



ActiveWellness



Strength for Caring Feedback!

Thank you for the 1-2-3 stretch exercises in ActiveWellness. I enjoy doing them, and know they are helping my muscles!

JOAN LEONARD, HENDERSON

After caring for my husband for many years, I am now slowly (at 83 years) trying to repair my own health and energies. It is most important for carers to also care for themselves.

MRS H M CARR, WAITAKERE

Thank you for sending me the yellow exercise band and instructions. I do feel some improvement in strength and balance so far. I realise that as the weeks go by there will be further progress. Also I enjoy attending Kath Schahill's class, which I learned about in your magazine. We have used the bands in class too. They are a great group of senior citizens, and I enjoy their company. I have a lot of catching up to do if I'm to keep pace with them! Kath watches to see that we don't overdo it, and advises us well.

MARY C, PAPATOETOE

Soon you'll be able to follow the Strength for Caring programme with Wayne Halkyard on YouTube or DVD! Meanwhile, you can hear Wayne talk about exercise, nutrition, and training at www.familycareradio.net.nz

Order our easy fitness programme for family carers and those with health and disability needs!

Since launching our 15 minute *Strength for Caring* programme in 2008, Carers NZ has distributed hundreds of exercise bands, and received dozens of calls and letters from those who have built strength by following the programme.

Strength for Caring is an outcome of the Government's Carers' Strategy and its first five year Action Plan.

In this issue of *Family Care*, we are reprinting the programme for readers who may not have seen it.

To follow the programme, purchase an exercise band at your local sports store, or we can provide one for \$5.

To order a band, phone (0800) 777 797, post your request to PO Box 133, Mangonui, Far North 0442, or email sara@carers.net.nz

Have you used the programme and found it helpful? Share your story with other readers! We would love to hear from you.

If you or someone in your family has a fall or is injured, get treatment as soon as possible. Don't wait until you feel better, as this can make an injury worse, and your recovery might take longer. Getting ACC cover is simple: your doctor, physiotherapist, or other treatment provider will submit an ACC claim for you. To learn about making an ACC claim, visit www.acc.co.nz or phone (0800) 101 996.



Strength for Caring

Many family carers receive strains, sprains and other injuries as a result of their caring role. Or, you may be a 'self carer' who wants to build strength to stay well. By doing some simple exercises just twice a week, you can quickly strengthen the muscles used for common caring tasks like lifting, transferring, and handling equipment. Carers NZ and national bodybuilding champion Wayne Halkyard have designed our 15 minute Strength for Caring routine to help you guard against injury ... and feel better overall!

The *Strength for Caring* programme involves seven basic exercises using a stretchy, inexpensive exercise band or cord.

Try this routine just twice a week initially, and do more 'sets' as you get stronger.

"It's hard to believe that 15 minutes of 'resistance training' a few times a week can make a big difference to strength and wellbeing," says Wayne.

"But I promise that if you give these exercises a try, your strength will improve within three weeks, and you will look and feel better."

Suitable for all ages and fitness levels, the exercises target the

body's major muscle groups, and nearly all of the muscles used for weight-bearing, lifting, moving objects, pushing, and rolling ... movements familiar to carers supporting someone who needs help to do these things.

Wayne says the exercises will also help carers to relax, easing the muscle tension that can contribute to care-related injuries.

If you have access to the Internet, you can hear Wayne's exercise, wellbeing and nutrition suggestions at Family Care Radio!

Wayne works with many disabled and elderly clients in the Far North, as well as people regaining strength after surgery, injuries, or years of inactivity.

We congratulate Wayne for his national bodybuilding victories!

Titles held by Wayne have included Masters Mens 40 to 50 Champion for the South Pacific Natural Physiques Association, and the same title for the New Zealand Federation Bodybuilders Association.



www.familycareradio.net.nz



Exercise bands and cords are available at retail stores and sports shops. Bands come in different tensions: very stretchy for beginners, to very tight (harder to stretch) for those who exercise regularly and are quite fit. Costs range from a few dollars for exercise bands to \$40 or more for high quality cords sold at sports stores. You can buy a band to use with this programme for just \$5. Request yours by writing to PO Box 133, Mangonui, Far North 0442 or phone 0800 777 797.

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK, FOTOLIA

Create a free walking, running or cycling programme at www.activesmart.co.nz!

7 Exercises, 15 Minutes!

Try our easy strength-building programme twice a week ... you'll soon notice a difference.

Do 12 repetitions of each exercise. Face forward and keep your back straight. Tighten your tummy muscles or 'abs' as you start each exercise. Keep movements smooth. After a few weeks you may want to do the programme more often, or complete more 'sets' of the exercises. I've used an exercise cord with handles, but the inexpensive stretchy bands work just as well.



1 DEAD LIFT
Breathe in; exhale while standing upright. Keep arms straight. Strengthens the thigh, back, ab and shoulder muscles, used when transferring from low to higher or upright positions.



4 HORIZONTAL EXTENSIONS
Keep arms slightly bent. Breathe in, straightening arms out to sides. Keep arms straight, breathing out while returning to original position. Strengthens upper back muscles, rear shoulders and abs: muscles used when pulling weight or objects towards you.



2 BENT ROWS
Breathe in, and smoothly pull arms to bent elbow position. Exhale while returning to starting position. Strengthens the back, bicep, shoulder and ab muscles, used when pulling weight towards you.



5 LATERAL RAISES
Breathe in as you raise cord to shoulder height, keeping arm slightly bent at elbow. Breathe out while returning to starting position. Strengthens the outer shoulder, neck and ab muscles, all used for upward lifting movements.

Swap arms for exercises 5, 6 and 7... use your weaker side first.



3 BICEP CURLS
Breathe in as you pull arms up to bent elbow position. Breathe out while returning to starting position. Strengthens biceps and abs, the muscles used for all lifting and transferring.



6 FRONT RAISES
Breathe in while pulling cord or band to head level. Keep arms slightly bent. Exhale while returning to starting position. Strengthens front shoulders, abs, and forearms: muscles used to transfer weight from lower to higher positions.



7 ONE ARMED CHEST PRESS

Exhale while pushing cord until your arm is straight. Breathe in while returning to starting position. Strengthens the chest, front shoulder, ab and tricep muscles, used for pushing and rolling movements.

home for life!

Age Concern's new information sheet gives suggestions to help a house become a *Home for Life*. Here are tips from the information sheet, or you can view more suggestions at www.ageconcern.org.nz

Most people want to remain in their homes for as long as they can. Often the home itself can enable us to live safely and independently right into very old age. Here are ideas for those planning home modifications or maintenance ... or shifting to a new home!



Access

Think ahead and consider how you can improve access to your home (for example, having hand rails, and a ramp rather than steps).

Section + garden

Keep your section manageable. One idea is to share the work (and garden produce) with friends, family, or neighbours.

Maintenance

Can you plan future needs in advance, and spread the cost of large maintenance jobs over time so they do not become a burden later?

Bathroom + shower

Plan for future safety and convenience if you intend to re-do a bathroom or a shower. A level entrance 'wet area' shower can improve access and safety at all ages.

Fittings

Put sockets, switches, and cupboards at a convenient height.

Sleeping space

Allow for a downstairs room to become a bedroom if needed.

Shifting

Consider whether it would be helpful to live near to the people, activities, and facilities that are important to you.

Local transport

Would you have access to good local public transport if you were unable to drive a car?

Parks + gardens

If you enjoy walking, you'll want a pleasant place to walk nearby.

Family issues

If you want to move nearer to family, check that everybody's expectations have been discussed so there are no surprises later.

Companionship

If you are on your own, but lonely, alternative living arrangements are worth thinking about, such as 'flattening' with friends, an Abbeyfields House, kaumatua housing, or other purpose-built accommodation.

Guests

Will you need sufficient space in your house or unit for friends, family, or supporters to stay, and for your hobbies and interests?

Disabilities

Check out whether your house or unit will be suitable if someone develops mobility needs or disabilities.

Room with a view

It can be an asset to have an interesting outlook, for example a street, park, or playground.

Advice

If signing contracts for new accommodation, seek legal and financial advice.

Support

Join local groups such as Age Concern to stay informed, and for companionship.

'self care' ideas

Advice from Mt Maunganui reader Betty Cole for those living alone or managing their own health and disability needs.

Medical alarms

An alarm is a must if you need support or are prone to falls. Have a good rapport with your GP, who can provide advice about choosing and funding your alarm. Ask friends and others who have alarms for advice, too. There are different kinds, and the services differ, so be informed.

Tall neighbours!

These are handy for changing light bulbs and smoke alarm batteries. Trying to do these things can be dangerous for elderly people and those who aren't steady on their feet.

In the bedroom

Get into bed as near as possible to the pillows, which will save having to heave yourself up the bed. If your bedding is too heavy, wear warmer pyjamas or nightdresses so you can use lighter duvets or blankets (the bed will then be easier to make each day too). If incontinence is a problem, a commode by the bed is useful, but make sure you are capable of emptying and cleaning it, or have assistance to do so.

In the bathroom

This room can be made safer and more comfortable for 'self carers'. Rails in the shower and near the toilet are essential. A sturdy plastic chair with arms makes an economical shower chair; stand it on a non-slip bath mat. If there is room, it is handy to have a chair or stool to sit on while dressing or brushing teeth. Hooks on the back of bathroom doors will keep the floor and bench surfaces free of clothes and dressing gowns.

In the kitchen

Make good use of the sink! Have your electric jug or kettle nearby, and place your cup or teapot into the sink so you can pour downwards. When beating or mixing, put the bowl into the sink so you can work with a downward motion. Use your dishwasher, which is much easier than standing at the sink to wash dishes.

In the laundry

Use appropriate cycles on the washing machine to avoid hand washing. Use the clothes drier; it's better to pay for power than to fall over at the clothesline! Fold linens and place them at the bottom of the pile in your linen cupboard to avoid ironing. Hanging clothes instead of folding them away in drawers can also reduce the need for ironing.

Cleaning

Use a handheld vacuum cleaner (dust buster) and a carpet sweeper to avoid frequent use of a heavy machine. Rails and ramps next to or over outdoor steps are a must for 'loners', to prevent slips and injuries.

Jewellery

If you like to dress up, jewellery can literally be a pain. You can buy necklaces with magnets instead of fiddly clasps, or 'clever clasps' with magnetic catches that attach easily to jewellery ... or, have your favourite pieces adapted. Talk to your local jeweller or stockists about this service. Alternatively, ask someone to do up your jewellery before you go out and, if they are dropping you off at the end of your outing, ask them to undo the clasps before they depart!



"I work at a public hospital in elderly rehabilitation, volunteer at a respite day care centre, and am myself a 'self carer'. Thinking ahead can save energy and time, and help to prevent injuries."