

Exercise Progression Guide: Regain Strength, Balance, and Independence

Website: DrJesseSantiano.com

This guide provides a step-by-step progression of simple, safe exercises designed to help rebuild strength, improve posture, enhance balance, and support recovery after illness or prolonged inactivity. Each movement activates vital muscle groups and encourages the internal organs to adapt in ways that support better mobility and health.

Use this guide daily, rest between sets, breathe deeply, and drink water as needed. With consistency, your body will respond one step at a time.

Essential Equipment

- Physical therapy belt or any sturdy belt around the hips
- Walker or sturdy chair for support
- Light dumbbells or water bottles
- Rubber ball for hand exercises

Stage 1: Seated Exercises

1. Squeeze a rubber ball

- Sit upright and hold a soft rubber ball.
- Squeeze firmly, hold for 3 seconds, then release.
- Repeat 10-15 times per hand. Strengthens grip and forearm muscles.

2. Biceps curls with light dumbbells

- Sit or stand holding light dumbbells.
- Bend elbows to lift the weights toward the shoulders, then lower slowly.
- 2 sets of 1015 reps.

3. Overhead arm raises

- Using light dumbbells or no weights, raise arms overhead.
- Strengthens shoulders and improves range of motion.
- 2 sets of 10 reps.

4. Belly tightening (core activation)

- Sit or lie down with knees bent.
- Gently pull your belly button toward your spine and hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 10 times to engage core muscles.

4a. Log Rolling (Side-to-Side)

- While lying flat on your back, slowly roll your body from side to side.
- Keep knees slightly bent if needed. Use your arms and legs to assist the motion.
- Repeat 510 times to stimulate core muscles and improve bed mobility.

5. Scapular squeezes (for posture and lung capacity)

- Sit upright.
- Pull shoulder blades together as if pinching a pencil between them.
- Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

6. Seated knee raises

- While sitting, lift one knee toward the chest, then lower.
- Alternate legs. 2 sets of 10 reps per leg.

7. Seated leg lifts

- Extend one leg forward with knee straight, then lift it slightly.
- Hold for 23 seconds and lower. Alternate legs.
- 2 sets of 10 reps per leg.

7a. Seated Push and Adjust

- While sitting upright in a chair, place your hands on the seat beside your hips.
- Push down with your hands to lift your weight slightly, then move one side of your hips forward or backward.
- Repeat on the other side. Do 510 gentle shifts.
- Helps maintain upright posture and prevents sliding down a recliner.

Stage 2: Standing Exercises (with support)

8. Stationary marching (with walker or chair)

- Stand tall while holding onto a walker or chair.
- March in place, lifting knees as high as comfortable.
- 12 minutes. Rest as needed.

9. Tippy toe raises

- While holding on for support, raise up on your toes, then slowly lower.
- Strengthens calves and improves balance.
- 2 sets of 1015 reps.

10. Walking practice

- Walk with walker or along a stable surface.
- Focus on upright posture, heel-to-toe steps.

- Start with short distances (510 steps), gradually increase as tolerated.

Important Reminders:

- Breathe deeply and slowly during exercises.
- Allow full rest between sets.
- Use a belt around the hips for assisted standing or walking.
- Stay hydrated throughout the session.

Disclaimer:

This guide is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

Always consult with your physician or licensed healthcare provider before beginning any exercise or rehabilitation program,

especially if you have a history of injury, surgery, or chronic illness. The exercises presented here are general in nature

and may not be appropriate for all individuals. Use at your own discretion and risk.