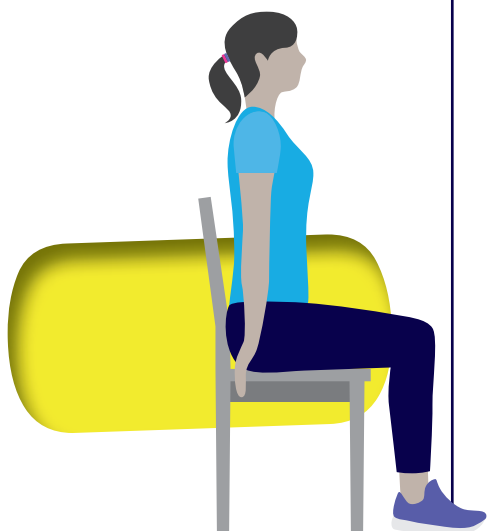


HOW TO STAY ACTIVE AND EXERCISE AT HOME

Staying active and exercising is important for our physical and mental wellbeing. It's especially good for you if you have Parkinson's.

Here, we've put together some of the best exercises to help you stay active at home when you have Parkinson's.



Can I do all of the exercises?

If you're fit and healthy and your Parkinson's symptoms are mild, aim for the standing exercises. Start gently before easing into a more vigorous pace.

If you've had Parkinson's a long time, or your symptoms are more complex, do the seated exercises to keep you limber and active.

If you have any underlying health conditions (eg heart problems, breathing problems, diabetes, joint problems), you should contact your GP before starting any new exercises.

How do I get started?

Before you begin any specific exercise, make sure your living space is safe and comfortable for the activity.

- » Move loose rugs and unnecessary furniture to clear enough space.
- » Make sure your room is at a comfortable temperature – don't exercise in a room that's too hot. Open a window if you need to.

- » Check that your shoes and any equipment you're using are in a good condition and right for the activity.
- » Remember to keep any important medication or inhalers close by.
- » Have a phone or mobile nearby in case of an emergency.
- » Don't forget to drink water. You can lose around one and a half litres of fluid for every hour of vigorous exercise, so drink water before, during and after a session.

It's also important to prepare your body by doing a warm-up. If you're able to, a good way to start is by marching on the spot. This will make you breathe faster and more deeply, make your body feel warmer, and make you break into a mild sweat. Hold on to a steady chair if you need to.

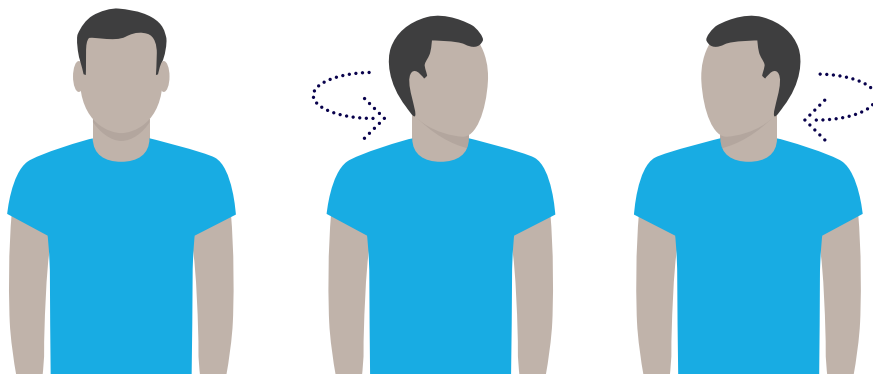
You can also do seated marching to get warmed up. Make sure to get your arms moving as well as your legs.

STRETCHES

Start your day off with these to help you loosen up. Anyone with Parkinson's can give them a go.

SEATED NECK ROTATIONS

These will help you keep your neck moving and stop it from stiffening.



- » Sit in a firm chair, shoulders pushed downward, and looking straight ahead.
- » Slowly turn your head towards your left shoulder. Hold for five seconds before returning to the starting position.
- » Repeat on the right.
- » Do three rotations on each side.

SEATED ARM STRETCHES

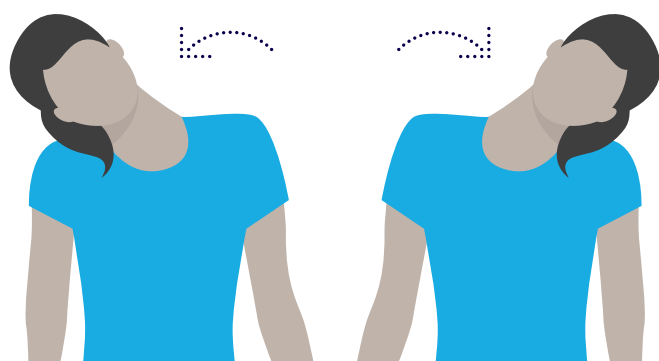
These will help you stretch your arms as well as your chest and back.

- » Start with your arms by your side.
- » Raise your arms above your head, with elbows straight and hands about shoulder-width apart.
- » Hold this position for five seconds before you relax by bringing your arms down.
- » Repeat three times.



SEATED NECK BENDS

Another good one for loosening tight neck muscles.



- » Start in the same position as the 'seated neck rotations' exercise.
- » Slowly tilt your head to the right, keeping both shoulders pushed down. Hold the position for five seconds before returning to the starting position.
- » Repeat on the opposite side.
- » Do three bends on each side.

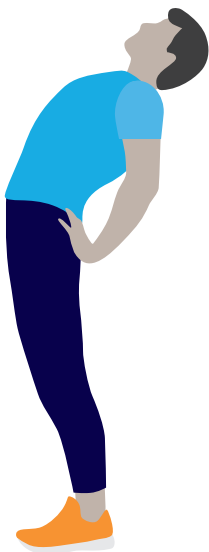
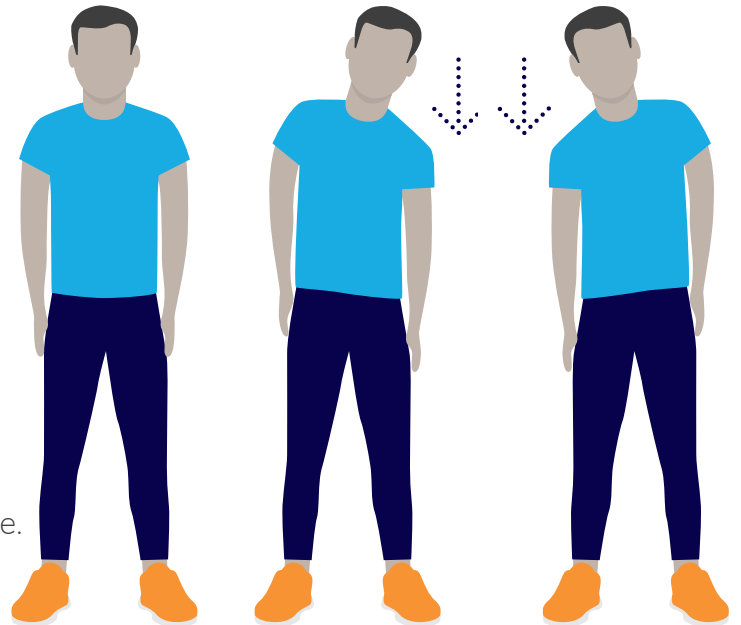
STANDING STRETCHES

For these, if you're a little unsure of your balance, hold on to a firm surface or stand next to the wall if necessary. If you can't do them safely when standing, you can do the same exercise while sitting on a firm chair.

SIDEWAYS BENDS

These are good for loosening the muscles on the side of your body.

- » Stand upright with your feet hip-width apart and arms by your sides.
- » Slide your left arm down your side as far as is comfortable, until you feel a stretch on the opposite side. Hold the stretch for five seconds before you bring your body upright again.
- » Repeat with your right arm down your right side.
- » Do three reaches down each side.



BODY ARCHES

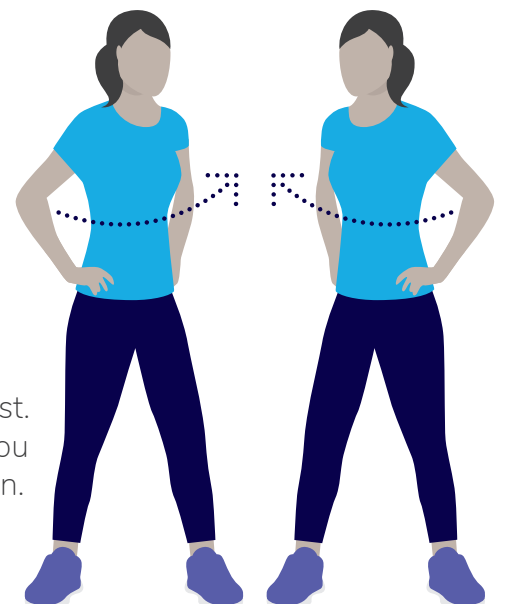
These are a really nice way to stretch the spine and come out of a stooped sitting position.

- » Start in the same position as the 'sideways bends', but place your hands (or one hand) on to the small of your back (where your spine curves inwards).
- » Slowly arch your spine backwards, pull your shoulders back and lift your head – do NOT tip it backwards.
- » Hold for five seconds while taking a deep breath in, then breathe out as you return to the starting position.
- » Do three arches.

BODY TWISTS

These will keep your middle moving, working your abdominal as well as your back muscles.

- » Start in the same position as the 'sideways bends' exercise, but place your hands on your hips, or fold your arms across your chest.
- » Slowly turn your head and shoulders as far round to the left as you can. Hold for five seconds before returning to the starting position.
- » Repeat on the right.
- » Do three rotations on each side.



SOFA EXERCISES

For these you will need a stopwatch, or a clock with a second hand, as you do each exercise for 30 seconds. Rest for one minute between each exercise. Once you feel confident doing them, repeat the whole set of exercises with rests in between.

SOFA DIPS

These will help build strength in your arms and torso.

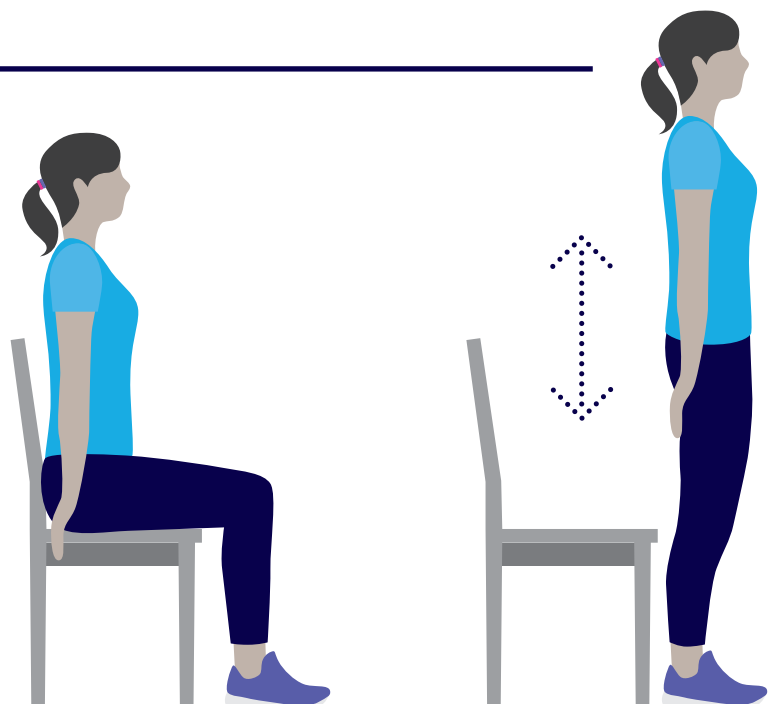


- » Sit on the edge of the sofa and grip the edge next to your thighs. Your legs should be semi-straight, and your feet placed hip-width apart with the heels touching the ground. Look straight ahead with your chin up.
- » Press your palms down on the sofa to lift your body up, then move forwards far enough that your bottom is off the edge of the chair.
- » Lower yourself using your arms.
- » Slowly push yourself up and back to the start position and repeat.

SOFA/CHAIR SQUATS

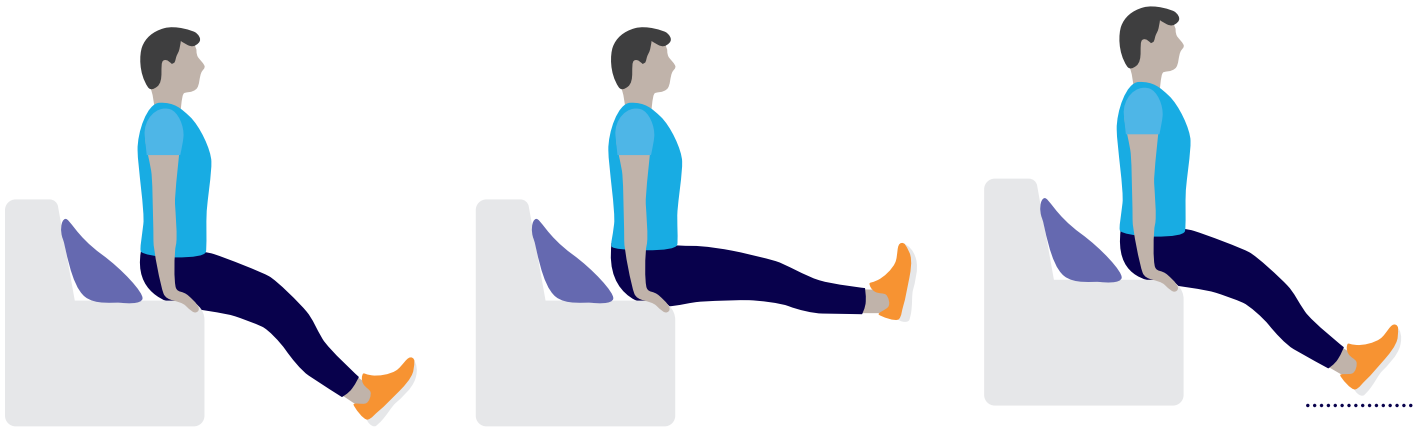
A great exercise for leg strength and mobility.

- » Sit upright, and move towards the front of the sofa with your bottom still fully on the seat.
- » Push up into a standing position, using an aid for balance if necessary.
- » Slowly lean forwards, to sit back down in a controlled manner.



LEG RAISES

These will also improve leg strength and stability when on your feet.



- » Sit towards the front of the sofa. Place your hands either side of you, and your feet together on the floor.
- » Lift your legs from your knee as high as possible until they are parallel with your hips. Do one leg at a time if this is easier.
- » Slowly lower your legs until your feet are five centimetres (two inches) from the floor and repeat. To make it easier, allow your feet to touch the floor.

SOFA CLIMBERS

These will get your heart pumping and are great for flexibility.



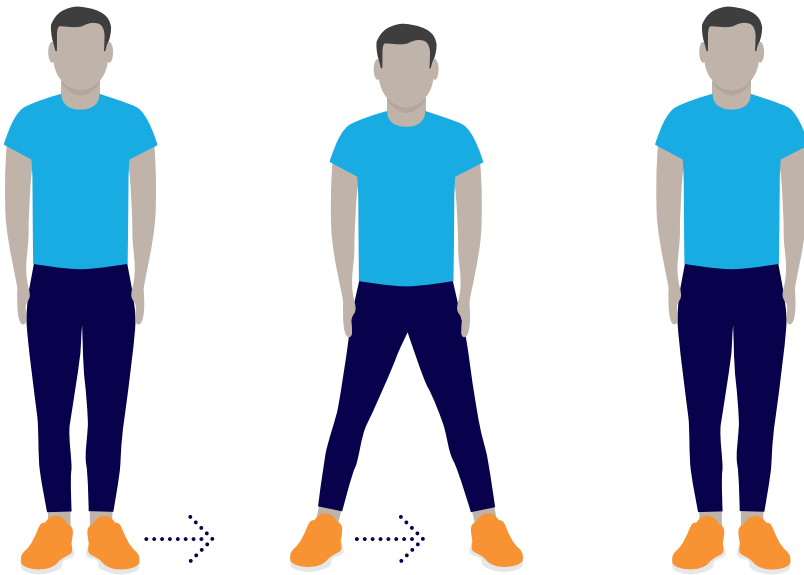
- » Place your hands on the sofa, then straighten your legs straight behind so that you're at an angle against the sofa.
- » Slowly lift your knee towards your chest in a straight line, then lower it back down. Alternate between legs.
- » To work your oblique muscles (the muscles on the side of your abdomen), lift your leg towards your opposite elbow in a slow and controlled manner.

BALANCE EXERCISES

These exercises will work the muscles that support you as you move, keeping you steady on your feet.

SIDEWAYS WALKING

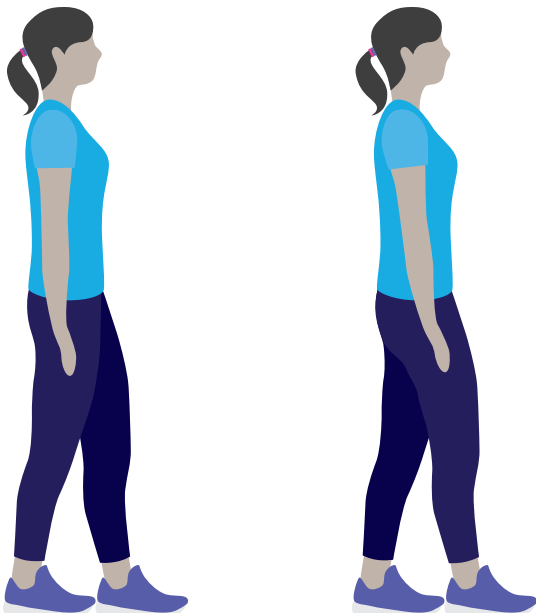
This is great for working the outer hip and thigh muscles and for widening your steps.



- » Stand with your feet together. Take a large step sideways, moving one foot out to the side, and then bring your other foot in.
- » Avoid dropping your hips as you step.
- » If you have space, perform five steps from one side of the room to the other.
- » Repeat this 10 times.

HEEL-TO-TOE WALK

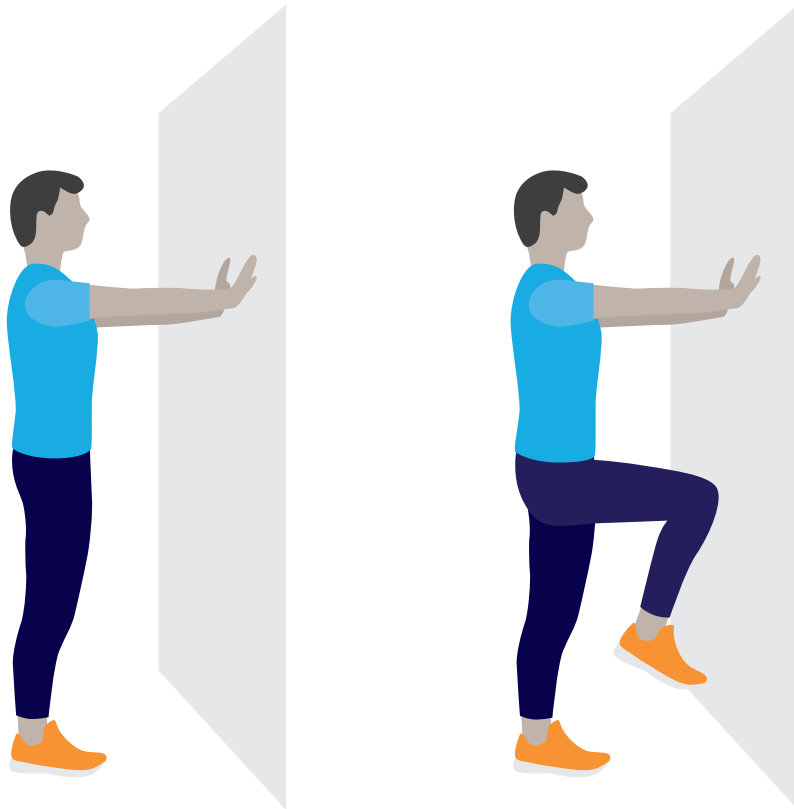
This exercise is challenging – make sure you do it using a wall or chair at the beginning.



- » Stand upright and place your right foot on the floor directly in front of your left toes. Hold the back of a sturdy chair for stability or use a wall for balance until you get the position right.
- » When ready, let go of the supporting surface and then step forward, placing your left foot on the floor directly in front of your right toes.
- » Make sure you keep looking forward at all times, and use the supporting surface to keep you steady if necessary.
- » Try to perform at least five steps. As you progress, move away from the wall, or place your hands on your hips.

ONE LEG STAND

Doing this exercise will help you when you end up standing for a slightly longer period on just one foot. This might include climbing stairs, stepping on or off curbs, or over puddles.

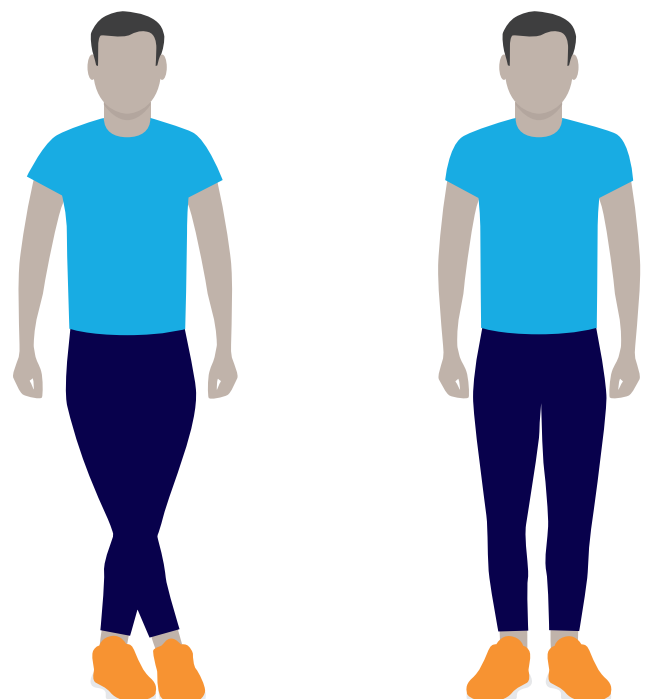


- » Stand facing the wall, with arms outstretched and your fingertips touching the wall.
- » Lift your left leg, keeping your hips level and a slight bend in your opposite leg.
- » Gently place your foot back on the floor. Hold the lift for five to 10 seconds and perform three on each side.
- » To make this harder, move away from the wall and extend your arms in front of you.

GRAPEVINE

This exercise combines coordination and steadiness.

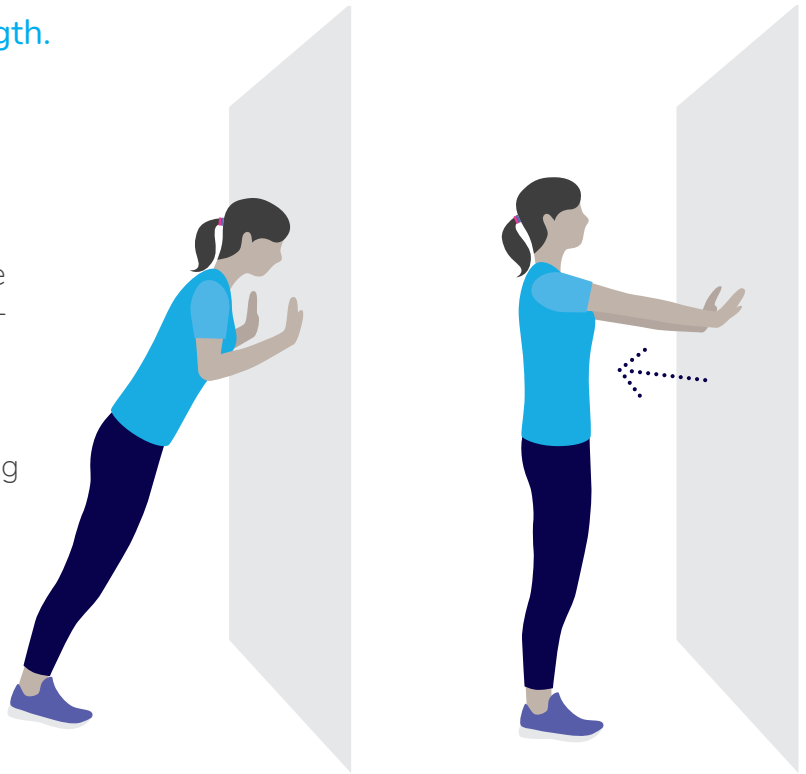
- » Start by crossing your right foot over your left.
- » Bring your left foot to join it. Attempt five cross steps on each side.
- » If necessary, put your fingers against a wall for stability. The smaller the step, the more you work on your balance.



WALL PUSH-UPS

These build arm and upper body strength.

- » Stand in front of a wall, just over an arm's length away, with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- » Bring your hands up to shoulder height. Leaning forward on extended arms, place your hands flat on the wall, also shoulder-width apart.
- » Breathe in and bend your elbows, lowering the body toward the wall. During this movement, focus on tightening your muscles around your middle and buttocks to maintain a strong, straight body position.
- » Pause for one second and then, as you breathe out, push off the wall with your arms, keeping the hands on the wall.
- » Keep your feet flat on the floor. If your heels come up off the floor, move slightly closer to the wall.



DAILY TOP TIPS

Here are our top tips for being active at home. Finding something that's fun and fits in with your life can help strengthen muscles, increase happiness levels and improve balance and posture. Using movement and physical activity is a great way of breaking up your day and keeping fit.



Do heel raises while doing the dishes.



Hang the washing out rather than using a tumble dryer.



Stand up to take phone calls or text.



Dance while getting dressed, making a drink or meal.



Do side lunges while brushing your teeth.



Use tins or bottles as weights to do bicep curls or shoulder presses.