



KEEPING ACTIVE WITH HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE

EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES TO KEEP YOU MOVING



FLEXIBILITY

If you are stiff, it is harder to do things like getting dressed, getting things from high cupboards and being physically active.

Wear loose comfortable clothes.

Build up slowly and aim to gradually increase the number of activities that you do and the parts of the body that you stretch.

If you feel dizzy, stop and rest.

Also try: stretching, yoga, tai chi, pilates

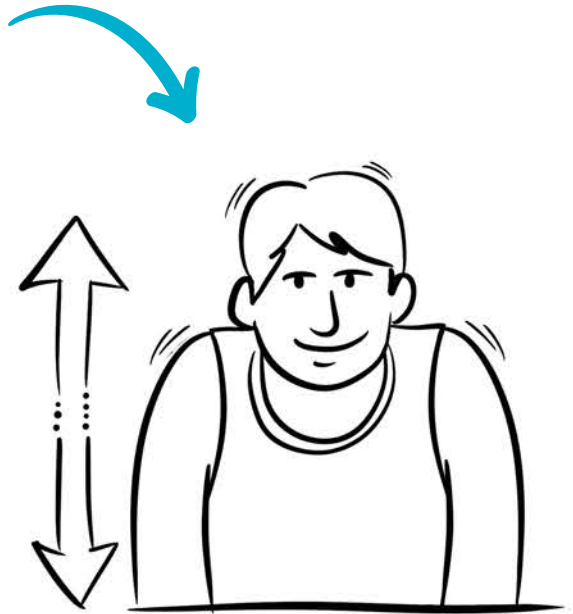
NECK STRETCH

- In sitting or standing
- Keep your shoulders down
- Bring your right ear toward your right shoulder, hold for 3 seconds
- Bring your head back to the middle
- Bring your left ear toward your left shoulder, hold for 3 seconds



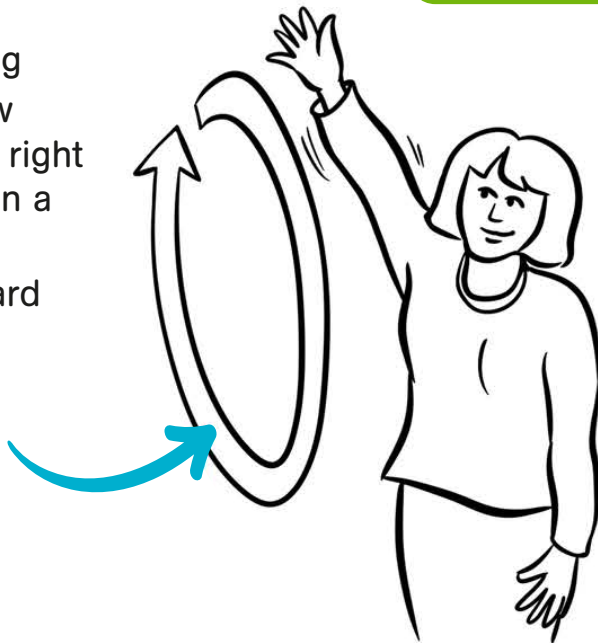
SHOULDER ROLLS

- In sitting or standing
- Shrug your shoulders up towards your ears
- Now slowly roll them backwards and downwards whilst trying to squeeze your shoulder blades together



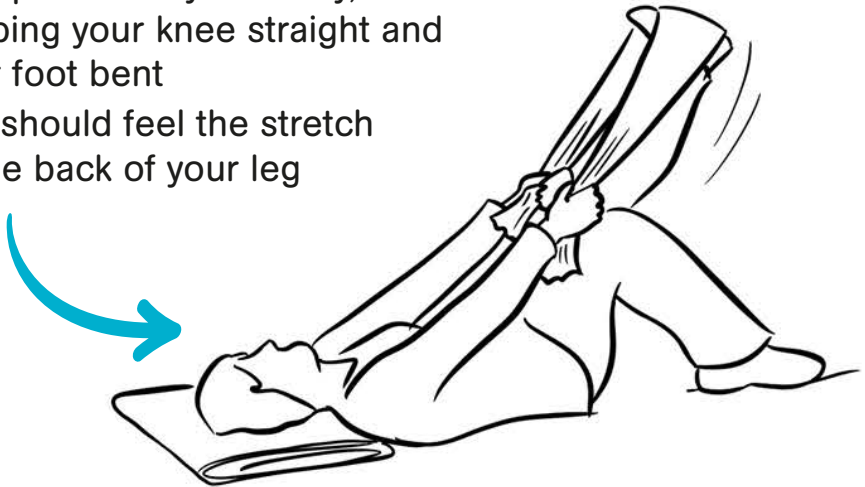
ARM CIRCLES

- In sitting or standing
- Keeping your elbow straight, move your right arm in a big circle in a forward direction
- Repeat in a backward direction
- Now repeat with your left arm in both directions



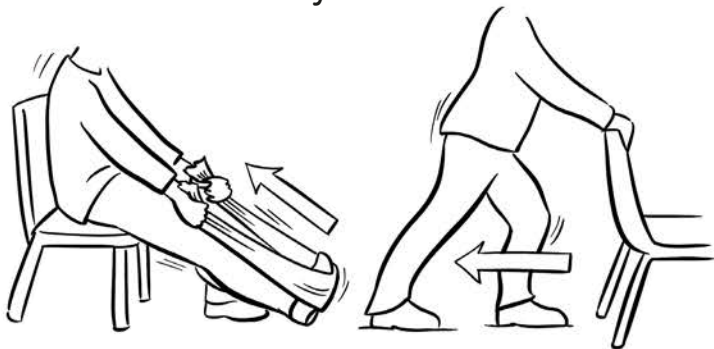
HAMSTRING STRETCH

- Lying on the floor, wrap a towel around your foot and pull your leg up towards your body, keeping your knee straight and your foot bent
- You should feel the stretch in the back of your leg



CALF STRETCHES

- In standing, step back with one leg, bend your front knee and lean forward. Keep your back knee straight, and you should feel a stretch in the back of your calf
- If you do this in sitting, wrap a towel around the ball of your foot, pulling your upper foot towards your body
- Feel the stretch in the back of your calf



CHILD'S POSE

- Start by lying on your stomach, move onto all fours, then gently sit back on your heels
- Keep your arms stretched out in front of you
- Try to sit all the way back on your heels



BALANCE

People with Huntington's disease often have poor balance. Physiotherapists recommend that both balance and balance confidence can be improved by exercises.

Balance exercises can progress like this:

- Standing feet side by side holding on to something
- Then try not holding on
- Then try with eyes closed
- Then try tandem standing
- Then try one leg standing.

Remember safety first and make sure that you have support – either a person or e.g. table nearby when doing balance exercises. **Also try yoga, tai chi, pilates, bowls**

STANDING EXERCISE

- In standing, try to maintain your balance
- If you feel comfortable in this position, close your eyes for up to 10 seconds, but be sure your hands are near to the chair for support if you need it



TANDEM STANDING

- Place one foot in front of the other. If you can, put the heel of your front foot against the toe of your other foot
- If you are unable to keep your balance in this position, put your front foot to the side but as close to the other foot as is comfortable
- If you feel comfortable in this position, let go of the support while keeping your hand nearby



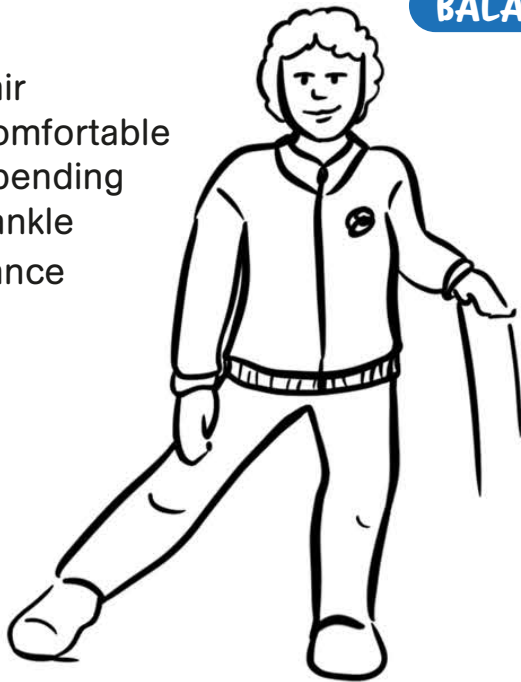
STANDING ON ONE LEG

- In standing with support, bend one knee so you are standing on one leg
- If you lose your balance, put your foot down, regain your balance and try again
- If you feel comfortable in this position, let go of the support while keeping your hand nearby



SIDE LUNGES

- Standing with the chair at your side, take a comfortable step out to the side, bending your knee over your ankle
- Use the chair for balance if needed



FORWARD LUNGES

- Standing with a chair near to your side, take a step forward with your right leg, hold for a second, and then return to the starting position
- Use the chair to help you keep your balance if you need support



THROWING A BALL, DANCING

- You can throw a ball or bean bag when sitting upright on a chair
- Throw a ball for a dog and pick it up when it is returned to you
- Dance when waiting for the kettle to boil



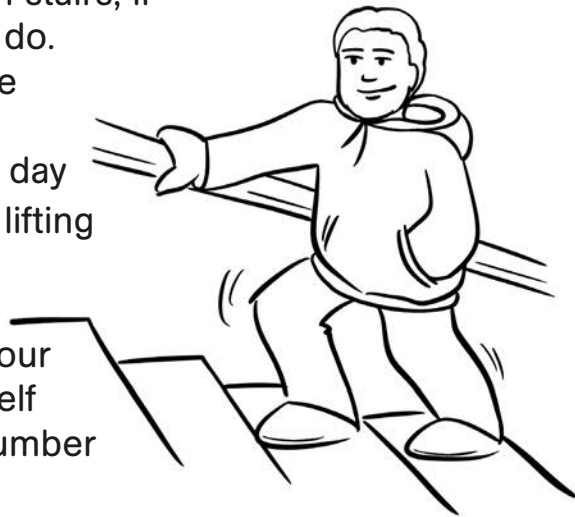
STRENGTH

Being strong helps with day to day activities and walking and reduces the risk of falls. Strength training involves making muscles work harder by working against a resistance. This resistance can be your own body weight or weights such as cans of food, bottle of water.

In order to strengthen muscles, you need to work to the point where you may need a short rest before continuing. Try to do 8-12 repeats of an exercise, which is 1 set. You can gradually increase the number of sets up to 3 per exercise. Do exercises for legs, arms, back and abdomen. Remember to start gradually and build up over a number of weeks. **Also try: pilates, running, outdoor gym, rowing**

STRENGTHENING AT HOME

- You can strengthen your legs by climbing up and down stairs, if this is safe for you to do. Gradually increase the number of times you climb the stairs every day
- Gardening – digging, lifting pots are all working against resistance and can strengthen your muscles. Pace your self and do jobs over a number of days if needed



STRENGTHENING AWAY FROM HOME

- Cycling and hill walking can help strengthen your legs, if you are safe to do so
- Gradually increase the distance or time that you cycle or walk
- Remember to wear the right type of clothes and bring water and a phone with you



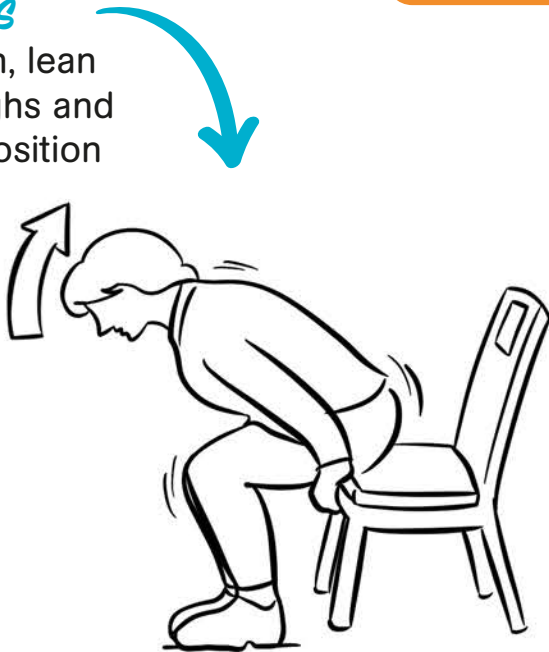
TRUNK EXERCISES WITH WEIGHTS IN SITTING OR STANDING

- Holding a weight in each hand, reach with your right hand across your chest to the left side. Turn your body as far as you can comfortably move
- Return back to centre, and then repeat to the other side
- Gradually increase the weight and number of sets



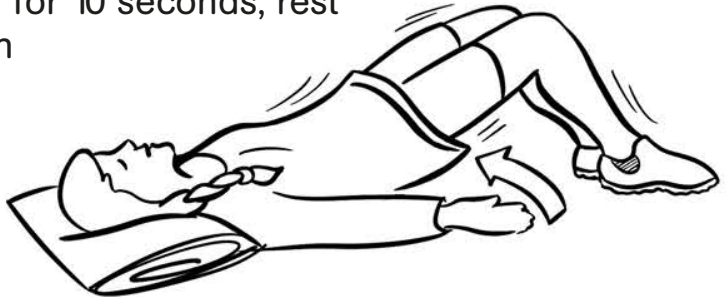
SIT TO STAND EXERCISES

- From a sitting position, lean forward over your thighs and come to a standing position
- Once you have your balance, carefully lower yourself back into the chair
- Gradually increase the number of sit to stands and take a rest between sets



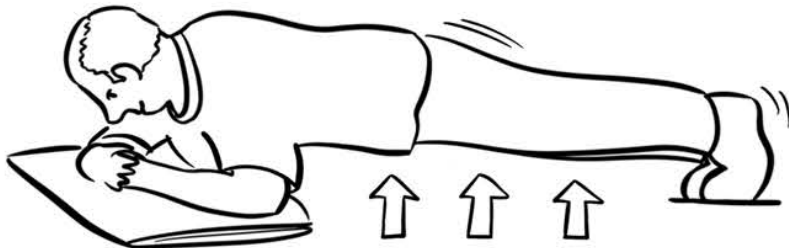
BRIDGING

- Bend both of your knees so that your feet are flat on the floor
- Gently tilt your pelvis, as if you are imprinting your back into the floor
- Now, lift your hips up into the air, while still holding your pelvis level
- Try and hold for 10 seconds, rest and try again



PLANK

- Lying on your stomach, prop yourself up onto your elbows
- Now, curl your toes under and lift yourself up onto your feet, while staying supported on your elbows
- Try not to lift your hips up too high in the air.
Hold this position for as long as you can (up to 10 sec)
- Rest as needed and then try again



FITNESS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

There are many ways to stay active and keep fit at home and outside.

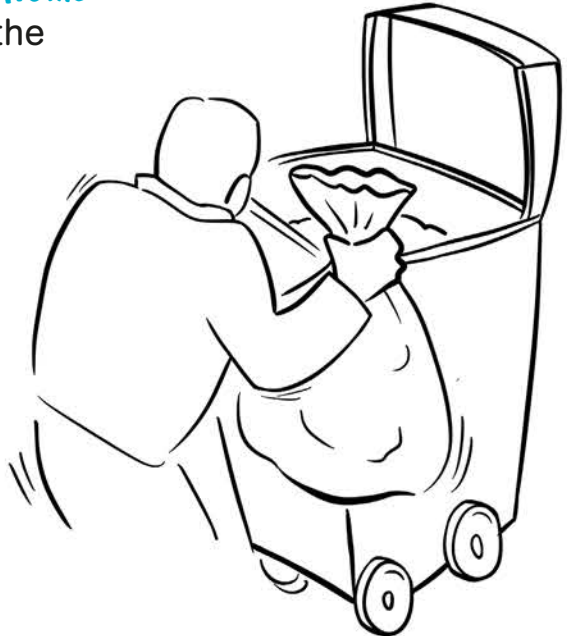
Physiotherapists recommend aerobic exercise of moderate intensity three times per week to improve fitness. Moderate intensity is when you can talk during the activity, but could not sing!

Remember safety first, wear appropriate, clothing, keep hydrated, bring a phone if going alone.

Try things that make you breathe a bit harder than when at rest.

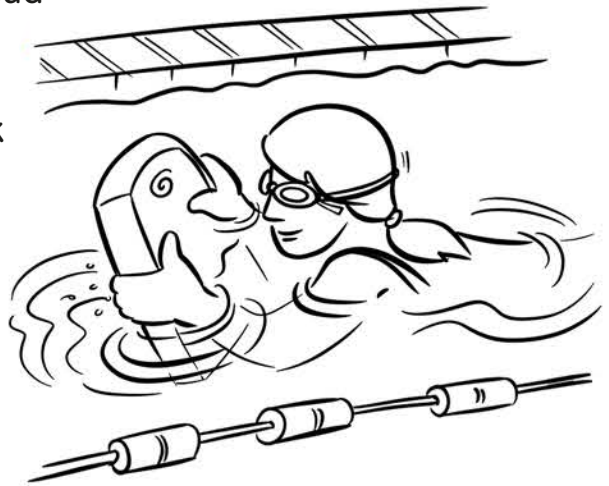
BEING ACTIVE & FIT AT HOME

- Filling and emptying the dishwasher
- Putting out the bins
- Cleaning
- Gardening
- Follow a fitness programme online
- Dance in the kitchen



BEING ACTIVE & FIT AWAY FROM HOME

- Walk to the shops
- Take the stairs instead of the lift
- Park away from the shop/work and walk the rest of the way
- Swimming or water exercises
- Walking football



RELAXING

Relaxation exercises can be helpful to reduce tension both in muscles and in the mind.

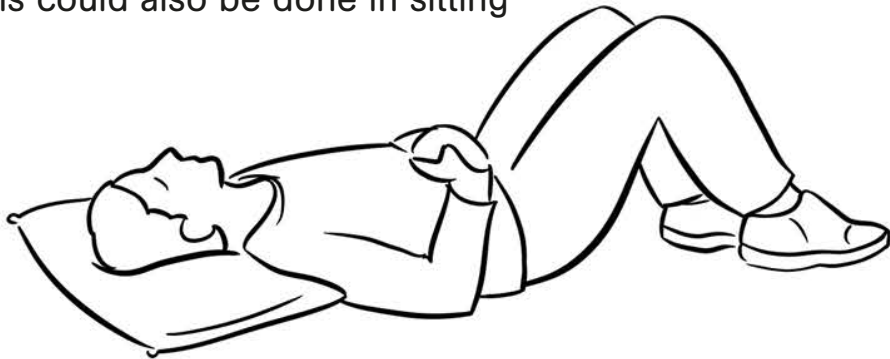
Relaxation is a skill that needs practice therefore gradually increase the time spent on the exercise.

You can listen to relaxation recordings, sit peacefully by water, meditate or do breathing exercises – whatever works for you.

Also try yoga, tai chi, mindfulness

BREATHING EXERCISES

- Lying on your back, with your knees bent, place your hands on the lower part of your stomach, and inhale deeply through your nose and feel your tummy rise
- Exhale through your mouth, and relax
- This could also be done in sitting



CAT/CAMEL EXERCISE

- Start on your hands and knees, with your knees directly underneath your hips, your hands underneath your shoulders and back flat. Lay your hands out flat
- Now as you take a deep breath in, arch your back, pulling your belly button away from the floor and bending your head so that you look at your stomach
- Now exhale and move your spine in the opposite direction, pushing your belly button towards the floor and lifting your head up to look towards the ceiling

