goals can be a helpful way of monitoring your progression and ensuring that the exercises are having the desired effect. These goals should be personal to you, and we would encourage you to discuss them with your therapist. If you are interested in exploring this further, we can provide you with a goal-setting booklet that helps guide you through the process.

How to Use This Booklet

You will see a number of symbols throughout the booklet:



Step by step instructions explaining how to perform the exercise



The reason the exercise is important for you



Top tips

How much should I do?

Ideally you should try to practise these exercises every day. You may prefer to practise in smaller activity chunks – for example arm exercises in one session and leg exercises in the next and so on.

How do I know when to stop exercising?

It is normal for anyone who is not used to being physically active to experience some muscle soreness after doing a new activity and this pain will reduce as they become more accustomed to the activity.

Worsening symptoms may be due to increasing activity too quickly – try reducing activity levels a little and then gradually increasing them again more slowly.

Dizziness, sickness or excessive tiredness are signals to stop exercising and wait for symptoms to settle. Warning signs to seek urgent medical attention include blacking out, chest pain, or excessive shortness of breath.



The most important thing is to start small and build up gradually. During the first 2-3 months of increasing physical activity it is sensible to be physically active with other people.

Ankle strength in lying



Lying on your back, point your feet away from you, then back up towards you. Your knees should remain straight.

Do 2 sets of 10

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of sets of 10
- ✓ Do the same exercise when you are sitting in your chair



? To strengthen your ankle muscles to help balance when standing and walking. These exercises are also important for maintaining good circulation in your legs whilst you are in bed.

Thigh strength using a roll



Place a rolled up towel/pillow under the one knee. Pull your toes up towards you and lift your heel by tightening your thigh muscles, keeping your knee down onto the towel. Your heel should lift slightly so the knee is straight.

Do 10 with each leg

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of repetitions until you can do 3 sets of 10 comfortably.
- ✓ Add an ankle weight, and then build up repetitions again



? To strengthen the muscles on the front of your leg – these are important for keeping your legs strong when walking and climbing stairs.

Hip and knee bends



Lie on your back. Start with your legs out straight. Bring your knee up towards your chest as far as is comfortable.

Do 10 with each leg

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of sets until you can do 3 sets of 10 comfortably



? To increase flexibility and strength of the hip and knee which helps with many things such as getting dressed.

Hip muscle strength



Position yourself lying on your back. Start with your leg next to your other leg. Move your leg out to the side then bring it back in again. Keep your foot pointing up towards the ceiling.

Do 10 with each leg

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of repetitions
- ✓ Add a small weight around your ankle
- ✓ Try this when lying on your side, lifting your leg upwards



? To strengthen the muscles on the outside and inside of your hip. These are really important when you need to move your legs sideways, for example when getting in and out of bed.

Bridging



Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet resting on the bed. Squeeze your tummy muscles in, then lift your bottom off the bed. Hold for 5 seconds, then gently lower. Repeat 10 times

Somewhat hard?

- ✓ Ask someone to support your feet
- ✓ Don't try to lift too high
- ✓ Try putting your hands on the bed by your side

Need more?

- ✓ Place your hands across your chest
- ✓ Build up the number of repetitions again



- ? To strengthen the muscles at the back of your hip – these are the big muscles that you use to move around the bed or stand up from a chair. It also helps relieve the pressure on your bottom.

Front of shoulder strength



Lie on your back with your arm by your side. Lift your arm so that it's straight up in the air, keeping your elbow straight. Gently lower back to the bed. Ensure that the movement is slow and controlled.

Do 10 with each arm

Too tricky?

- ✓ Clasp both hands together
- ✓ Keep your elbows slightly bent

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of repetitions to 3 sets of 10
- ✓ Hold a small hand weight



? To strengthen your shoulder muscles to help you with many everyday tasks like washing and drinking a cup of tea

Pillow press



Lie on your back holding a pillow on your chest. Push the pillow up into the air until your elbows are straight, but not locked.

Repeat 10 times

Need more?

- ✓ Increase the number of repetitions
- ✓ Swap the pillow for a small weight



? To strengthen the muscles at the front of your shoulder and chest to help you with many everyday tasks such as moving around the bed.

Produced by the Moving Medicine team as part of the Active Hospital Pilot at Oxford University Hospitals Foundation Trust, aiming to improve levels of activity in hospitals.

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Any comments please email: contactus@movingmedicine.ac.uk



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