

10-Minute Exercises for Seniors Over 65

**A Physical Therapist's Guide to Increasing Strength,
Improving Balance, and Reducing Fall Risk**

By Melody Santos, PT, CRRP

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Seated Abdominal Breathing



Place one hand on your abdomen.
Take a slow breath in through your nose, letting
your belly rise.
Then exhale gently through pursed lips.
Repeat 5 times.

Neck Turns



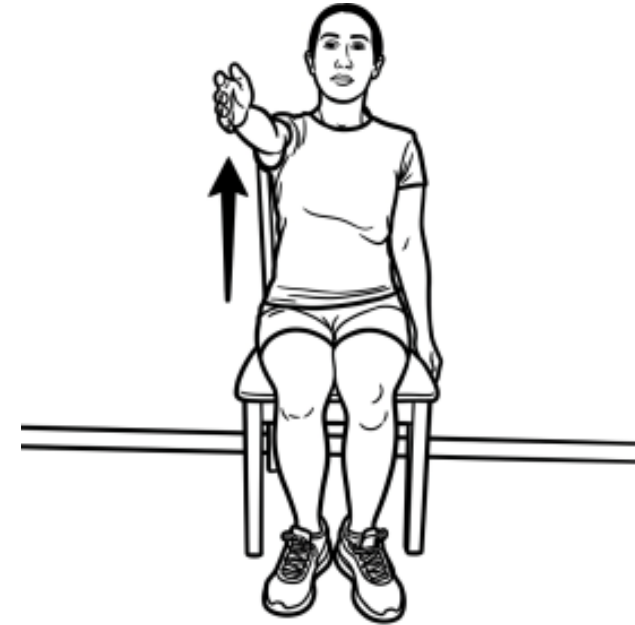
Sit tall with both feet flat on the floor.
Slowly turn your head to look over your
right shoulder, then return to center.
Switch sides.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Shoulder Rolls



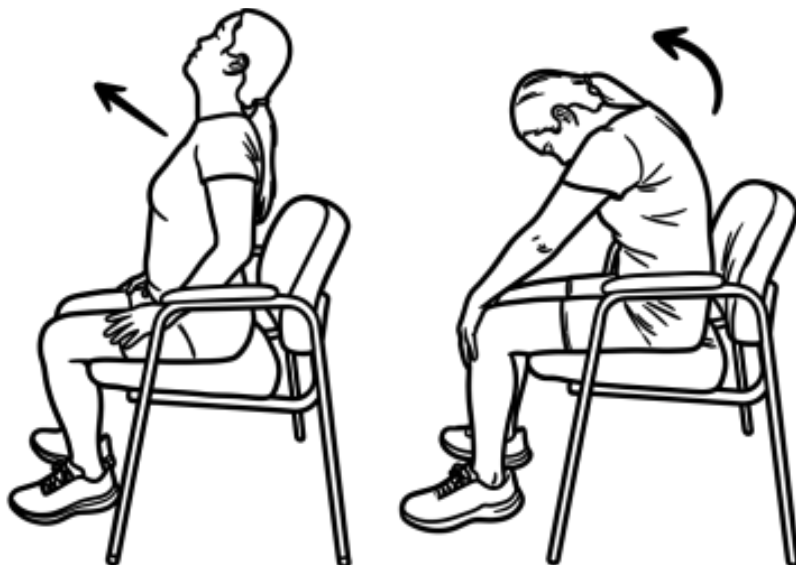
Roll both shoulders upward, backward,
and downward.
Switch directions.
Repeat 10 times in each direction.

Arm Forward Raise



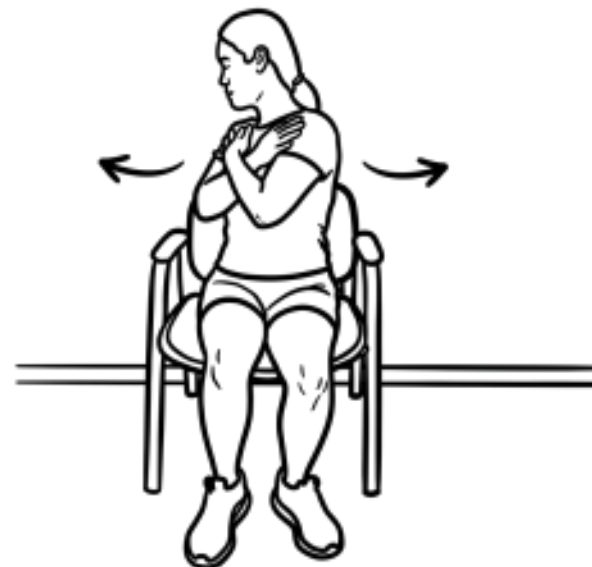
Sit tall and with your thumb pointing up,
lift your right arm forward to shoulder
height (about 90 degrees), then lower with
control.
Switch arms.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Seated Camel–Cat



Place both hands on your thighs.
Inhale and gently arch your back, lifting your chest and chin slightly.
Next, exhale and round your back forward, tucking your chin toward your chest.
Repeat 5 times.

Seated Trunk Rotation



Sit tall and cross your arms over your chest.
Rotate the upper body gently to the right, then return to center.
Switch sides.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Ankle Pumps



Extend your right leg slightly and point your toes up and down.

Switch legs.

Repeat 10 times on each side.

Wrist Circles



Extend both arms forward, palms facing down.

Perform slow circles of both wrists in one direction.

Switch directions.

Repeat 10 times in each direction.

(You may keep your hands open or fisted).

Seated Heel Raises



Sit tall with both feet flat on the floor. Keeping your toes on the ground, slowly raise both heels as high as comfortable. Pause briefly, then lower with control. Repeat 10 times.

Shoulder Blade Squeezes



Sit tall with arms relaxed at your sides. Squeeze both shoulder blades together, then relax. Repeat 10 times.

Shoulder Stretch



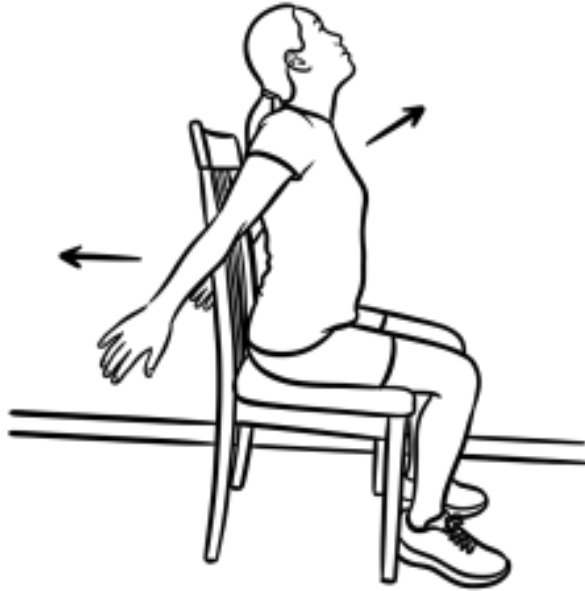
Bring your right arm across your chest.
Use your left hand to gently press your
right arm closer to your body.
Hold 3 seconds, then relax.
Switch arms.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Neck Side Bend Stretch



Gently tilt your head to the right, bringing
your right ear toward your right shoulder.
Hold 3 seconds, then return to center.
Switch sides
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Chest Opener



Extend your arms back as far as comfortable,
then slowly look up.
Hold 3 seconds, then relax.
Repeat 10 times.

Seated Hamstring Stretch



Extend your right leg and point your toes
toward the ceiling.
Slowly lean your trunk forward until you
feel a gentle stretch in the back of your
thigh.
Hold 3 seconds, then relax.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

Seated Calf Stretch



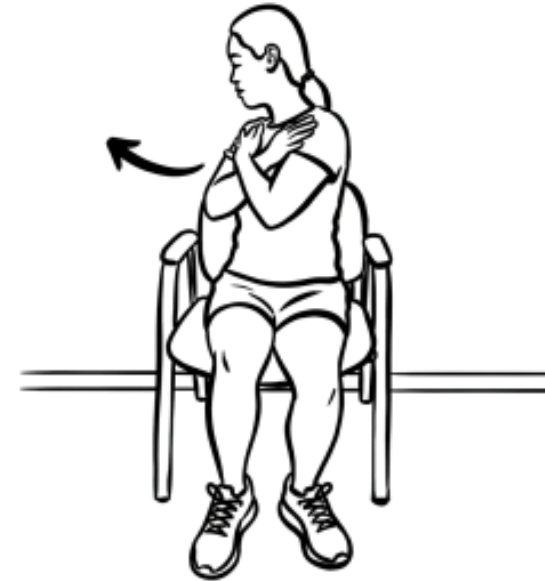
Loop a beach towel around the ball of your foot. Gently pull both ends of the towel toward you until you feel a gentle stretch along the back of your lower leg.

Hold 3 seconds, then relax.

Switch legs.

Repeat 5 times on each side (10 times total).

Trunk Rotation Stretch



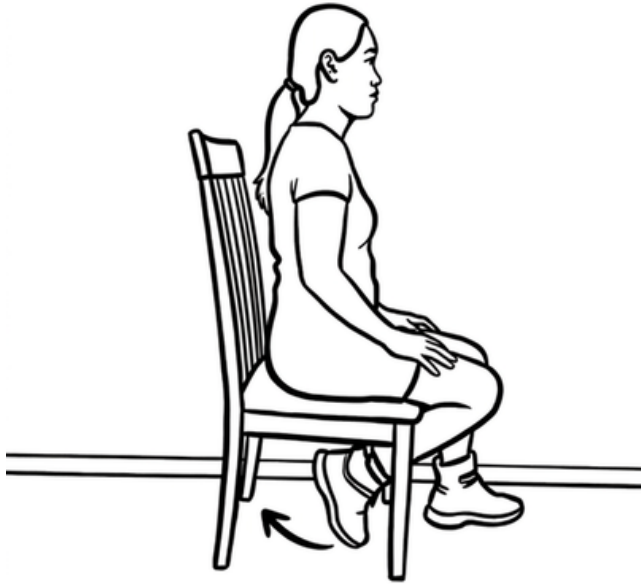
Sit tall and cross your arms over your chest. Gently turn your upper body to the right, looking over the right shoulder.

Hold 3 seconds then return to center.

Switch sides.

Repeat 5 times on each side (10 times total).

Quads Stretch



Sit tall and bend the right knee under the chair as far as comfortable.
Hold 3 seconds, then relax.
Switch legs.
Repeat 5 times on each side (10 times total).

Slow Deep Breathing



Place one hand on your abdomen.
Take a deep breath in, slowly, through your nose, letting your belly rise.
Then exhale gently through pursed lips.
Repeat 5 times.

Biceps Curls



Hold a light dumbbell or water bottle in each hand.

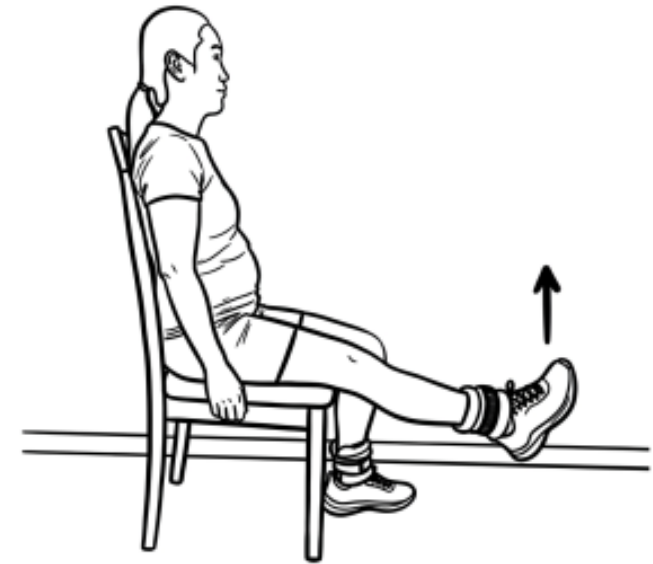
Bring the weight in your right hand toward your shoulder.

Pause briefly at the top, then lower slowly.

Switch sides.

Repeat 10 times on each side.

Knee Extension



Lift your right foot as high as comfortable and straighten your right knee.

Hold briefly at the top, then slowly lower it with control.

Switch legs.

Repeat 10 times on each side.

Seated Hip Abduction



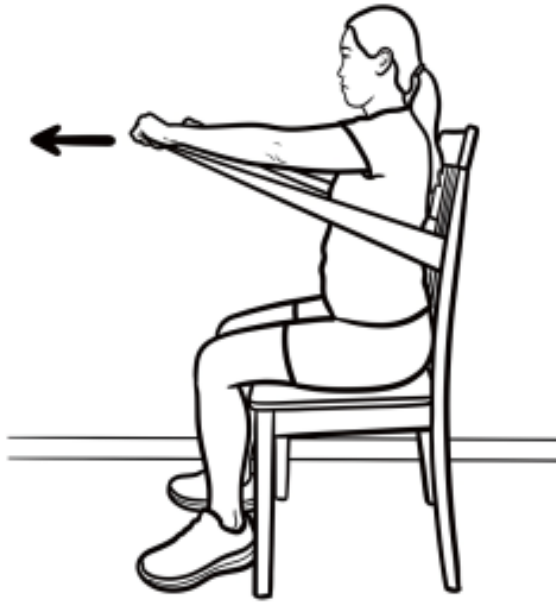
Step to the side with your right leg then slowly return to the center.
Switch legs.
Repeat 10 times on each side.

Rows



Place a light resistance band under both feet.
Grip one end in each hand.
Draw both arms back — then let your arms return slowly and with control.
Repeat 10 times.

Chest Press



Loop a light resistance band behind your chair, just below shoulder height. Hold each end at chest level, palms down. Press both arms forward until nearly extended, then return with control. Repeat 10 times.

Forward V Raise (Scaption)



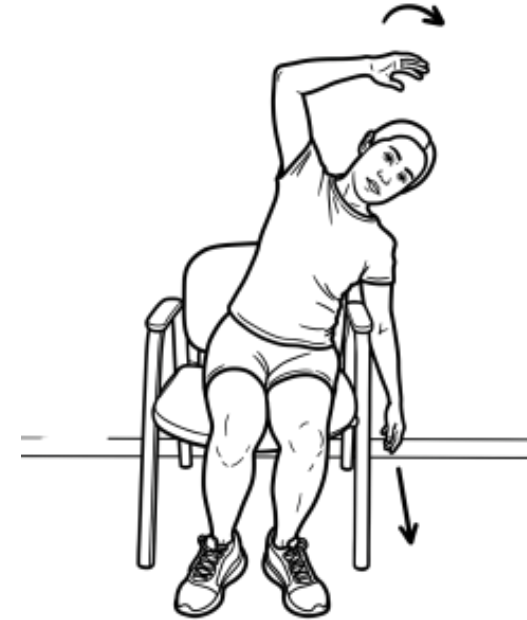
Hold light dumbbells or water bottles in each hand. Raise both arms forward and out to the side forming a wide “V” in front of you — until your hands reach shoulder height. Pause briefly, then lower with control. Repeat 10 times.

Overhead Press



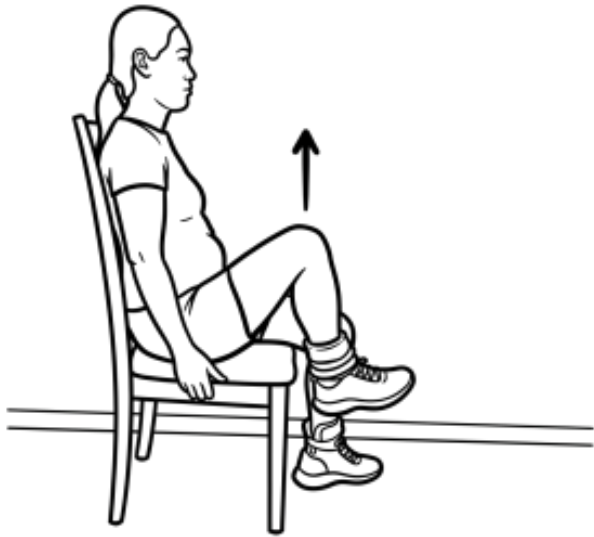
Sit tall, holding light dumbbells at shoulder height, palms facing each other. Press both arms upward until nearly extended, then lower with control. Repeat 10 times. (Alternate arms if that's more comfortable for you).

Seated Overhead Reach and Side Bend



Raise your right arm overhead, then gently side bend toward the left side. Hold briefly, then return to the center with control. Switch sides. Repeat 10 times.

Hip Flexion



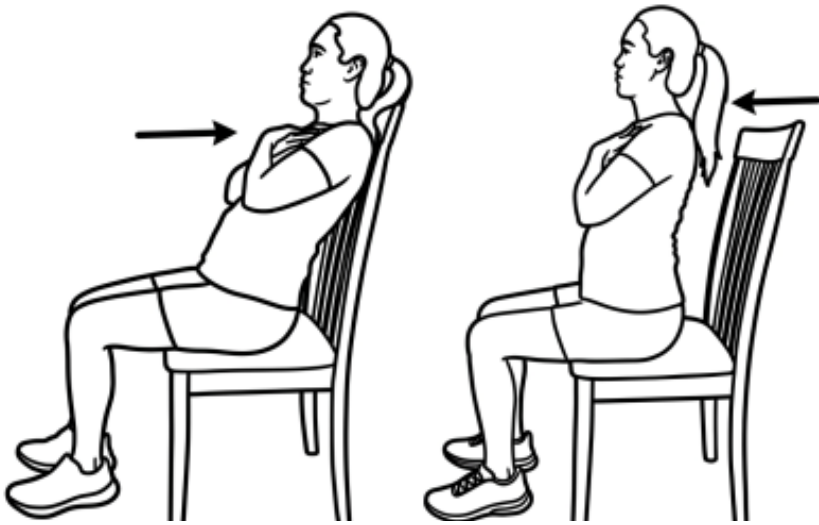
Sit tall and lift your right foot off the floor as high as comfortable.
Pause briefly at the top, then lower it to the floor with control.
Switch legs.
Repeat 10 times on each side.

Triceps Extension



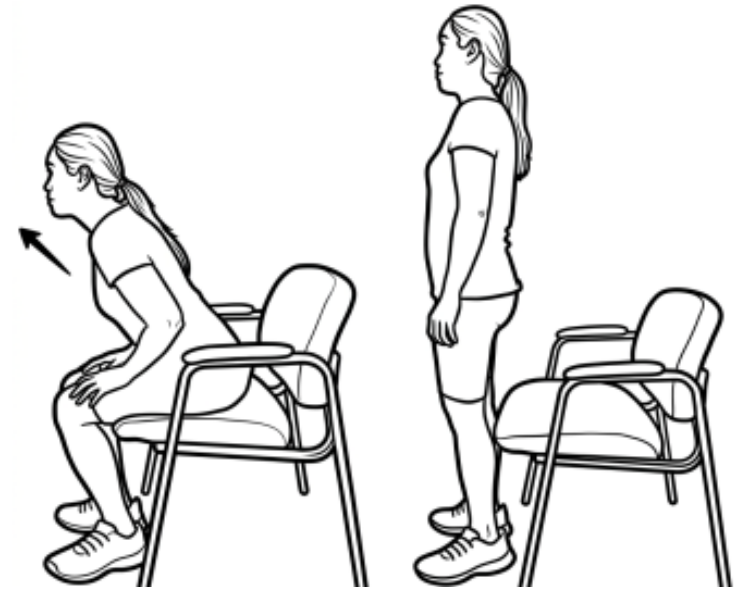
Hold a light dumbbell overhead with your right hand.
Bend your right elbow and slowly lower the weight toward your shoulder. Use your left hand to support your right arm if needed.
Next, straighten your right elbow to return to the starting position.
Repeat 10 times. Switch arms.

Seated Curl Up



Sit tall, close to the front edge of the chair.
Place both hands lightly crossed over
your chest.
Lean back slowly against the back of the chair.
Next, lean forward slowly until you
return to your starting position.
Repeat 10 times.

Sit to Stand



Scoot to the front of the chair.
Slide both feet back until they are under
your knees, lean forward, and stand up
with control.
Use your hands to push up as needed.
Next, lean forward and sit down slowly.
Repeat 10 times.

Standing Heel Raises



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

Rise up onto the balls of both feet then lower your heels down slowly.

Repeat 10 times.

Standing Hip Abduction



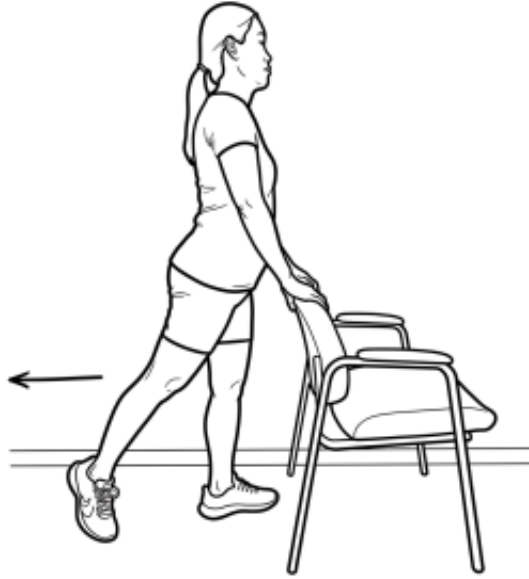
Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

Slowly lift the right leg out to the side then lower slowly.

Switch legs.

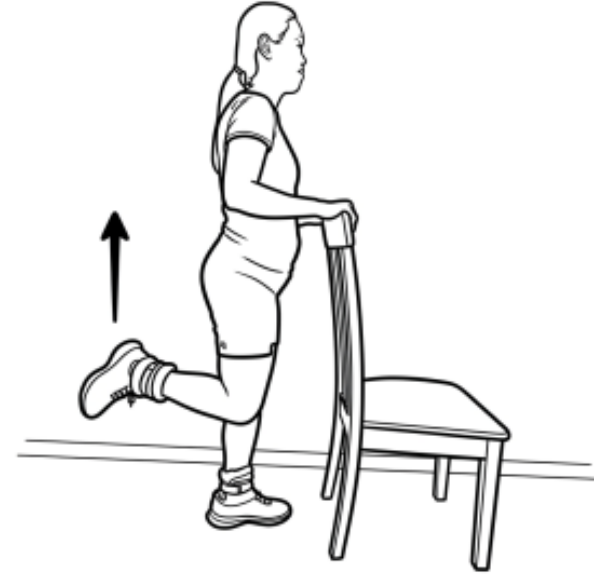
Repeat 10 times on each side.

Standing Hip Extension



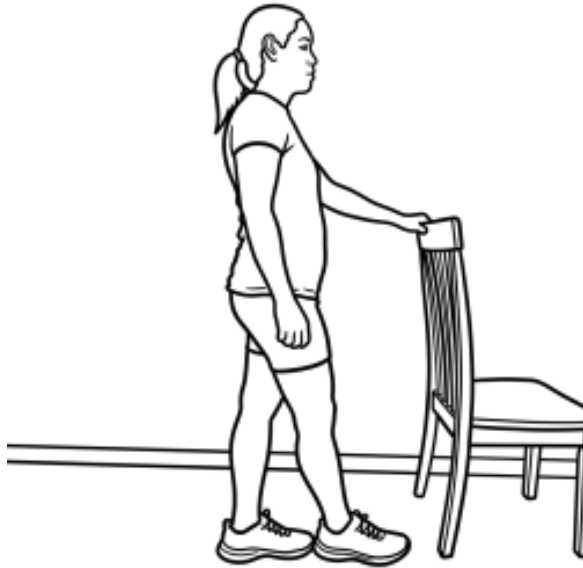
Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.
Slowly lift your right leg straight back, keeping your trunk upright then lower slowly.
Switch legs.
Repeat 10 times on each side.

Standing Hamstring Curls



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.
Slowly bend your right knee, bringing your heel toward your buttocks then lower slowly.
Keep your thighs parallel throughout.
Switch legs.
Repeat 10 times on each side.

Tandem Stance



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.
Place your right foot directly in front of the left foot.
Hold this position for 10 seconds.
Switch legs.
Repeat 3 times on each side.

Single Leg Balance



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.
Lift your right foot slightly off the floor and hold this position for 10 seconds.
Switch legs.
Repeat 3 times on each side.

Mini Squats



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

Slowly bend your knees and lower your body a few inches as if you're about to sit down.

Straighten up and exhale as you rise.

Repeat 10 times.

Forward Lunge



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

Step forward with your right foot, then shift your weight onto it.

Pause briefly then return to back to your starting position.

Switch legs.

Repeat 5 times on each side.

Side Lunge



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

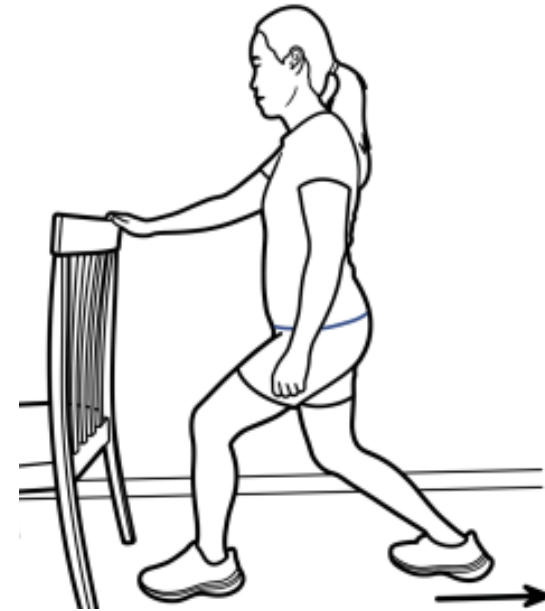
Step to the side with your right foot, then shift your weight onto it.

Pause briefly then return to your starting position.

Switch legs.

Repeat 5 times on each side.

Back Lunge



Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly for support if needed.

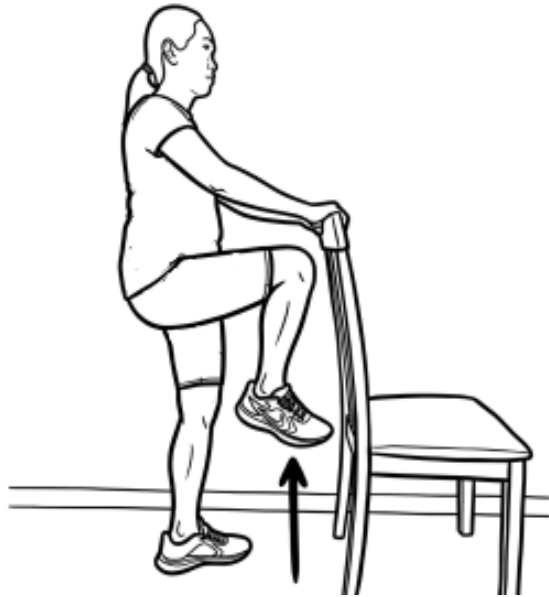
Step back with your right foot, then shift your weight onto it.

Pause briefly then return to your starting position.

Switch legs.

Repeat 5 times on each side.

Marching in place



Thank You

I hope this guide supports you
as you build strength, improve balance,
and stay active with confidence.

With gratitude,
Melody Santos, PT

Stand behind your chair, holding it lightly
for support if needed.
Slowly lift your right knee up to a
comfortable height, then lower it back down.
Switch legs.
Repeat 5 times on each side.

A Gentle Reminder

Move at your own pace and work within your
comfort level. Use a sturdy chair or support
when needed, and stop if you feel pain,
dizziness, or unusual discomfort. If you have
any medical concerns, check with your
physician before beginning or continuing the
exercise program.