

Exercising to help painful weak joint - By BBC R4 Inside Health

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06vkg24>

The talk

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-BKCr8C6WGMbVJSaDdGQI95MVU/view?usp=sharing>

Advice from Philip Conaghan Professor of Musculoskeletal Medicine, University of Leeds

1. If you have trouble undoing **jars**, are dropping things, can't lift heavy pots and are finding fine movements like undoing buttons difficult-then you have **weak grip** and need the exercise attached.

2. For **knees**, if you can't get out of a bath, can't get out of normal height chairs without using your arms, or experience a sensation of your leg giving way, then you have weak thigh muscles (called the quadriceps muscle) and need one of the exercises attached, a. For very Weak people, then you need the towel-assisted exercise. Walking laps in a swimming pool is another good exercise for you. b.If you can do the straight leg raise but can't hold it up very long, then start with holding the leg for a count of 6 or 7, then let it rest. Multiple repetitions are still needed. With daily (or twice daily) exercises you will find you can hold the leg up for longer periods c. As you get stronger, you can move to exercise bike or cross-trainer. Low-impact activities are recommended

3. For all these exercises, you need to be doing them daily for at least 6-8 weeks before you notice any benefit. It's all about making some daily time for your routine

4. The general rule is to slowly increase your effort week by week. Strong muscles allow you to increase your everyday activities AND they reduce joint pain (good clinical trial evidence),

5. For backs I don't have a simple exercise, as it usually needs strengthening of both abdominal and back muscles (and usually thighs-again - as movement is restricted so you lose thigh strength too). Good to see a physiotherapist and think Pilates is a good long-term option

6. Increasing **weight** as we get older is a big issue for all of us; it puts more strain on painful joints and increases pain. Just getting strong and even getting more active, usually won't result in substantial weight loss-so if that is an issue for you, you really have to think about what you eat and change your diet, it's just as hard as regular exercising!

7. For more information on joint pain and exercises, the Arthritis Research UK website (www.arthritisresearchuk.org) is a reliable site to check out

Exercise for hand or thumb pain

Aim: To strengthen the muscles of the forearm that control grip strength of the hand and consequently reduce hand pain and improve function

The exercise: You will need something soft and compressible such as a rolled-up sock or ball of wool or 'stress' ball

1. Place ball in one hand
2. Rest the exercising hand on an arm rest of a chair, a table or on your thigh
3. Squeeze as tightly as you can for 30 seconds
4. Release and relax for 3 seconds
5. Repeat steps 3&4 until your arm is tired or aching. Try starting with 10 repetitions.
6. Repeat for the other hand

As you improve:

1. Squeeze for longer
2. Do more repetitions



How often? Do these exercises in the morning and evening, perhaps whilst watching TV or relaxing

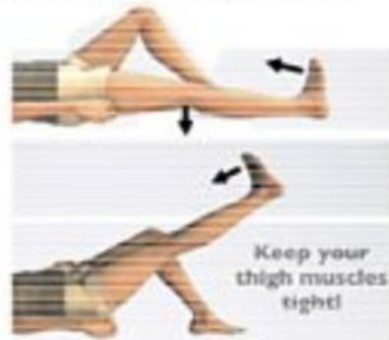
Making this a daily ROUTINE is the KEY!

Exercise for knee pain

Aim: To reduce pain by strengthening the muscles of the thigh (quadriceps). This will also improve standing, getting out of chairs, and walking

The exercise:

1. Lie down on flat surface such as a bed or couch
2. Bend the LEFT leg at the knee and place the LEFT foot firmly on the surface
3. Straighten the RIGHT leg and LOCK the knee by pushing it down hard onto the surface while pulling your toes towards your head
4. Keeping it locked and straight, raise the RIGHT leg slowly to 12 inches off the surface
5. Hold for 10 seconds
6. Lower leg and relax for 3 seconds
7. Repeat Steps 3-6 until your leg is very tired
8. Swap over and repeat exercise on the LEFT leg, with the RIGHT knee bent up



As you improve:

1. Hold the leg up for longer each time
2. Do more repetitions

How often? Do these exercises in the morning and evening, perhaps whilst watching TV or relaxing

Making this a daily ROUTINE is the KEY!

Exercise for knee pain with very weak muscles

Aim: To reduce pain by strengthening the muscles of the thigh/quadriceps. This will also improve standing, getting out of chairs, and walking

The exercise:

1. Lie down on flat surface such as a bed or couch
2. Place a rolled up towel under LEFT knee
3. LOCK the knee by pushing it down hard onto the towel while raising your heel off the bed, while pulling your toes towards your head
4. Keeping leg locked and straight, hold for 10 seconds
5. Lower leg slowly and relax for 3 seconds
6. Repeat Steps 3-5 until your leg is tired or the thigh is aching
7. Swap the towel and repeat exercise on the RIGHT leg



As you improve:

1. Hold the leg up for longer each time
2. Do more repetitions
3. When this exercise gets too easy, its time to take the towel away and try straight-leg raises

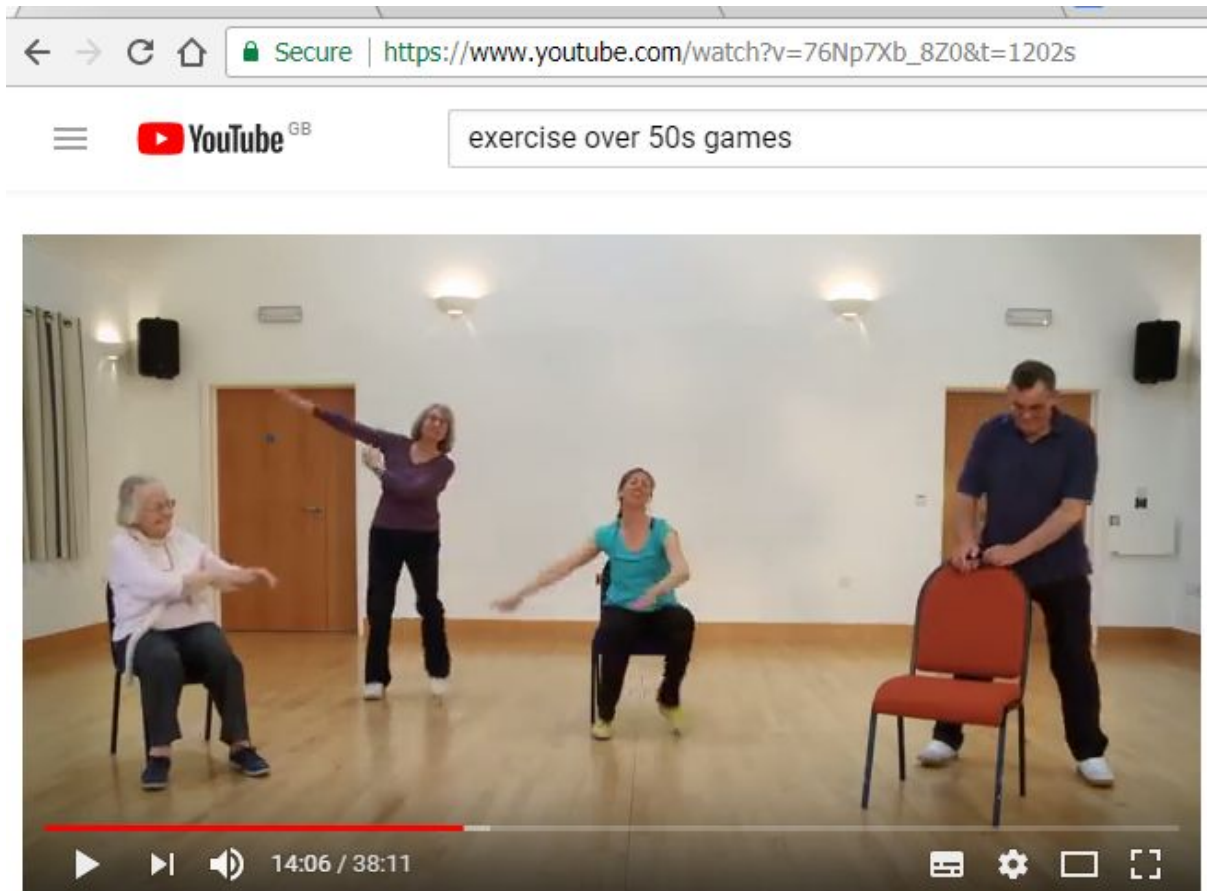
How often? Do these exercises in the morning and evening, perhaps whilst watching TV or relaxing

Making this a daily ROUTINE is the KEY!

Exercise is usually very beneficial for us, for our joints, strength, stamina, mental and physical wellbeing. This is even more so as we mature because the bad news is we get weaker as we get older - but the GOOD news is that by exercising we can reverse that decline.

The Oxford Physio service have created a resource for folk **over 50** that can be accessed at www.generationgames.org.uk This is free.

They also have a follow along routine that can also be watched on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76Np7Xb_8Z0&t=1202s



Exercise at home for the over 50s - www.generationgames.org.uk