



# Physical Activity

It is recommended that we take part in 30 minutes of Physical Activity at least 5 times per week for weight maintenance. For weight loss 60 minutes per day is advised.

## The benefits of Physical Activity:

- Could reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, cancer, osteoporosis
- Improves posture, balance and flexibility
- Strengthens muscles and bones
- Can improve the quality of your sleep
- Lowers blood pressure and cholesterol
- Improves mood
- Can reduce stress, depression and anxiety
- Enhances self esteem
- Can strengthen heart and lungs
- Weight loss

The table below represents the “Talk Test” for physical activity. This is a simple but effective method to make sure you are getting the most out of your workout. If you can comfortably talk but not sing, you are exercising at the right intensity.

Is the effort I am putting into the activity...?	How warm am I?	Am I able to...?	Range to stay healthy:
Very light effort	Normal temperature	Talk normally	✗
Light effort	Starting to feel warm	Whistle/Sing	✓
Moderate effort	Warmer	Talk in sentences	✓
Vigorous effort	Quite warm	Talk in short phrases	✓
Maximum effort	Very hot, sweating heavily	Gasp	✗ (Stop, you are overdoing it)

Here are two chair based exercises that you can do at home or at work, to ensure that you are getting some exercise daily (and they are handy for rainy days!).

### Bicep Curl

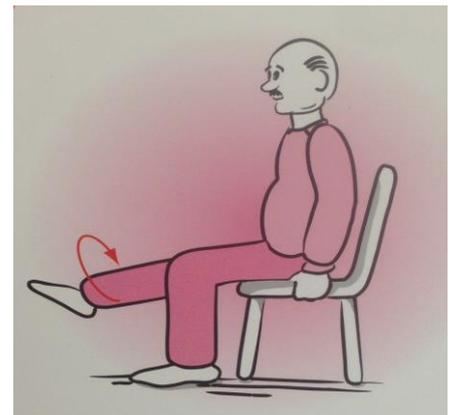
- Place your hands on your thighs, palms facing up.
- Bend your right elbow and bring your hand toward your right shoulder and slowly lower back down.
- Alternate right and left arms or use both at the same time and continue for up to 30 seconds.



**Tip:** To increase intensity of exercise hold a tin of beans in your hand as you complete the bicep curl.

### Leg Circles

- Hold onto the sides of the chair.
- Straighten your right leg out in front of you and point your toes.
- Make 3 circles to the right and 3 circles to the left, making sure you are moving your whole leg.
- Repeat using left leg.



**Tip:** To increase intensity of exercise, make 6 circles to the right and 6 circles to the left.

The above exercises were taken from a **FREE** HSE publication “chair based exercise programme for older adults”, available for all to order from [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

### Useful Websites:

- [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie)
- [www.dlrleisureservices.ie](http://www.dlrleisureservices.ie) (Dublin)
- [www.shorelineleisure.ie](http://www.shorelineleisure.ie) (Wicklow)