

# **Physical Activity**

**C - Sedentary  
Wheelchair users**

# Small steps to a better life

Be as active as possible, even if you are mostly seated and in a wheelchair. Once you get into regular physical activities – even by starting small at first – your health will benefit in many ways.

## 1. Sitting exercises



### Pressure relief

- Shift your weight left to right continuously for **10 times every 1 hour**. Progress to every **30 minutes**, if possible.



### Shoulder mobility

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Roll your shoulders backwards. Hold for **10 seconds**. Repeat **10 times**.



### Seated march

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Lift your thighs and march, alternating both feet. Repeat **20 times**.

*If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.*



### Knee extension

- Sit in the middle of the chair without leaning against the back rest. Straighten your knee and raise your leg up. Repeat on the other leg. Repeat **20 times**.

*If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.*

## 2. Stretches

Do these exercises as often as possible throughout the day, everyday.



### Chest stretch

- Sit in the middle of the chair. Open both arms sideways. Hold for **10 seconds**, repeat **10 times**. Rotate your torso to each side, hold for **10 seconds** each.



### Back thigh stretch

- Sit at the edge of the chair. Straighten one leg and lean forward (like in the picture). Hold for **10 seconds**, repeat **10 times**.

## 3. Standing time



### Standing tolerance

- If you're able, stand for **2 to 3 minutes**, after every **1 hour of sitting**. You may need to use a railing or ask someone to help.

*If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.*



### Standing endurance

- Try standing for **2 to 3 minutes** without support – but only if you're steady.

*If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair.*

## 4. Other simple exercises



### Stand-sit

- Perform sit-to-stand **5 to 10 times** with support or supervision, **every morning and night.**

*If possible, it is better to perform this exercise on a more stable chair instead of a wheelchair*

Log on to [healthhub.sg](http://healthhub.sg) and watch the 7 sit-down exercises video, "You can get moving".

## Pain management

- You should not feel any pain – just very minimal ache – when doing these exercises.
- Pain may be due to various reasons, like weak muscles due to a sedentary lifestyle, or tight muscles due to repetitive work.
- Exercise can help to relieve pain. However, if you have difficulty or pain with these exercises, seek help from an exercise professional or physiotherapist.

### Check with your doctor if

- Your general health is good enough to undertake more strenuous exercise.
- You develop giddiness, unusual breathlessness, chest tightness or pain during these exercises.

### Remember

- You need to progress your exercises gradually.
- You may need professional help from a physiotherapist if you are unsure of your exercises and/or need progression.
- Supervised standing exercises may benefit you. Consult your doctor and physiotherapist.