

Regular feature: **Exercise**

Sarah Russell - Clinical Exercise Specialist

Sarah Russell MSc is a Clinical Exercise Specialist and Clinical Pilates Teacher, with a master's degree in Sport Science. She has had an ileostomy since 2010. In each issue, Sarah will be available to answer questions surrounding fitness and exercise through the IA Journal. If you have a question that you'd like to put to Sarah for an answer, please send it to: editor@iajournal.co.uk



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Gentle chair exercise programme

This gentle chair-based exercise session is ideal if you have any mobility issues, are recovering from surgery, going through cancer treatment, feeling a little frail or just want something simple, safe and easy to do at home to get you moving.

You can do this workout in the privacy and safety of your own home. It will mostly work on your balance and muscle strength and a little cardiovascular fitness – and it'll just feel great to get moving and build some confidence in your body.

There are many benefits of doing some exercise – including reducing risk of diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer – but we know from research that the majority of people who live with stomas are simply not active enough for good health.

Most people find it difficult to find the time, motivation and energy to exercise regularly, and when we add the challenges of living with a stoma (and possibly also a hernia) on top, it can make it feel impossible to consider doing any exercise at all. So, it's not surprising that

people are turned off or feel it's not for them. But I'd encourage you to open your mind and give it a go.

This super-safe gentle exercise programme could be just the starting point to get you moving again and feeling more confident.

World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations are that we aim to do 150 minutes of exercise per week which includes some strength exercises to help build muscle.

How soon after surgery can I do this? Can I do it if I have a hernia?

If you're more than 4-6 weeks post-stoma surgery and are recovering well then you should be fine to give this a go. It's also safe for people who have a hernia. Start with light weights/bottles or cans to begin with.

How long will it take? And how often should I do it?

If you do all the exercises in this programme, it should take 15-20 minutes. Aim to do it 2-3

times per week alongside other activities such as walking, if you're able. But you don't have to do it all. Just pick the exercises which feel right for you.

What equipment do I need?

- A hardback chair (typical dining type chair)
- Some hand weights, cans or bottles (500ml water bottles or 400g food cans would be fine to start with)
- A stopwatch or timer on your phone
- Some tunes to keep you motivated
- A drink

Let's get started:

Stand with your chair next to you for balance. Have all your equipment ready near you.

Warm up (can be done standing or sitting) – use the chair to hold on to for balance if you're unsteady

1. Shoulder rolls (pic 1)
2. Marching on the spot (no pic)
3. Heel digs (pic 2)
4. Stand on one leg for 30 seconds (do each leg). (Hold on to something for balance if you need it, but gradually reduce your reliance on it) (pic 3)

Main exercises

- There are 7 exercises. 3 upper body and 3 lower body and 1 core exercise.
- Do each exercise repeatedly for a set time (30,60 or 90 seconds), then rest for 10-20 seconds and move onto the next exercise. You can repeat the whole set, then start from the beginning again if you wish, up to 20 minutes total.
- Choose how long you set your timer for each exercise – beginner level 30

seconds, progressive level 60 seconds – advanced level 90 seconds.

- Take your time to pace each exercise, the goal is to complete the whole set and not run out of steam.
- You're in charge of how much or how little you do. Something is always better than nothing.
- You don't have to do everything – if anything hurts or makes knee, shoulder or hip pain worse, then try the 'easier version', substitute something else in its place or just skip it altogether.
- Try to find a steady consistent pace through the set time, so that you feel strong at the end.

1. Sit stand (pics 4 & 5)

Sit in a chair – feet flat on floor – exhale as you stand up – pause – sit down – repeat

Make it easier – slow the pace, use a second chair for support

Make it harder – add weights or increase the pace

2. Arm rowing (pic 6)

Hold a weight/can/bottle in one hand – lean over – support weight on chair – keep body still – row arm to waist and lower – repeat on same side.

Change sides and do the set on the other arm

Audio Journal on USB

The IA Journal is available on a USB key free of charge for visually impaired members. For more details contact the Journal Editor.



Pic 1.



Pic 2.



Pic 3.



Pic 4.



Pic 5.



Pic 6.



Pic 7.



Pic 8.



Pic 9.



Pic 10.



Pic 11.

Make it easier – sit and use a Theraband to row

Make it harder – use a heavier weight or a bag of cans/bottles to increase the resistance

3. Heel raises (pic 7)

Make it easier – alternate walking, holding onto chair

Make it harder – add weights

4. Arm curls (pic 8)

Hold a weight/can/bottle in each hand – bend elbows and bring hands to shoulders – lower to starting point – repeat

Make it easier – sit down and alternate arms

Make it harder – use heavier weights

5. Side-step lunges (pic 9)

Hold onto back of chair – step out to one side – bend standing leg – swap sides – alternate side to side

Make it easier – toe taps

Make it harder – add weight, lunge deeper

6. Shoulder press (pic 10)

Sit – hold weights/can/bottles in hands and push hand overhead towards ceiling – alternate arms – swap to other side. Repeat from side to side. Keep neck and shoulders relaxed

Make it easier – upright rows

Make it harder – stand and use heavier weights

7. Seated knee lifts for core (pic 11)

Sit in chair – tighten up lower abdominal muscles to create a tight band – imagine pulling

hip bones together – breathe! Don't hold breath. Lift one foot approx. 2" off the floor – hold for a second – lower and swap to other side. Avoid rocking from side to side – keep torso stiff and straight. Keep core muscles tight throughout.

Repeat the whole circuit through as many times as you like up to a maximum of 20 minutes.

Then repeat the 'warm up' as your cool down. And you're done! Good work.

Disclaimer

This article does not constitute medical advice, it is for information purposes only. It does not replace individual advice given to you by your doctor or other healthcare professional.

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