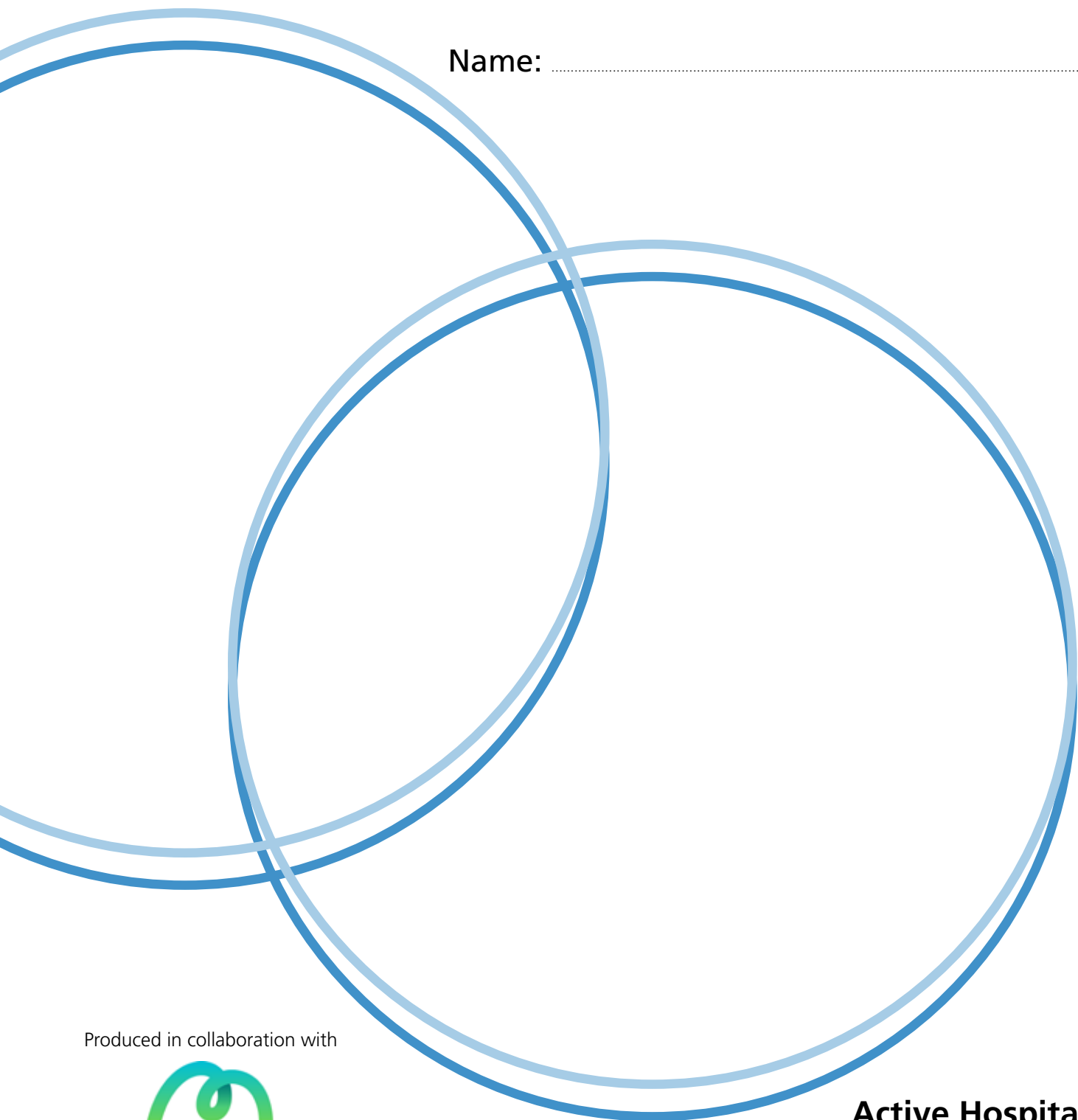


# Bed-Based Exercise Programme

Name: .....



Produced in collaboration with



Active Hospital  
Project



Having a stay in hospital may leave you feeling somewhat weaker than usual and everyday tasks may feel very challenging and tiring. Moving more whilst you're in hospital can help you to maintain your independence and reduce 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 making sure 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 the following 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 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.

## How do I know when to stop exercising?

If you are not used to being physically active, it is normal to experience some muscle soreness after doing a new activity. This discomfort will reduce as you 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 increase 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 your physical activity it may be helpful to be active with other people.***

# Ankle strength when 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.



This helps to strengthen your ankle muscles, improving 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



Lying on your back, place a rolled up towel/pillow under one knee. Pull your toes up towards you and lift your heel by tightening your thigh muscles, keeping your knee down on the towel. Your heel should lift slightly, so your 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.



This helps 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 one 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.



This helps to increase flexibility and strength in your hip and knee, which helps with many things, such as getting dressed.

# Hip muscle strength



Lying on your back, start with your legs together. Move one 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.



This helps 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.

## Too hard?

- ✓ Ask someone to hold 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.



This helps to strengthen the muscles at the back of your hips. These are the big muscles 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 arms by your side. Lift one arm so that it's straight up in the air, keeping your elbow straight. Gently lower it back to the bed. Make sure 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.



This helps to strengthen your shoulder muscles, making many everyday tasks like washing and drinking a cup of tea easier.

# 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.



This helps to strengthen the muscles at the front of your shoulder and chest, helping you with many everyday activities, such as moving around the bed.

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

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If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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