MOVE!

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR VETERANS

Session 12
(Pump Up Your Physical Activity!)

New Mexico Va health care System

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- Weight Management Team Members:
  - MOVE! Coordinator, Registered Dietitian
    - Extension 4407 or 5395
  - New Mexico VA: (505) 265-1711, Extension 4407
    - Please call the MOVE! Coordinator if late or cannot make it to class.
  - Brain Kersh, PHD – Clinical Psychologist
    - Extension 1043
  - Claudia Segura, DPT – Physical Therapist
    - Extension 5280

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Progressive Exercise Program

It may be challenging to perform certain activities when beginning an exercise program. Here are some ways you can start slowly, and progress to get the most out of your program. When exercises seem easy, think of new ways to make them more challenging. For example, add more weight or repetitions, stand instead of sit, or challenge your balance by placing feet tandem (one in front of the other) instead of a side-by-side stance. Here are some exercises that demonstrate where to start (A) and how to progress (B) when they feel too easy.

Bicep: Bicep Curl (front of upper arm)

A. Start by sitting tall, on the edge of your chair.

- With light weight, palm facing upward, curl the weight to the shoulders.
- Release to bring arms back to the side of the thighs.
- Repeat.

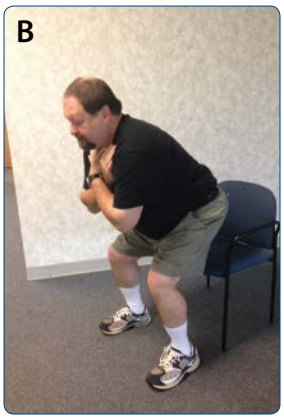
B. Standing tall, feet hip-distance apart, perform a basic bicep curl as described above.

Quadriceps: Squat (front of thigh)

A. Start by sitting tall, on the edge of your seat, hands rested on thighs.

- Press hands into thighs while moving to a standing position.
- Slowly return to a seated position with the assistance of hands on thighs.
- Remember to keep knees behind the toes when sitting.

B. The same activity as described above, but cross your arms over your chest.



Tricep: Tricep Extension (back of upper arm)

A. With feet hip-distance apart, knees slightly bent, hinge forward resting left arm on the chair.

- Right elbow begins at a 90-degree angle, and extends to a 180-degree angle.
- Return to starting position. Repeat on the right side.

B. Place hands on the edge of a sturdy chair.

- Fingers pointing forward, knees at a 90-degree angle.
- Slowly, bend elbows backward, nearing 90 degrees.
- Return to straight elbows and repeat. Avoid using the legs.

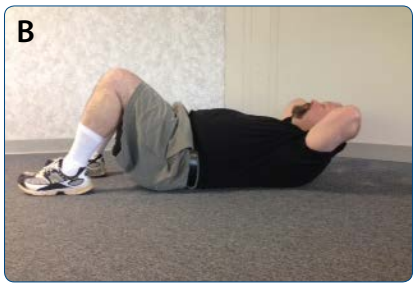
Abdominals: Crunch (stomach/six pack muscles)

A. Lay flat on the ground with knees bent.

- Keep your back flat on the ground or mat.
- Gently, slide fingers toward the heels while tightening the abdominals, raising the head and neck off the ground.
- Return to starting position and repeat.

B. Start in the same position as above.

- This time, hands behind head, only for support.
- Avoid "crunching the neck."
- Raise chin to the ceiling as the head and neck leave the ground.
- Return to starting position and repeat.



Hamstring: Hamstring Curl and Bridge (back of thigh)

A. Stand tall with feet hip-distance apart, holding onto a chair for support.

- With a flexed foot, bend the knee, bringing the heel to the gluteus (bottom).
- Return to starting position, repeat and switch to the other side.

B. Lay flat on the ground, knees bent.

- Tighten you abdominals and bottom as you push into your heels and raise your hips to the ceiling, like a bridge.
- Gently roll back down to the ground to the starting position.
- Repeat.

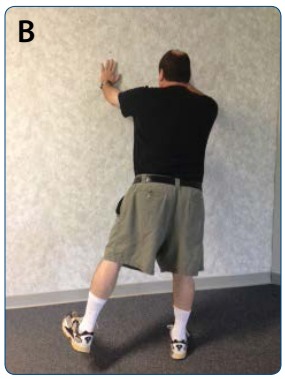
Abductor and Adductor: Leg Lifts (inner and outer thigh)

A. Sitting in a chair, knees bent to 90 degrees, place back of the hand on the inside of the knees.

- While squeezing the legs together, resist by pressing the back of your hands outward.
- Squeeze and hold for 5 seconds and repeat.
- Switch by placing the palms on the outside of the knees.
- Press inward with the hands, while resisting with the knees by pressing outward.

B. Standing tall with hands on a wall or chair for support, keep standing knee slightly bent, lift the leg to the side of the body keeping the knee and toes pointing forward.

- Repeat and switch to the other side.



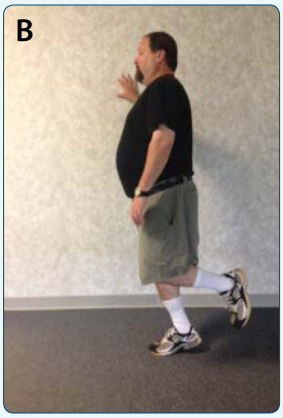
Gastrocnemius: Calf Raises (calves)

A. Standing tall, hips shoulder-distance apart, hold onto the wall for support.

- With knees slightly bent, raise the body onto the ball of the feet.
- Return to the starting position and repeat.

B. Same position as above, but standing on only 1 foot.

- Standing knee should be slightly bent while rising onto the ball of the foot.
- Return to the starting position, repeat, and then switch to the other side.



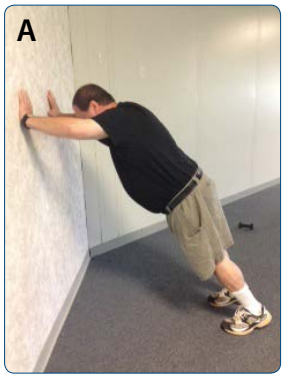
Pectoralis: Push-up (chest)

A. Standing away from the wall with hands placed flat on the wall at chest height, begin with straight arms in a plank position.

- Slowly bend elbows outward and let your body move toward the wall, keeping the abdominal muscles tight.
- Straighten elbows and repeat.

B. Same position as above, however, hands are placed on a sturdy chair.

- Perform this exercise as instructed above. Repeat.



Continue to find ways to challenge your body as your strength continues to increase.

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Strengthening Your Core

Your body's core is the area around your trunk and pelvis (hips) and is where your center of gravity is located. All body movement involves the core. A weak core can cause poor posture, lower back pain, and increased risk for injury. The benefits of a strong core include:

- Increased protection and support for your back
- Controlled movement
- Improved balance

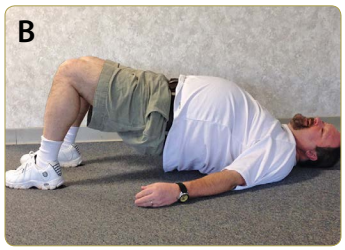
Strengthening your core requires regular and proper exercise of your body's core muscles. Here are some basic core exercises:

- Before you start to exercise your body's core, locate your deepest abdominal muscle – the transversus abdominis – by coughing once. The muscle you feel contracting is your transversus abdominis. We will refer to this muscle as your "abdominals."
- Focus on keeping this muscle contracted while doing each of these exercises, and the rest of your core muscles get a workout, too. Once you know how to contract your abdominal muscles, begin the core muscle exercises.
- With each exercise, breathe freely and deeply and avoid holding your breath. Coordinate your breathing with the tightening of your abdominals to get the maximum benefit.

Bridge

This exercise works many of your core muscles in combination.

- Lie on your back with your knees bent (A). Keep your back in a neutral position – not overly arched and not pressed into the floor. Avoid tilting your hips up.
- Cough to tighten your abdominals. Holding the contraction in your abdominals, raise your hips off the floor (B).
- Align your hips with your knees and shoulders. Hold this position and take three deep breaths.
- Return to the start position and repeat. For a challenge, extend one knee while maintaining the bridge position (no picture).

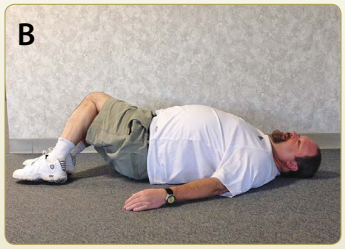


Single-leg abdominal press

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your back in a neutral position (A). Cough and hold to activate your abdominals.
- Raise your right leg off the floor – so that your knee and hip bend at 90-degree angles – and rest your right hand on top of your right knee (B).
- Push your hand forward while using your abdominal muscles to pull your knee toward your hand. Hold for three deep breaths and return to the start position.
- Repeat this exercise using your left hand and left knee. Keep your arm straight and avoid bending more than 90 degrees at your hip.

Trunk rotation

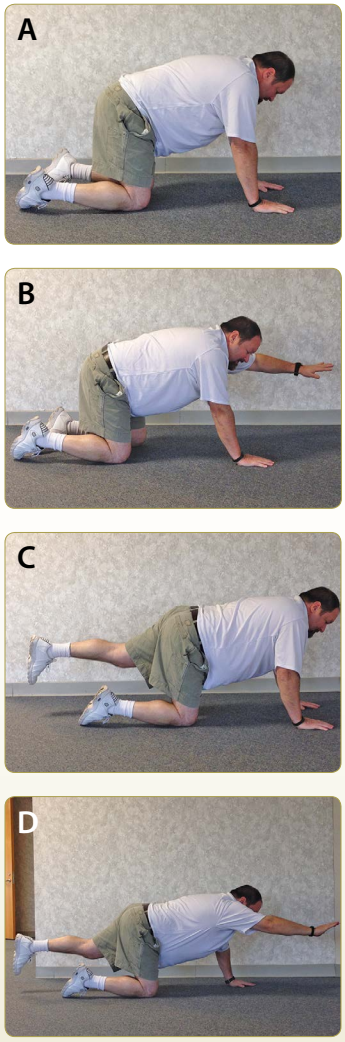
- Lie on your back on the floor with your knees bent and your back in a neutral position. Cough and hold to tighten your abdominals.
- Keeping your shoulders on the floor, let your knees fall slowly to the left (A). Go only as far as is comfortable – you should feel no pain, only a stretch.
- Use your trunk muscles to pull your legs back up to the start position. Repeat the exercise to the right (B).



Crunch

- Lie on your back and place your feet on a wall with a 90-degree bend at your knees and hips. Cough and hold to activate your abdominals.
- Imagine two dots in a vertical line on your abdomen – one above and one below your bellybutton. Imagine pulling those dots together.
- Use your trunk muscles to raise your head and shoulders off the floor. To avoid straining your neck, cross your arms on your chest, rather than locking them behind your head, and don't raise your head more than shown. Hold for three deep breaths, then return to the start position and repeat.

Quadruped



- Start on your hands and knees with your hands directly below your shoulders and your head and neck aligned with your back (A).
- Cough and hold your abdominals tight. Raise one arm off the floor and reach ahead (B). Hold for three deep breaths, return your arm and raise your other arm.
- Repeat the exercise by raising each leg (C).
- Challenge yourself by raising one arm and the opposite leg together (D). When raising your leg, avoid rolling your pelvis. Center your hips and tighten your trunk muscles for balance. Do this on both sides.

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Indoor Physical Activities

If the weather is bad or you prefer the indoors, there are still lots of physical activities you can do:

- Put on some music and dance.
- Do strength exercises at home. These involve lifting weights, but you don't need barbells. Use items such as water bottles and canned foods as dumbbells. You can also start by using your own body's weight. For example, do curls as if you are lifting dumbbells, but just lift your fist. Lie on the floor, and lift your legs.

- Walk around the mall. Most open early for walkers – ask about this at their information desk.
- Do stretches (see Handout P30 – *Sample Stretches*).
- Exercise with a fitness program on TV.
- Borrow an exercise video from the library or a friend (for example, chair dancing, step walking, and basic aerobics).
- Go to a gym or recreation center.
- Get involved with fitness activities at a local community center or senior center.
- Too hot outside? Take a swim in an indoor pool.
- Take a water aerobics class.
- Look for sales or visit second-hand stores for used exercise equipment.
- Do indoor activities such as racquetball, tennis, roller-skating, bowling, etc., at a sports center or gym.

Ask your MOVE!® team for more information on stretching and flexibility activities as well as strengthening exercises.

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Exercise Can Be Fun!

So, you don't like exercise. There are many ways to be physically active without doing what you might consider "a workout" or "exercise."

- Go walking with others.
- Dance.
- Get the whole family involved in some physical activity like walking at a park.
- Find a beginner's exercise class that you might enjoy.
- Do housework or yard work to music. Move with the music as you work.
- Try out a new sport or activity.
- Go bicycling with family or friends.
- Check out your local community center for upcoming events.
- Play golf. Carry your clubs to burn more calories or use a pull cart.
- Rent a kayak or bicycle for the day.

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Staying Motivated With Physical Activity

Make physical activity part of your daily routine! Here are some ways to help you keep on track with your physical activity program:

- Set realistic and achievable goals
- Schedule activity by making it part of your regular routine
- Have a support system – friends, family, group exercise
- Log your progress
- Consider a trainer
- Use music and TV fitness programs
- Use a pedometer/odometer and log this in your Food and Physical Activity Diary. You may also track your time for either moderate or vigorous physical activity.
- Do a variety of activities
- Keep moving, even small amounts of movement throughout the day add up
- Check your progress regularly
- Choose a convenient time of the day
- Stay encouraged
- Join a gym or club
- **Have fun!**

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Physical Activity and Your Safety

Here are some general safety tips when preparing to be physically active:

- Carry identification, emergency contact, and illness and medication information with you at all times.
- Drink water before, during, and after exercise.

- Let someone know where you are going and how long you'll be gone.
- Carry a cell phone if you have one.
- Prepare for the weather.
- Wear comfortable, good-fitting socks and shoes suitable for physical activity.
- For outside exercise, dress to be seen. Wear brightly colored clothing. In poor light, wear reflective materials designed for improving your visibility to drivers.

- Take a familiar route.
- Be active in public places.
- Avoid isolated trails, paths, and poorly lit areas.
- When approaching another walker or jogger from behind, give a verbal warning before passing them.

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Tips for Cold Weather Physical Activity

Cold weather doesn't have to slow you down.
To stay safe in the cold, keep the following in mind:

Dress in layers

- Start with a synthetic material, like polypropylene, against your skin. It will draw the sweat away from your body and dry quickly.
- For the second layer, select wool or cotton to soak up moisture.
- Choose the third layer for its ability to keep the cold air and rain out, something lightweight and waterproof.

Don't lose your head

- Wear a hat to avoid losing heat through your head.
- Protect your feet. Insulate them with warm socks and keep them dry.
- Choose mittens over gloves because the fingers can warm each other.

Drink up – You can become dehydrated in the cold

- Drink before you feel thirsty. By the time you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated.
- Water is readily available, inexpensive, and exactly what your body needs.
- Drink water before you go out and bring some with you.
- If your lips are chapped, this means you need more water.

Don't overdo it

- Cold is a stress on the body. So is exercise. Together they may be too much. Start slowly and don't overdo it.

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Warm Weather Exercise Guidelines

You should take extra care when exercising in warm weather. The following tips will keep you safe in the heat:

- Exercise in the early morning or after the sun sets.
- Take frequent rest and water breaks.
- Drink water before you feel thirsty. By the time you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated. This is especially true as you get older.
- Drink fluids before, during, and after exercise.
- Choose water or a low-calorie sport drink.
- Avoid beverages with alcohol and caffeine because these can cause dehydration.
- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable fabric in light colors. Choose shady areas when possible.
- Reduce speed or distance as needed.
- Exercise indoors during ozone alerts, extreme heat, and very high humidity.
- Use sunscreen, hats, and sunglasses.
- Listen to your body. Stop if you feel chest pain, short of breath, dizzy, lightheaded, weak, very fatigued, nauseated, or that your heart is pounding. Get to a cool place. **If these symptoms continue for more than 5 minutes, call 911.**

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- Your "Homework" This Week:
- Behavior: Identify weight-related problem and work through the steps.
- Nutritional: Keep a food log everyday. Great Job! Reflect on what diet changes are working for you.
- Physical Activity:
- 1. Keep an activity log daily.
- 2. Try something new (balance training and/or core activities)