Sit-to-Stand Exercise

The sit-to-stand exercise (also known as the *chair stand* or *chair rise exercise*) strengthens your lower body and helps you maintain or improve your mobility and independence. The goal is to do the sit-to-stand exercise without using your hands. This will be easier as you become stronger. You should always talk with your health care provider before starting any exercise program, especially if you have had recent surgery.

Do the exercise exactly as told by your health care provider and adjust it as directed. It is normal to feel mild stretching, pulling, tightness, or discomfort as you do this exercise, but you should stop right away if you feel sudden pain or your pain gets worse. **Do not** begin doing this exercise until told by your health care provider.

**What the sit-to-stand exercise does**

The sit-to-stand exercise helps to strengthen the muscles in your thighs and the muscles in the center of your body that give you stability (*core muscles*). This exercise is especially helpful if:

- You have had knee or hip surgery.
- You have trouble getting up from a chair, out of a car, or off the toilet.

**How to do the sit-to-stand exercise**

1. Sit toward the front edge of a sturdy chair without armrests. Your knees should be bent and your feet should be flat on the floor and shoulder-width apart.
2. Place your hands lightly on each side of the seat. Keep your back and neck as straight as possible, with your chest slightly forward.
3. Breathe in slowly. Lean forward and slightly shift your weight to the front of your feet.
4. Breathe out as you slowly stand up. Use your hands as little as possible.
5. Stand and pause for a full breath in and out.
6. Breathe in as you sit down slowly. Tighten your core and abdominal muscles to control your lowering as much as possible.
7. Breathe out slowly.
8. Do this exercise 10–15 times. If needed, do it fewer times until you build up strength.
9. Rest for 1 minute, then do another set of 10–15 repetitions.

**To change the difficulty of the sit-to-stand exercise**

- If the exercise is too difficult, use a chair with sturdy armrests, and push off the armrests to help you come to the standing position. You can also use the armrests to help slowly lower yourself back to sitting. As this gets easier, try to use your arms less. You can also place a firm cushion or pillow on the chair to make the surface higher.
- If this exercise is too easy, do not use your arms to help raise or lower yourself. You can also wear a weighted vest, use hand weights, increase your repetitions, or try a lower chair.
General tips

- You may feel tired when starting an exercise routine. This is normal.
- You may have muscle soreness that lasts a few days. This is normal. As you get stronger, you may not feel muscle soreness.
- Use smooth, steady movements.
- **Do not** hold your breath during strength exercises. This can cause unsafe changes in your blood pressure.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, and breathe out slowly through your mouth.

Summary

- Strengthening your lower body is an important step to help you move safely and independently.
- The sit-to-stand exercise helps strengthen the muscles in your thighs and core.
- You should always talk with your health care provider before starting any exercise program, especially if you have had recent surgery.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.