

Diabetes – Chair Exercises and Weightlifting

Why are chair exercises and weight lifting important?

Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do to maintain your diabetes control as well as your mental health and quality of life. You should include different types of activity in your daily life.

Research has shown that lifting weights for two to four 15-minute training sessions a week helps you in many ways.

Some benefits are:

- delay the progression of osteoporosis
- prevent low back pain
- promote weight loss
- improve blood flow in blood vessels and blood pressure
- lower stress

If you have medical problems, you should contact your doctor or health care provider who can advise the right kind of activity for you.

How much does this cost?

You do not need to join a gym. For these exercises, you need a steady chair with a flat seat. The top of the chair should come to your waist when you stand behind it.

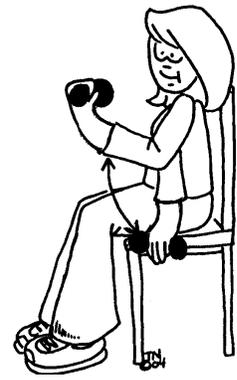
For your arms, you can use barbells or fill plastic bottles with water or sand to the weight you want to lift. Start with light weights: about 1.4 kilograms or 3 pounds for a woman and 2.3 kilograms or 5 pounds for a man. Increase the amount by .5 to 1.0 kilograms or 1 to 2 pounds as you get stronger.

You can buy ankle weights once you feel you are ready to increase your leg strength.

Some of these pictures show barbells and ankle weights. You can lift bottles instead.

Muscles in the front of upper arms (Biceps)

- Sit straight in the chair with your arms at your sides.
- Bend one arm at the elbow and lift weight toward your shoulder.
- Avoid moving your upper arm or shoulder while you bend.
- Slowly lower your arm to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other arm.



Muscles in the front and back of upper arms (Triceps)

- Sit straight in the chair with your arms at your sides.
- Raise both arms straight over your head. Bend one elbow so that one wrist is resting behind your neck. Move the same arm back over your head.
- Repeat with your other arm.



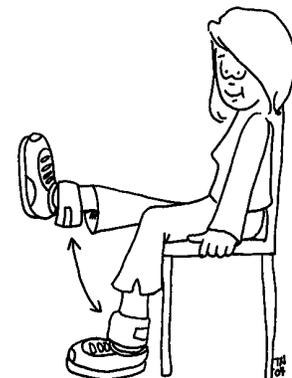
Muscles in the upper arms and shoulders (Deltoids)

- Sit straight in the chair with your arms at your sides.
- Raise both arms out to the sides and try to touch your hands over your head.
- Lower your arms to starting position.
- Rest and repeat.



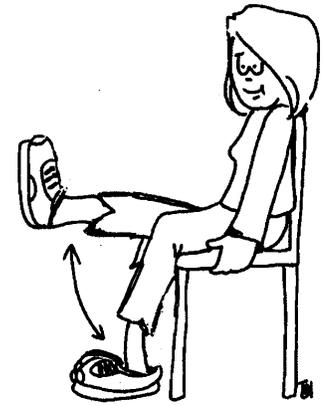
Muscles in the front thigh (Quadriceps)

- Sit straight in the chair with the backs of your knees resting against the chair seat.
- Raise one foot in front of you until your leg is as straight as you can get it. Point your toes up.
- Slowly lower your leg to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other leg.



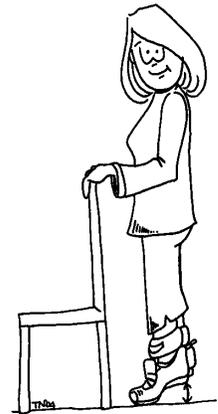
Muscles in lower abdomen (Abdominals)

- Do not use any weights for this exercise.
- Sit in the chair and slide forward so that only your upper back is resting against the chair back.
- Hold onto the seat with both hands.
- Lift both feet 5 to 7 centimetres or 2 to 3 inches off the floor. Point your toes up.
- Straighten your legs in front of you. Hold them together at the highest position for 1 to 2 seconds.
- Slowly lower your legs back to the starting position.



Muscles in ankles and back of calves (Gastrocnemius and Soleus Muscles)

- Stand straight behind chair holding onto chair.
- Raise your body on your toes as high as you can.
- Lower your body slowly to the starting position.
- Repeat until it becomes hard to keep doing.



Muscles in back of thighs (Hamstrings)

- Stand straight behind chair holding onto chair.
- Without moving your upper leg, bend one knee so that your heel is as close to the back of your thigh as you can get it. Keep both knees beside each other and try not to arch your back.
- Lower your leg to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other leg.



Muscles in tops of legs and knees (Hip Flexors and Quadriceps)

- Stand straight behind chair holding onto chair.
- Without bending at the waist or letting go of the chair, bring one knee as close to your chest as you can.
- Lower leg to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other leg.



Muscles at sides of hips and thighs (Abductors)

- Stand straight behind chair.
- Hold onto back of chair.
- With your leg straight, move one leg out to the side.
- Keep your toes pointing forward.
- Lower your leg to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other leg.



Muscles in buttocks and lower back (Gluteals in the buttocks and Erector Spinae in the back)

- Stand straight and hold onto the back of the chair.
- Bend forward about 45 degrees at the waist. Lift one leg straight out behind as high as you can. Avoid bending your knee or moving your upper body.
- Lower your leg to the starting position.
- Repeat with your other leg.



How many exercises should I do each time?

For each exercise follow these general guidelines:

- Start by doing 8 repetitions if you can.
- When you are able to do 3 sets of 8 repetitions, increase to 3 sets of 12 repetitions. Then go up to 3 sets of 15 repetitions.
- When you can do 3 sets of 15 repetitions, increase the amount of weight you are lifting by 0.5 to 1.0 kilograms or 1 to 2 pounds.