

EXERCISES FOR WHEELCHAIR BOUND ELDERLY

Shoulder retractions



1. Sit up straight and a bit forward, and tighten your abdominal muscles for back support.
2. Hold your arms out in front of you with your elbows bent 90 degrees. Your hands are facing down. It feels a bit like grabbing bicycle handlebars.
3. Thrust your arms out in front of you, as far as they'll go without locking the elbows.
4. Now pull your elbows back to a point slightly behind you and squeeze your shoulder blades together.
5. Hold the squeezed position for 5 seconds. Endeavor to squeeze evenly rather than favor one shoulder blade over the other. If you like, increase the intensity during those 5 (or even 10) seconds.
6. Relax the shoulder blades and return to the outstretched position.
7. Do about 10 repetitions.

Tummy Twist



1. Sit up straight in your wheelchair.
2. Either cross your arms in front, or grip the left armrest and reach your right arm to the bottom of the chair
3. Draw your belly toward your spine to help you keep the lower body still.
4. Twist at the waist and rotate your upper torso to the left. Go as far as is comfortable. Bring your head along with your body so you're looking left.
5. Hold for a second or two and return to the center.
6. Repeat on the right. Change your hand positions if necessary
7. Repeat 5-10 times on each side.

Seated Side Stretch



1. Sit straight in your chair.
2. Inhale and reach your right arm overhead with the palm facing in.
3. Bring your arm overhead and slowly lean the arm and torso as far as is comfortable to the left.
4. Hold it for a second or two.
5. Exhale, return to center and lower the arm.
6. Do 5-10 reps on each side.



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Toe Taps

1. Tighten your abdominal muscles.
2. Tilt your toes to the ceiling, keeping your heels on the floor.
3. Repeat 15-25 times.

If that's not hard enough for you, there are lots of variations.

1. Raise one leg, as high as you can, straight out in front if you can. Toe-tap the foot that's still on the floor.
2. While your toes are raised, swivel them left and right, keeping your knees as motionless as possible.
3. Straighten your knee and slide your foot away from the chair, as far as you can while still keeping it flat on the floor. Then do the taps.



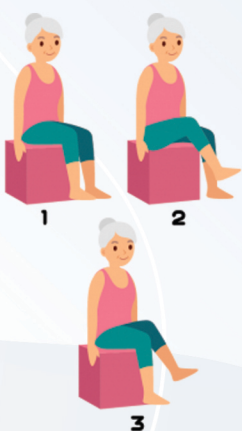
Seated Feet Lift

1. Sit up straight.
2. Grab the front of the chair seat with both hands, just outside your knees.
3. Tighten your abs.
4. Keeping your knees bent, lift your feet as high as you can. If that's only a few inches, that's fine.
5. Hold them for a second or two then lower.
6. Repeat 10-20 times.



Knee Lifts

1. Sit up straight and tighten your abs.
2. Keeping the knee bent, raise your right leg as high as you can.
3. Lower it, then repeat with the left leg.
4. Repeat about 10 times on each side.





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Wheelchair Crunches

1. Sit up with your knees at 90 degrees and your feet flat on the floor. This can be done either with your back against the chair or sitting out from the back. In either case your back should be straight.
2. Fold your arms across your chest.
3. Hinge from your hips and bend forward. Your elbows are aiming toward your knees, but go only as far as you can.
4. Keep your back straight, all the way from the base through the neck. The bend is at the hips.
5. Do 1-2 sets of 15-20 reps.



Chest Press

1. Wrap the band around the back of your wheelchair and grab an end in each hand.
2. Hold your arms at shoulder level with your bent elbows against your rib cage.
3. Gradually extend your arms in front of you. Go as far as you can, but don't lock your elbows.
4. Hold for a second or two then return to start.
5. Do 1-2 sets of 10-15 reps.



Chest Ball Squeeze

1. Sit up straight and engage the abdominal muscles.
2. Hold the ball about a foot in front of your chest with one hand on each side.
3. Squeeze the ball.
4. Continue to squeeze while you extend your arms, just short of the point where your elbows lock.
5. Keep the rest of your body motionless.
6. Pull the ball back to your chest and relax the squeeze.
7. Repeat about 10 times.



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Seated Presses

1. Sit straight in your chair.
2. Hold the dumbbells just above your shoulder with your wrists facing forward. Your forearms and elbows should point straight down toward the floor.
3. Take a deep breath
4. Exhale while you extend your arms overhead.
5. Inhale as you return to start position.
6. Do 1-2 set or 1-15 reps.