



**Dr. Peggye Dilworth-Anderson**

**A Brief Message from the Director:**

Thank you for allowing us to work in your communities. We hope that the research we are doing will benefit caregivers now and in the future. In response to your enlightening questions and concerns, as well as requests for additional information on certain topics, we have developed this quick reference guide that we hope will be of great assistance to caregivers and families in your community.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to create programs and resources that help older adults and their caregivers.

Sincerely,

**Peggye Dilworth-Anderson, Ph.D.**

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Professor, Health Policy and Management  
UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health



**How to Reach Us**

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**Seniors & Chair Exercises**

- Chair exercises can be effective in:
  - ✓ Keeping you strong
  - ✓ Managing stress
  - ✓ Improving mood
  - ✓ Preventing falls
  - ✓ Better breathing

Chair exercises are a great start to beginning an exercise for life program. These exercises help to maintain posture, balance, and muscle strength. If you have trouble standing for long periods or have difficult balancing, chair exercises are perfect for you.

Chair exercises should not hurt. If you have pain, stop immediately. Exercise for seniors is as important as a healthy diet and medications for a healthy lifestyle. Exercise helps you to decrease stress, prevent falls, and even improve your thinking. Start slowly. Going too quickly can cause injury. Be sure to ask your physical therapist or health care provider how to start your program safely.

**A Helpline to Help You!**

1-800-272-3900  
National Alzheimer's Association  
24-hour Helpline

# Selected Chair Exercises<sup>1</sup>



## Wrists



- Rest your forearm on the arm of your chair with your hand over the edge. Hold your weight with your palm facing upward. Slowly bend your wrist up and down. Repeat 10-15 times. Repeat with the other hand 10-15 times.

## Knee Raise for Balance



- Stand on one foot behind your chair, holding on for balance. Hold this position for up to 10 seconds. Repeat 10-15 times with each leg.

## Ankles



- Sit securely toward the edge of your chair. Stretch your legs out in front of you. With your heels on the floor, bend your ankles to point your toes toward you, holding the position for 10-30 seconds. Point your toes away from you and hold for 10-30 seconds. Repeat 3-5 times.

## Abs & Thighs



- Sit toward the front of your chair, knees bent and feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart. Extend your arms in front of you. Slowly stand up to an upright position. Repeat 10-15 times.

## Calves



- Stand behind your chair, feet shoulder-width apart, holding on for balance. Breathe in slowly. Breathe out and slowly stand on tiptoes, as high as possible. Hold this position for 1 second. Breathe in as you slowly lower your heels to the floor. Repeat 10-15 times, rest, then repeat 10-15 more times.

## Side Leg Raise for Balance



- Stand behind your chair with your feet slightly apart, holding on for balance. To challenge yourself, try holding on with one hand. Breathe out and slowly lift one leg out to the side. Keep your back straight and your toes facing forward. The leg you are standing on should be slightly bent. Hold this position for 1 second. Breathe in as you slowly lower your leg. Repeat 10-15 more times with each leg.

1. National Institute on Aging. (2010). Exercise & Physical Activity. Retrieved November 10, 2010, from <http://nia.nih.gov>



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